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WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

University College

Liberal Arts

**Historical Function of the Fictional Work
of H. J. C von Grimmelshausen and Essad Bey**

by

Sarah Hermes Griesbach

A thesis presented to the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
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Regarding the usage of names within this paper:

Grimmelshausen, his translators, and his critics use multiple monikers for the same characters. Though the names used by his Grimmelshausen's critics are kept as originally written when used in quotations, the names that I use consistently to refer to Grimmelshausen's characters are: *Simplicius*, *Courage*, and *Tearaway*.

Simplicius --The English *Simpleton* does not have the degrees of meaning found in the shifting use of *Simplicissimus*, *Simplicius*, and *Simplex* which utilizes Latin comparative adjectives in declining order.

Courage--The character born *Libuschka* becomes *Janco* when she hides from the dangers that await her as an adolescent female by pretending to be a young man. The name *Courage* is the English spelling of the same word used in German [*Courasche*], but taken from the French as a seventeenth-century slang term for testicles. Courage receives her anonym when she is discovered to be female after a skirmish with a soldier that reveals her to be without the male anatomy that becomes her title.

Tearaway--Grimmelshausen's character *Springinsfeld* [Spring in the Field] is referred to in English versions of the text as either *Tearaway* or *Hopalong*. This name, like so many of Grimmelshausen's names, holds a story within it and tells something of the character. The demeaning appellation is given by Courage as a symbol of their private contract, in which she had stipulated that he would be known by the first order she gave him. He earned the title when she requested his assistance in catching a horse so that she might engage herself with the man to whom she affected to sell it.

Essad Bey--Though born *Lev Nussimbaum*, *Essad Bey* is the *nom de plume* taken by the author of *Blood and Oil in the Orient* and *Twelve Secrets of the Caucasus*. I use this name to describe him throughout this paper, except when referencing his actual childhood, in contrast to his fictional childhood. Tom Reiss, the author of the definitive biography on the enigmatic writer, uses the name Nussimbaum.

My own share of the misfortune which those terrible times visited upon almost all of Europe I suffered in the most unfortunate towns of all, namely, those along the Rhine; this, more than all other German rivers, was flooded with sorrow, since it was forced to suffer War, Famine, and Pestilence, and finally all three scourges at one and the same time ...
1670, Grimmelshausen's *Tearaway* at the battle of Nordlingen

The Caucasus - The Pearl of the East!
The ancients called it "the ring of mountains which encircles the earth, as a marriage ring does a finger," and today the poets of the East have named it "the land of tongues and of miracles," for the languages of these mountains are innumerable, and the miracles that are related in these languages are without end.
Berlin, Autumn, 1930 Essad Bey

Introduction

Hans Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen's storytelling technique is an artful subterfuge for his calculated documentation of events too complex and too emotional to be told through a journalistic report or didactic treatise. Grimmelshausen's arresting adventure narratives capture readers' imaginations while identifying distinctions in class identity, gender limits and roles, methods and horrors of war, and the popular beliefs and customs of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). This thesis will explore the intended purposes and methodology of Grimmelshausen's historical account within three sets of the fictional chronicles found in his *Simplicissimus Cycle: Simplicius Simplicissimus* (in two German-English translations), *Tearaway* (in two German-English translations), and *Courage, the Adventuress* (also in translation).

I will further analyze Grimmelshausen's approach to his historical narrative by way of comparison to rediscovered author Essad Bey's characterization of the peoples of the Caucasus during the Civil War in Azerbaijan following the Bolshevik Revolution as depicted in *Blood and Oil in the Orient* and *Twelve Secrets of the Caucasus* (both translated from German to English). The three works by Grimmelshausen and two by Bey investigated here offer rich descriptions of each author's respective time, place, and perspective. My comparative study interrogates an essential historiographical question: What worthwhile historical content can be legitimately culled from sources easily proven to be unreliable?

Grimmelshausen and Bey fuse fact and fiction to provide a rich bounty of cultural lore, audience orientation and expectation, and (occasionally accidental) anthropological record. Their texts described here, while subjective and artistic, provide historical context for their subjects. Within a novel, characters are endowed with personal insights that

enrich the reader's historical perspective. In *Teaching the Novel Across the Curriculum*, Gregory F. Schroeder proposes the use of novels as historical evidence when authors write "about their own societies, and they incorporate observations of first-hand experiences, and ideas and values of their respective societies in their fictional stories" (207).

In her *New Yorker* piece, "Just the Facts Ma'am, Fake Memoirs, Factual Fictions, and the History of History" Jill Lepore writes that fiction can do "what history doesn't but should: it can tell the story of ordinary people." Lepore argues that the record left by poetry or literature is more meaningful than historical treatises due to the philosophical message that is imparted when one describes the "kind of things that can happen" rather than telling merely what has happened. She traces the history of history and finds evidence to suggest that late twentieth and twenty-first century notions of unbiased history are a departure from tradition:

In the eighteenth century, novelists called their books "histories," smack on the title page. No one was more brash about this than Henry Fielding, who, in his 1749 "History of Tom Jones, a Foundling," included a chapter called "Of Those Who Lawfully May, and of Those Who May Not Write Such Histories as This." Fielding insisted that what flowed from his pen was "true history"; fiction was what historians wrote. (Lepore 78)

Efforts to draw historical relevance from Gimmelshausen's fiction are nothing new, as evidenced by essays written by literary critics over the course of centuries regarding his writing. These essays point to the significant role his texts play in understanding seventeenth century attitudes toward a multitude of subjects, such as Jews, the supernatural, carnivals, and the concept of friendship. Bey has not received similar historic recognition. He claims, in contrast to Gimmelshausen, to objectively describe

the peoples and geography of the Caucasus though his texts are, essentially, works of fiction.

The conceit of fiction is to pose as reality. One mark of a great novel is that it is believable, or, at least, that it allows the reader to suspend disbelief:

Thus began my dime novel, which was distinguished from thousands of other dime novels neither in style nor structure. The only difference is that mine actually took place, once again bearing witness to the sad fact that life very rarely surpasses the level of a dime novel. (*Bey Blood and Oil* 63)

That truth is sometimes best revealed when disguised by a veil of fiction is equally true.

Literary criticism often focuses upon the authenticity and reliability of narrative voice.

Historical relevance is commonly thought to be reliant upon honest objectivity:

The historian should be fearless and incorruptible; a man of independence, loving frankness and truth; one who, as the poets say, calls a fig a fig and a spade a spade. He should yield to neither hatred nor affection, nor should be unsparing and unpitying. He should be neither shy nor deprecating, but an impartial judge, giving each side all it deserves but no more. He should know in his writing no country and no city; he should bow to no authority and acknowledge no king. He should never consider what this or that man will think, but should state the facts as they really occurred.
Lucian (C.E. 120-200)

Yet, so narrow a definition of authentic historical account would omit the work of the “father of history” Herodotus (b. 484 BCE) due to his known inaccuracies, his cultural biases, and his moral agenda. Although the ideal history is typically described as a text whose author strives for an impartial voice, all are, inevitably, subject to the perspective drawn from their defining time, station, and place. During the past half-century, historians have opened up their field to a broader view of the overlap between fact and fiction.

Grimmelshausen's and Bey's oeuvre pose sometimes as invention, sometimes as autobiography. Their texts offer authentic historical record of the great events and long disappeared traditions they describe. Although separated by three hundred years, these authors write to their German audiences of events to which they had access due to unique opportunities. Their use of engaging literary device allows for the communication of chronicled remembrances. The reader encounters characters posed as innocent bystanders. Sometimes their narratives present the reader with an honest reflection of the events these *Candide* like figures witness. Grimmelshausen and Bey show that, counterintuitively, a convincing portrayal of sincerity demands artistic artifice.

At other times, prevalent prejudices of the authors' epochs are discernable. Assumptions authors make about their readers tell the modern-day scholar quite a lot about what was in the minds of the segment of society for which each publication was aimed. Because the effectiveness of writing is dependent upon the ability of an author to tune into the collective unconscious of his era, the modern-day historian can tease out a comprehensive *Weltanschauung* characteristic of the author's time and place.

Grimmelshausen and Bey manipulate the emotional response to the events they recount by making the tragic absurd enough for the reader to endure the graphic descriptions of violence they portray. Detail of travelogues and battle accounts emphasize the fantastic and foreign to build reader interest, an element missing in many late twentieth through twenty-first century scholarly histories. The work of Grimmelshausen and Bey reveals their historical consciousness. They teach lessons of morality through storytelling and they use the people and events they depict to argue for social change.

Both sift through their experiences to find an aggregate message decrying the futility and horror of war and the easily obvious/axiomatic value of religious tolerance.

In 1957, Hayden White began to publish essays on what he perceived as the largely untapped resource of literature in historical scholarship. White's focus on narrative expression enriches historiographical thinking largely because he explores not only the content discussed within literature, but also the historical value of interpreting and classifying writing techniques to further ascertain a scope of understanding for the time, place, and circumstances of the author. White teases historical meaning out of authors' use of metaphor, metonym, synecdoche, irony, and, in a more general way, what he calls "emplotment:"

[Historical] events are *made* into a story by the suppression or subordination of certain of them and the highlighting of others, by characterization, motific repetition, variation of tone and point of view, alternative descriptive strategies, and the like—in short, all of the techniques that we would normally expect to find in the emplotment of a novel or a play. For example, no historical event is *intrinsically tragic*, it can only be conceived as such from a particular point of view or from within the context of a structured set of events of which it is an element enjoying a privileged place. (White *Historical Text* 194)

White's description of the historiography he pioneered serves as a fitting model for my own investigation into the texts of Grimmelshausen and Bey as I explore how the events these authors describe--by turn, tragic and comic--contribute to our historical record.

Section one, of this paper, begins my exploration of the historical function of the fictional work of Grimmelshausen and Bey by identifying the perspectives particular to these authors due to their backgrounds and their fortuitous exposure to major events of their times. An investigation of historical content found within the five texts and an historiographical discussion of the reliability of that content makes up section two, the

largest section of the paper. Section three examines Grimmelshausen and Bey's use of their literary characters to demonstrate behaviors and perspectives cogently and convincingly, advancing a plotted testimony of the authors' historical visions. Section four considers methods of argumentation that are not found in standard forms of historical writing, specifically the emphasis Grimmelshausen and Bey make upon elements of the absurd, fantastic, and foreign. Section five looks to the historical consciousness Grimmelshausen and Bey exhibit in their writing. Section six determines the principle messages Grimmelshausen and Bey assert and advocate.

SECTION 1 The Unique Vantage Points of Grimmelshausen and Bey

Though Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen and Essad Bey are the author names that are, today, attributed to their respective publications; these authors' identities are intriguing stories in their own right. Both authors' writing careers are rooted in deceit. It is, therefore, natural to question the authenticity of all of their claims regarding their own experiences and about the people and events they describe.

The three volumes discussed here made up books one through eight of the original ten books of the *Simplicissimus* cycle. The cycle was originally published as the autobiography of a Melchior Sternfels von Fuchshaim, then purported to be fiction written by a Samuel Greifenson von Hirschfeld, two of Grimmelshausen's at least seven pen names. Grimmelshausen went so far as to ghostwrite his own effusive (and satirical) reviews (Speier 5). His Simplicius character lives a life riddled with deceptions, shifting social class, war-time allegiances, even parentage, and gender. Given the coy and convoluted way in which the *Simplicissimus* stories are delivered, one might rightfully question their reliability as a source of any truth, let alone as a purveyor of history.

Yet, when viewed from another angle, the very layers of intrigue that define Grimmelshausen's work can also have provided opportunity for the **revelation of truth**. The bawdy, reprobate behavior of nearly all Grimmelshausen's characters could not have been socially acceptable reading at the time. Surely, salacious descriptions of the gluttonous behavior of nobility, the fickle loyalty and dark immorality of low and highly ranked soldiers, and extended, graphic depictions of the myriad of ways in which women of all classes were brutalized and mistreated throughout the Thirty Years War would not

have done much to provide Grimmelshausen's wife and ten children with the respect of their neighbors or fellow parishioners. Nor is it likely that Grimmelshausen's career, largely dependent upon connections and reputation made during his war-time service, could have benefited from the sharp accusations he makes toward the literary counterparts of the individuals providing his salary.

Believed to have been born in 1621 or 1622 in Gelnhausen, Hesse, Grimmelshausen began his life in a Lutheran family. The son of an innkeeper of noble descent, Grimmelshausen was orphaned at an early age. While still a child, he was drawn (or kidnapped) into the Thirty Years' War by Hessian and Croatian troops, an experience shared with his Simplicius character. He served as a musketeer and formally joined the imperial army regiment of Colonel Hans Reingard von Schauenburg in 1639. In 1645 he joined the regiment of Johann Burkhard von Elter, Schauenburg's brother-in-law. In 1649, not long after the Peace of Westphalia, he left the military and returned to Offenburg where he married Catharina Henninger. Their marriage record reveals that Grimmelshausen had, by that time, converted to Catholicism, the denomination of his spouse.

Following his marriage, Grimmelshausen became the steward for the Schauenburg family in Gaisbach (today part of Oberkirch, a town in Western Baden-Württemberg). Between 1653 and his death in 1676 Grimmelshausen bought property, ran an inn, and served as steward for the Ullenburg castle where he is thought to have had contact with numerous important writers and prominent members of society. He served as mayor, judge, police chief, notary public, and tax collector in the small village of Renchen for the last decades of his life (Otto; Menhennet; Speier).

Grimmelshausen's biography is quite similar to those of his subjects. He most certainly would have had opportunity to observe the wartime behavior he describes with such detailed scrutiny and complexity. Given what is known of his biography, the honesty of Grimmelshausen's voice is more likely due to his anonymity. That anonymity was kept until 1837, when Grimmelshausen was finally recognized as the author of the *Simplicissimus* cycle (Speier 4).

Tom Reiss' tenacious research revealed that, in 1905, the author known as Essad Bey was born Lev Nussimbaum to Ashkenazic parents, Abraham Nussimbaum, and Berta Slutzkin. The location of his birth is not known, though his literary persona is born in Baku, Azerbaijan. Nussimbaum's father was born in Tiflis, now Tbilisi, to parents who had come from either Kiev or Odessa. His mother, too, was from the Jewish Pale of Settlement. She committed suicide when Lev was around seven years old, for reasons Reiss cannot relate with certainty, but which likely stemmed from conflicts created by her communist sympathies. Lev converted to Islam at seventeen, becoming Essad Bey to at least one of his social circles (Reiss 3-18).

Bey found himself exposed as a convert to Islam in 1931. In contrast to Grimmelshausen, his subterfuge lasted only eight years, the discovery coming at just the time when *Twelve Secrets* and *Blood and Oil* were published. At the time his identity was discovered, a handful of German critics did their best to reveal him as a scoundrel and a fraud. Reiss's detective scholarship/journalism and subsequent best seller *The Orientalist*, reveal that at the time Bey's identity was exposed, he was widely published as an 'Orient

expert,' a position he held as a writer for *Die Literarische Welt*¹ until he left the journal at age twenty-eight, having published 144 articles (211).

Rather than leave his fictional Muslim identity as a pen name, Bey tried to reshape his life, and for almost a decade he succeeded in reshaping his childhood past to fit his literary life story. Bey's livelihood, even his marriage, were dependent upon the masquerade that he played in his daily life. Eventually he would lose his social standing and his wife as his fictional childhood was uncovered as a farce. Reiss provides the following review of *Blood and Oil*, discovered in the influential rightwing journal *Der Nahe Osten*:

This book is one of the most miserable publication of recent years [...] The author, who introduces himself as "Mohammad Essad-Bey" and pretends to be the son of a Tartar oil magnate from Baku, has turned out to be a Jewish dissident name Leo (Lob) Nussimbaum, born in Kiev in 1905, son of a Jew named Abraham Nussimbaum from Tiflis[Tbilisi]. When one compares the accounts in the book, according to which the author was threatening Russian ministers at the age of ten, and in which the author pretends to be a relative of the Emir of Bukhara and an expert on Muslim customs, one gets a clear idea of the whole grotesquerie. (215)

Bey's movement in and out of popularity was as tumultuous as the fortune that befalls his fictional self in his adventure accounts. Reiss notes that in 1931 the name Lev Nussimbaum was filed as "Geschichtsschwindler" or "story swindler," in an anti-Semitic lexicon that could be found in German and Austrian public libraries. In that same year Nussimbaum/Bey was able to use his Islamic name to receive new membership cards for the Union of German Writers and the German Literary Association. In 1933, the name

¹ *Die Literarische Welt* was not an obscure magazine. It was, rather, "Germany's most intelligently edited and most widely read literary journal of the period" connecting Bey to Franz Kafka among other literary notables of his time (Isenberg Twelve9).

Essad Bey appeared on the Third Reich Propaganda Ministry's recommended list of excellent books for German minds (Reiss 268).

Bey was known for his outlandish appearance. After moving from Berlin to Vienna, he became a fixture in Viennese cafes wearing an elaborate Caucasian costume that included a fur fez and dramatic makeup. His swashbuckling manner made him stand out among his peers and caused the discrepancies between his stories and reality to appear all the more outrageous.

Questions regarding the purpose of Bey's deception cannot be definitively answered. Reiss does not appear convinced that Bey's religious conversion was sincere, and Bey's melodramatic impersonation of an Islamic nobleman from Baku does beg the question of the earnestness of his religious belief. Reiss follows what is known of Bey to his death in 1942 at age thirty six. At the end of Bey's life, after fleeing Vienna, he went into hiding in fascist Italy, in the town of Positano. His gravestone in Positano is marked by the name he had adopted and decorated by a turban. According to Reiss, Bey never budged from his portrayal of a Muslim, if that element of his life was, indeed, an act.

The facts of Bey's real life get in the way of the facts he recalls in his playfully encyclopedic travelogues, *Blood and Oil in the Orient* and *Twelve Secrets of the Caucasus*. Bey's recurrent assertions that he was invited into a family home or given a privileged, intimate position due to his birth and connections are impossible:

The reception into our family in Samarkand was an honour [...] The great fete at the home of my uncles, in his huge house, lasted uninterruptedly for three whole days, during which all the hundred and fifty relatives in order offered their good wishes [...] [My brown cousins] were almost all pretty, which filled me with pride. They had thrown aside their veil and sat before me on cushions, wearing gay slippers, full silk trousers, and small velvet vests. Each of them tried to entertain me, asked me about my health,

whether anything pained me, or whether I had killed many people. (*Blood and Oil* 140-41)

The excursions which Ali-Bey, the eunuch, and I made together took us through the villages, mountains, and valleys of the polyglot, variegated land of Daghestan, a somber, rough, a mysterious, and yet a hospitable land, that is known, and wishes to remain known, only to the few. (*Twelve Secrets* 17)

Of course none of what Bey describes in these passages could have occurred as they are described. Still, the many discrepancies between what could have and did occur in Bey's own life do not necessarily impugn every item in a long list of customs, beliefs, oral history, food, and countless rarified traditions described in Bey's engaging, if fantastic and somewhat fanciful, compilations. If viewed as a literary device, rather than proof of fabrication on the part of Bey, the role of insider serves as a mechanism to weave together colorful tales describing the most intriguing elements of Bey's real life encounters and his study.

Reiss's sleuthing shows that in 1922, Lev Nussimbaum enrolled as 'Essad Bey Nousimbaoum' in classes in Turkish and Arabic in the Seminar for Oriental Languages at the Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität (193). Reiss also notes that, in 1923, the name Essad Bey appears on a list of founding members of the Islamic community in Berlin and that "in 1924 he helped found its affiliated student group, Islamia" (200). Bey's immersion into the culture and lore of his subject would be enough to provide an honest student of the Caucasus region and peoples with the authority to express expertise. It is ironic that Bey's attempt to integrate himself into the society he so admired stands as a challenge to his credibility.

While seeking validation of some of Bey's more contentious claims about the people he professes, in *Blood and Oil* and *Twelve Secrets*, to have encountered, I came

across the work of a scholar who has more recently published research on the people of the Caucasus and whose personal story is interesting when compared to that of Bey.

Ethnographer Natela Baliauri, like Bey, writes under false personal pretenses. Baliauri's deceit, however, is the inverse of Bey's. Baliauri omits from her biography an important element of her scholarship, namely: Baliauri's ethnography is autobiography. In

Caucasus Paradigms, Paul Manning describes the purpose of Baliauri's omission with an argument that provides further justification for receiving Bey's work as a legitimate source of historical information:

The frame of the text is written using a third person perspective typical of intelligentsia ethnography. It is precisely this identification that provides the epistemic point of view needed to provide an adequate description of Khevsur private life, and it is in this peculiarly intimate voice of attributed quoted speech that her membership among the 'folk' becomes most apparent. (26)

What Manning describes as "a kind of hypercorrection, attempting to decentre her autobiographical perspective into an authoritative narrative 'voice from nowhere' (37) makes an illustrative juxtaposition to Bey's voice from somewhere. Baliauri perceives a need to write in a tone that might insure her gaining respect within academia (maintaining a third person perspective of marriage rites while she writes of her own elopement, for example). Bey's first person accounts, however, can be viewed as a commitment to communicating what he could have made available to his readers in an academic format, but was not moving or real when separated from the emotion and the drama with which readers imbue their own realities. And yet, considering that Bey wrote in an era of self-styled adventurers such as Jack London, B. Traven, Rider Haggard, and Talbot Mundy; carried a scimitar; and wore dramatic make-up, one can assume that he was motivated to entertain more than to inform.

Had Grimmelshausen delivered the core elements of his *Simplicissimus* cycle--the historical events he experienced, observed, and heard described and the morality lessons he wished to impart--in his own voice, with straightforward narration, his writing could hardly have had the impact it had. Grimmelshausen's characteristic ability to reveal an action from below, as his title character, Simplicius (framed as ignorant innocent or court buffoon) is able to do, provides persuasive evidence as proof of the testimony Grimmelshausen gives.

One clear difference between the academic writing of an historian and the historical evidence provided by an author of fiction is their respective motivations for publishing. Considerable historical insight can be garnered by exploring Grimmelshausen and Bey's awareness of their reading audiences' inclinations and preconceptions. Each section of each book in the *Simplicissimus* cycle was published separately in serialized installments, for popular reading. Grimmelshausen's audacious self-promotion in the form of his own book reviews, while in keeping with his classic method of toying with narrative voice, was also an act of self-preservation. As Speier notes in the foreword of his 1964 translation of *Courage*, "probably Grimmelshausen panegyricized himself, because he had no trusted friend among the literati to render him this service" (5).

At the time Bey published his romantic accounts of his wild boyhood in the far-away east, a series of tales of the Orient written by German adventure novelist Karl May, best known for his American Westerns, had risen to become the most popular German reading. May (1842-1912) gained fame by claiming experiences he had never had while using research taken from his contemporaries to spin enthrallingly outlandish yarns of

far-away places. May, like Bey, was criticized widely in his own time for being disingenuous and exploitative.

Both Grimmelshausen and Bey were well read, and had access to a great deal of the scholarship of their times. Both had unusually broad exposure to representatives of many walks of life, and a surfeit of life experiences upon which to draw. As each was able to capture elements of the society he encountered in such unabashed, gripping tones, few of their contemporaries could possibly have conceived of their products as valuable historical records.

Yet, Grimmelshausen and Bey's texts do provide valuable historical records of their authors' experiences and eras, not despite but **because** of their genre and because of their unique vantage points within their societies. Their familiarity with the opportunities, lack of opportunities, injustices, dangers, prejudices, and social dynamics of their time periods enlighten as they entertain. Grimmelshausen projects multiple viewpoints in his documentation of the Thirty Years War because he can extrapolate from what he knows to find the details allowing him to create convincing first person accounts. Bey writes stirring folk tales and recounts wild exploits that, together, form a complex fabric of preconceptions regarding Islam, the Caucasus mountain regions and peoples, Jews, Germans, social restraints, and religious extremes because his life followed a most unusual trajectory. Both consciously and unconsciously, Grimmelshausen and Bey left ample fodder for on-going historical interpretation of their texts.

Section 2 The Novel as Sourcebook in the Work of Grimmelshausen and Bey

Grimmelshausen and Bey write stories depicting sexual abandon, political corruption, deception, discovery, horrific violence, and bucolic nature; in essence all the elements of a good story and all the elements of real life, if that life encompasses the experiences of many packed lifetimes. Their texts are engaging works of fiction but also make useful historical sourcebooks, documenting the authors' eras through characters' world-views and behaviors. The use of this genre of writing for archival purposes does not constitute soft history, but rather, offers up complex, intricately layered records regarding economic structures, class divisions, social relationships, psychological perspective and (not unimportantly) everyday minutia. Unlike a scientifically derived chronology, the historical content of fiction is far from easy to analyze, and is often mentioned only in passing when noted in academic writing:

Serious historians of the ancient world have often undervalued fiction, if only [...] because by convention history is concerned principally with the recovery of truth about the past. But for social history--for the history of culture, for the history of people's understanding of their own society—fiction occupies a privileged position. (Hopkins qtd. in Bowersock ix)

The very untraditional historian Keith Hopkins frames his support for social history against a long tradition of disdain for literature's contribution to historical understanding.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's analysis of what makes a legitimate source of history remains the more commonly voiced perspective:

Legends, Ballad-stories, Traditions, must be excluded from such original history. These are but dim and hazy forms of historical apprehension, and therefore belong to nations whose intelligence is but half awakened [...] The domain of reality—actually seen, or capable of being so—affords a very different basis in point of firmness from that fugitive and shadowy element, in which were engendered those legends and poetic dreams whose historical prestige vanishes, as soon as nations have attained a mature individuality. (Hegel 2)

Yet, even the historiographical view Hegel espouses, referred to by Hopkins as conventional history, is formed through Hegel's review of military transactions, French memoirs, and Greek mythology. Hegel's disregard for the use of varied sources to build an historical framework appears to be guided by his desire for the historian to clearly state a philosophic goal for the future of mankind followed by an historic proof of that goal's legitimacy. Hegel describes the outcome of this process as the formation of a *Universal History*. I find support for the use of fictional accounts when those texts are interpreted through a lens devoted to Hegel's historical objective

Despite Hegel's condemnation of legends, ballads, and traditions as manifestations of immature societies, he, too, notes the inevitability of including such voices in the historical scholarship of his "modern time" though his examples of what he concludes must 'nevertheless' be included come out of a markedly European tradition. This begs the question as to whether the sources Hegel views as too hazy to offer historical relevance are all non-Western and signal Hegel's racist parochialism rather than his general historiographical perspective. Almost immediately following Hegel's condemnation of cultural history, he states, "our culture is essentially comprehensive and immediately changes all events into historical representations" (3).

Surely Hegel and Hopkins read Grimmelshausen, though evidence is not available regarding either theorist's perspective on the author or his work. It is likely Hegel considered Grimmelshausen's texts useful sources for determining a human *Universal History*. Hopkins made a reputation for himself using the most varied sources available to him in his pursuit of history's missing stories. It is likely that he recognized Grimmelshausen as a wellspring of important voices, largely left unheard in first person

accounts of the era. I would hazard a guess that he would have especially appreciated the viewpoint of Grimmelshausen's *Courage* as an instrument to fuller understand the female experience during the Thirty Years War. Had time allowed for Hegel to read Bey, I imagine he might have found the adventure tales of the Caucasus lacking in the criterion he identified as historically useful. Hopkins, however, would likely concur with my own analyses, though his death in 2004 preceded, by a year, the publication of Reiss's biography of Bey/Nussimbaum--and the corresponding international interest in Bey's work. Regardless, the applicability of fiction as a model for history is best proved by demonstration.

The inventive tales of both Grimmelshausen and Bey are firmly rooted in locations that existed, describe historical events, and reference people who played roles in these events. Outside of what is unarguably considered factual, their writing serves as a record of social norms and mores:

Those who know how the Slavonic nations treat their serfs might easily be led to believe that I was begot by a Bohemian nobleman and born of a peasant's daughter [...] When the Prince of Bavaria went to Bohemia with Bucquoy, in order to drive out the new King, I was thirteen years old.
(Grimmelshausen *Courage* 93)

In reference to the quotation above, I note that in 1620 Duke Maximilian Emanuel of Bavaria (1573-1651) was joined by Karl Bonaventura of Longueval, Count of Bucquoy (1571-1621). They were defeated by the forces of Frederick V² ("the new King") in the Battle of the White Mountain (93), a battle that marked the end of the Bohemian period of the Thirty Years' War. The reader also learns that Grimmelshausen assumed his

² Duke Elector of the Palatinate, and so-called 'Winter King' of Bohemia

readers would be aware of, and sympathetic to, the plight of powerless peasant girls in his feudal society.

Along with engaging records of historical events, Grimmelshausen and Bey provide important cultural and material history. Through satirical social commentary, Grimmelshausen exposes common behaviors and thinking while he decries that which he finds unjust, appalling, or just laughable. In the opening of *Simplicissimus*, a catalogue of society's superficial but entrenched strata is unveiled in the light of each group pretending to be what it is not:

In recent years (when many people think we shall soon see the end of the world!) there has arisen a disease among humble folk which makes them claim noble birth and ancient lineage as soon as they have scraped together a little money to buy themselves fine clothes or, by some stroke of luck, have risen above the common herd. More often than not, their fathers were chimney-sweeps, day labourers, carters, and porters; their cousins donkey drivers, card sharpeners, or mountebanks; their brothers jailers and executioners; their sisters seamstresses, washerwomen, and whores; their mothers bawds or even witches; and, in a word, their whole pedigree of thirty-two ancestors as soiled and strained as ever was the pastry-cooks' guild in Prague. Indeed, these newly hatched noblemen themselves are often as black as if they had been born and bred in Guinea. (Grimmelshausen *Simpleton* 1)

Here is a sentiment, reminiscent of Dickens' "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times [...] in short, the period was so far like the present." Flippant and insightful, Grimmelshausen offers a sweeping analysis of the guiding principles that characterize his era and piques some curiosity about that pastry-cook's guild in Prague. His social commentary on the seventeenth-century *nouveau riche* reveals a disregard for pompous pretensions one can assume his readership shared. Professions are characterized in a lovely spectrum of social acceptance and the use of black skin as symbolic of a sordid background provides insight into existent racial thinking. At the same time, the tone of

Grimmelshausen's bawdy humor suggests a gritty truth: his is an honest voice amidst dishonesty.

In his study of the *Simplicissimus* cycle, R.P.T. Aylett describes Springinsfeld [Tearaway], the narrator of the third book in the cycle and a minor character in *Simplicius* and *Courage*, as:

the archetypal old soldier-cum-beggar, of the sort flooding Europe after the Thirty Years War [...] even the loss of a leg during the war is seen as professionally advantageous. What is more, Springinsfeld has no fleas and a purse full of money: a most untypical beggar. The story he goes on to tell about his life reveals experiences which are certainly representative of the times and in some cases typical. (109)

Aylett engages in a sort of factor analysis of the *Simplicissimus* backdrop. The everyday lives of Grimmelshausen's characters are resplendent with elaborate descriptions of the standard conventions of the workaday lives of the early seventeenth century. A great deal more information is offered up for the historian in Grimmelshausen's entertaining passages than can be found in receipts, contracts, or a single memoir.

In the adventures of *Simplicius*, *Courage*, and *Tearaway*, the commonplace banalities of everyday life are shown to go on despite the war:

I played many pranks on my host to punish him for his insatiable greed. I taught his boarders how to extract the salt from the butter by boiling it and how to grate the hard cheese like the citizens of Parma do and moisten it with [...] Two young noblemen who were boarded with him received a letter of credit from their parents one day, with orders to travel to France and learn the language there. (*Simpleton* 157)

Grimmelshausen records the practice of seventeenth-century European nobility learning languages in their youth by living for extended periods in foreign countries. How were such arrangements possible without easy communication between parents, children, hosts, and lending institutions? The "letter of credit" referenced above suggests an ease of commercial exchange and record even in a time of war. That facility of exchange is again

made evident in several scenes throughout the cycle in which Simplicius and Courage leave great stashes of wealth in official safe keeping when leaving one city for another.

The cheese prepared ‘like the citizens of Parma do’ is another cue to the historian, in this case regarding the culinary habits and cross-cultural exchanges of the era. John C. Super writes in his essay that “food is the ideal cultural symbol that allows the historian to uncover hidden levels of meaning in social relationships and arrive at new understandings of the human experience” (165). Grimmelshausen’s descriptions of commonplace cuisine reveal pedestrian and decadent fare as well as sources of emergency rations:

At break of day I had another meal of raw wheat and then went across the fields until I came to a highway which brought me to the splendid fortress of Hanau. (*Simpleton* 30)

At the very same table sat a man who was eating *a la carte*, and he was eating like a horse, and falling to so mightily, with both cheeks full, that I marveled at him. He had already put away a bowl of soup and had then gobbled down two portions of cabbage and meat when I arrived, and now, in addition, he was asking for a large piece of roast. (Grimmelshausen *Hopalong* 4)

The record of what characters eat offers a direct guide to understanding what was available, to whom it was available, how often, and for what purposes.

In their contributions to *A Companion to the Works of Grimmelshausen*, Lynne Tatlock and Peter Hess discuss the important insights into seventeenth-century material culture garnered in the many vivid descriptions of clothing within the *Simplicissimus* cycle. From portrayals of social order to symbols of gender transgression, the elaborate descriptions of what each character wears and when tells a great deal more than the fashion modes of the time. What is the appropriate costume for each station? In the

following passage the description of what Simplicius is missing also suggests what was expected:

Now before I continue with my story I must acquaint the reader with the peculiar figure I cut at that time. My dress and carriage were so altogether odd, astonishing, and uncouth that the governor of Hanau had my portrait painted. In the first place, my hair had not been cut, curled, combed, or brushed for two years and a half. Impregnated with the dust of many seasons instead of powder [...] it looked as if I were wearing a Turkish turban. (*Simpleton* 31)

Clearly, a modicum of cleanliness is required. One can also assume that men regularly had their hair cut, curled, and powdered. The mention of the Turkish turban provides evidence of known references. Such easy associations reveal the reader's awareness of referenced themes, the more often an allusion is used, the more clear its familiarity.

Messages regarding gender expectations and limits are present throughout the *Simplicissimus* cycle. The adventures of Courage begin when she hides her gender in male garb so as to protect her virginity. Courage wears men's clothing regularly, as a soldier and as a gypsy,³ as she rejects the female roles of servile domesticity that otherwise bind her:

Courage both literally and figuratively attempts to wear the pants throughout her life. Although she wants to be a man, she finds it necessary to face the fact that as a biological woman she must instead procure a man, a pair of pants, as it were, in order to escape rape and conduct business. At one point in her checkered career she even considers representing herself as a hermaphrodite (*Tatlock A Companion* 280)

Simplicius, too, reflects Grimmelshausen's messages regarding gender. By multiple shifts in clothing, Simplicius shapes his reality. When sent as a punishment to be raped by the stable boys, Simplicius states, "I also reflected how difficult and well-nigh impossible it

³ I maintain the use of the term "gypsy" though it is a derogatory name for the "Romany" or "Roma" in order to remain true to the tenor of Grimmelshausen's text.

was for a poor virgin to preserve her maidenhood in times of war” (Grimmelshausen *Simpleton* 98). This scene of rape by the stable boys as punishment is framed as comedy when Simplicius in girls’ clothing is the would-be victim. When the very same fate befalls Courage on more than one occasion, her narration suggests that she finds herself to blame and is resigned to what cannot for a woman of her sort (that is, undomesticated) be avoided.

Grimmelshausen has a great deal to say regarding the dismal gender standards of his day. Moreover, while he does make direct accusations against accepted male institutions and practices, a topic that I will pursue further in section six, most of his arguments are made through show of evidence in each sequential demonstrative spectacle.

The opening statement of *Courage*, “Yes (you will see, gentlemen), who would have thought the old hag would ever attempt to escape the wrath of God? But what else could she do?” sets a pattern that is repeated throughout the novel (89). Courage’s audience is male and judgmental: she a recalcitrant sinner. “But what could I do?” serves as Courage’s refrain throughout her many trials. This redundant question peppers the tale of a life fated to misery, ostensibly cursed merely by her gender. Women, in Grimmelshausen’s universe, are puppets of society’s ill-motivated men.

Grimmelshausen plants Courage in a childhood characterized by virtue and innocence then has her fall to the extremes of sexual abandon. She moves in and out of security, primarily due to circumstances beyond her control. From childhood until old age she remains a victim of her gender:

When my guardian saw what was coming she said to me in good time,
“Libuschka, my girl, if you want to remain a virgin, you must cut your

hair and put on man's clothes; if you don't, I will not give a farthing for your honor, which I have been ordered to protect." (94)

This is the last time Grimmelshausen uses Courage's given name. Her parentage is a point of confusion and, thus, complication, but that is only one of many stumbling blocks that keep Courage continuously shifting her identity and her fortune. As Courage is shown moving step by step toward her ruin, Grimmelshausen portrays historical hardships born by women that are readily comprehensible when described as unavoidable consequences of horrific environmental factors.

Those environmental factors are identified clearly. There is no doubt as to what Grimmelshausen intends to convey. His Courage is an everywoman whose fate is predestined not by deed or disposition, but by ill fortune. Having lost her first love, the captain she had served as a soldier and then as a common law wife, Courage is corrupted by degrees due to the influence of her landlady in Vienna:

Even as my black mourning clothes lent me a special appearance, a grave dignity which added to the radiance of my beauty, so I conducted myself at the beginning with studied reserve [...] My landlady had a clever way of first approaching my maid and suggesting to her how to dress me and how to do my hair [...] Nothing that she could think of to excite the lusts of love did she leave undone. (106-07)

Courage's rapid descent from the belle of Vienna to a very high priced prostitute occurs in sudden searing revelation following paragraphs of light description:

The count was the first to receive and enjoy my favor [...] he would not have got so far had he not sent me, immediately after I abandoned mourning, a piece of dove-colored satin with all the trimmings for a new dress, and, above all, had he not presented me with a hundred ducats for my household in order to console me for the loss of my husband. After him came the ambassador of a great potentate who let me earn sixty pistoles the first night [...] whoever was poor, or rather not rich and noble enough, either had to stay outside or be satisfied with my landlady's daughters. In this way I arranged everything so that my mill was never idle. (110)

Again, Grimmelshausen communicates with perspicacious insight the difficulty of being a woman by shifting his characters in and out of their gender. His male characters experience the same hardships as his females when in female garb, suggesting a universality of outcome that shows gender trumping other considerations. Clearly, it is not the weaker or less moral state of women's souls that incurs such hardship, but, rather, the disposition of men toward women and the vulnerability of all women. In yet another sort of reversal of fortunes (or genders)--not a man encountering the burdens of womanhood but rather a woman enjoying the privileges of being male--Grimmelshausen uses Courage's voice to expound on the advantages inherent in life as a male:

At that time I wished I were a man and could take to war all my life. For there was so much fun that my heart leaped for joy. And my desire grew at the battle of the White Mountain near Prague because we scored a great victory, and suffered few losses. My captain got plenty of booty then. As for me, I was employed not as a page or servant, let alone as a girl, but as a soldier who is sworn to meet the enemy and get paid for it. (97)

When her female station is concealed, Courage is not denied the rewards of her work. As a male, she is heartily appreciated for her talents. The same opportunities, given implicitly to a man, are, in sharp contrast, resented in a woman. Quick on the heels of every success that Courage experiences as a woman is the hot resentment of both the men and women in her midst.

Unlike other officers' wives I did not ride on a saddle for ladies but on a man's saddle [...] and kept pistols and a Turkish saber under my thigh. Underneath my little skirt of pink taffeta I wore breeches so that I could sit up like a man at any moment and conduct myself like a young soldier on horseback [...] I gained more booty than many a sworn soldier, which annoyed men and women alike. (114-15)

Grimmelshausen relays the ease with which men label Courage "witch" to belay their own fear of inadequacy as she successfully dominates the battlefield:

He was nearly dying of shame at having been captured by a young woman. But when he saw the pistols in the pockets of my breeches and in my holster, and noticed that I made them ready along with my carbine, and heard what I had done at Wimpfen, he calmed down a little and said, "She is the Devil, I wash my hands of this witch." (121)

Again and again, Grimmelshausen shows that all the world hates a strong woman. While ingeniously resourceful, Courage's dilemmas are inevitable. When she is so bold as to turn the prescribed positions of power on their head, society calls for nothing less than her complete humiliation. After the death of her second husband, a good and kind captain, Courage marries an Italian lieutenant. The lieutenant's intense devotion to her disappears upon the first night of their marriage when he demands a fight to establish once and for all who will obey whom:

"Since you insist on commanding me to fight and want to give to the victor supreme lordship over the vanquished (a position which I have not coveted) I would be a fool indeed if I let slip through my hands an opportunity of getting what I would otherwise never have dreamed of." [...] Before he knew what was happening I hit him over the head so that he was dazed like a clubbed ox. I took the two cudgels to throw them out of the room, but when I opened the door there standing in front of it were several officers who had listened to our squad and watched us through an opening [...] I had not failed to notice that my bridegroom had invited these officers to be outside the room at that time so that they might witness his folly. For when they had jeered at the bully, telling him that he would have to let me wear the pants, he had boasted that he knew of a special way of teaching me docility the very first morning; afterward I would tremble whenever he gave me as much as an angry look [...] When he realized that he could not get his revenge and when he was no longer able to bear being everyone's laughingstock, he got all my cash together one fine day and went over to the enemy with three of my best horses and a servant. (118-19)

Courage is caught in a trap designed by the injustice of her gender. She is coaxed into a marriage ostensibly based on love, admiration, and desire. She does not choose to trade in her status of wife for that of husband. Forced, however, between submission to a manipulative and cruel man and his defeat, Courage refuses to submit. Parity is not an

option that her husband can even comprehend, much less accept. It is difficult to imagine that Grimmelshausen's readers, in any era, would not recognize the dilemma faced by the heroine.

This reading of Courage does not conform to much of the criticism devoted to her⁴. Scholars more typically depict Courage as the perpetrator, not victim, of sin. In his article, "A Defense of Grimmelshausen's Courasche," John W. Jacobson writes, "It is peculiarly ironic that Courasche, who suffers keenly and repeatedly at the hands of men in Grimmelshausen's work, has also been singularly ill-used by literary critics." Jacobson offers example after example in which literary critics refer to Courage as '*Ein unfruchtbares Weib*' (an infertile wench) who is innately sinful and addicted to vice. (42)

The more typical critique of Courage's place as a female archetype emphasizes her own claims of moral depravity. With each description of the sexual violence Courage is forced to endure, she waves away any notion of self-pity with admittance of her own guilt. In these claims by Courage that she deserves each of her miseries, the critics Jacobson addresses find easy support for their derisive analysis. Courage reports that she is sexually assaulted because she transgresses gender, is ill respected by society because of her libidinousness, and that her emotions should be ignored because of her female, and therefore, manipulative nature:

And at this point I began to cry as though I were quite serious about it all,
following the old ditty:
When women seem to cry from smart
Their tears do not reveal their heart.
They can cry at any time
For a reason or a rhyme. (113)

⁴ I had an instructive conversation with Tatlock in which she validated my assertions regarding Grimmelshausen's treatment of Courage as--though not historically mainstream--a legitimate, modern, feminist reading

While only a superficial reading would take Courage's words at face value, such a superficial analysis of Grimmelshausen's heroine nevertheless provides a window into the perspective of each period of criticism – yet another attribute of the novel in historical pursuits. Grimmelshausen does not make any of his moral arguments directly. He could have written letters to military leaders, newspapers, or religious leaders, decrying the sort of treatment he observed women endure throughout the war. He could have had Courage plead for understanding. It is unlikely that either he, or she, would have been believed by an audience predisposed to distrust the words of a woman.

While Courage embraces classic female stereotypical roles, it would be a mistake to label her as merely a stereotype. In the publication devoted solely to Courage's story, the circumstances of each situation in which she finds herself are given complex development. She is exposed to a horrendous downfall after each achievement. When viewed in so many varied circumstances--legally wedded wife, soldier, prostitute, outlaw, gypsy--Courage's plights become representative of a vast array of women's plights. In the stories narrated by Simplicius and Tearaway, however, Courage's two former lovers recollect their time with her with vengeful disgust and without a hint of sympathy. In Tearaway's self-titled narration Courage's male counterparts provide further evidence of the double standards that Grimmelshausen identifies within his culture. This disparity surfaces when, in an attempt to regain their dignity, which they believe stolen by Courage, both Simplicius and Tearaway describe her in the harshest terms. Tearaway cannot forgive her for cuckolding him, "That damn' witch!' he exclaimed. 'God rot her bones! Is the she-devil still alive? A more dissolute hag never saw the light of day!'" (*Tearaway* 38) Simplicius shares Tearaway's view but offers Christian charity, "Don't go

wishing the foolish woman more evil. As you can hear, she's close to damnation anywhere, up to her ears in the mire of sin and as good as stuck in the jaws of hell already" (54).

The less than virtuous characterization of Grimmelshausen's male characters proves further ammunition for his multi-faceted attack on the treatment of women. Following the humiliation Tearaway suffers under the hand of Courage, he marries a woman under twenty. He is at least thirty years her elder, earning his living by playing his fiddle along side her hurdy-gurdy music and drawing sympathy with his wooden leg:

And when I complained she was no longer a virgin, she said, Are you such a fool that you expect a hurdy-gurdy girl to be any different from the supposedly respectable brides of better men than you? If that's what you thought, then you're so simple it's enough to make me laugh myself silly. Didn't you realize that was why you weren't asked for a bridal gift? What could I do? Done is done. I was going to sulk for a bit, but she told me in so many words that if I intended to spurn her for such a piece of foolishness, which was only a delusion anyway, she knew of plenty of men who would not say no to her." (*Tearaway* 142)

Grimmelshausen is nothing if not thorough in his depiction of each moral depravity he cites. He identifies the evils of his time and describes them from the perspective of each participant. In such a way, he reveals the sorry plight of the illegitimate child, along with that of the unwed mother, and, in the following passage, the mindset of the philanderer, in this case, Simplicius:

In the very same hour in which my wife was delivered of her child, the maid, too, was brought to bed with hers, which as closely resembled me as my wife's was the spit and image of the farm-hand; and to complete my discomfort, that very night a lady from Griesbach delivered another child on my doorstep with a note saying that I was the father. So at one stroke I had three children in the house and quite expected others to crawl out of odd corners at any moment, to my very great distraction. But so it goes if a man indulges every passing lust and leads as wicked and godless a life as I did. (*Simpleton* 228)

Grimmelshausen's documentation of the social history of the early seventeenth century is anchored in accurately identified locations during actual events. His contemporaries would have been keen observers of any misrepresentations, having lived through the events he depicts in his fiction. Since it can be assumed that factual errors would have been easily recognizable and addressed, historians can confidently use the abundant historical content within the narratives as archives of the Thirty Years War.

Grimmelshausen's readership would not have needed a primer regarding the political alliances or geography of the war. Knowledge of the following would have been assumed: the principal contenders on the Catholic side were the Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, Ferdinand II and Ferdinand III, their Spanish cousin Philip IV, and Maximilian of Bavaria. The Protestant contingency was made up of the opponents of the Habsburgs: Christian IV, King of Denmark and Norway (who made peace with the Habsburg's in the Treaty of Luebeck in 1629), Swedish king Gustavus II, Frederick V, Louis XIII of France (though Catholic!), and the German states of Weimar and Hesse. For most participants the series of battles making up the war were as much territorial as religious. Within Germany, the Thirty Years War was, in essence, a civil war.

The commentary that follows battle records shows the manner and method of the civilians' losses. Grimmelshausen's battlefield coverage identifies massive material losses. Grimmelshausen weaves a record of the horrors of war into his subjects' personal stories:

The Duke of Bavaria parted from Bucquoy, the former marching against Budweis, the latter against Bragoditz. Budweis was wise enough to surrender in time, Bragoditz did not, and experienced the full force of the Imperial troops, who repaid the obstinacy of the city with great cruelty. (*Courage* 94)

Courage's story is used here to reference the plight of unlucky residents of pillaged cities. Grimmelshausen makes an historical record of the devastation that was a commonplace occurrence.

In the meantime we marched under Bucquoy's command into Hungary. In Pressburg, which we conquered first, we deposited most of our baggage and our best things because my captain anticipated that we would have to fight a pitched battle with Bethlen Gabor (noted in this edition: Bethlen Gabor (1580-1628), Prince of Siebenburgen⁵, an ally of the Winter King). From there we went to St. Georgen, Boesing, Modern, and other places which we plundered first and then burned down, We captured Tirnau, Alternberg, and almost the whole island of Schuett in the Danube, but at Neusohl we suffered a reverse. (103-04)

The intersection between historical realities and literary plot that occurs here is specific enough to provide a significant account of the progression of the war while simultaneously maintaining human interest. Courage's comments reveal the personal motivations of the military leadership as well as the grim circumstances of the civilians who lay in the path of war.

At that time Count Wahl, who commanded the Imperial forces in Westphalia, was mustering troops from all the garrisons for a mounted sweep through the bishopric of Munster and the surrounding country. He wanted most particularly to settle accounts with two companies of Hessian cavalry in the bishopric of Paderborn who were causing our forces much trouble. I was detailed for the sweep with our dragoons, and when a fair force had been assembled at Hamm we quickly moved off, without waiting for the remainder of the expedition, to assault these companies in their stronghold, a poorly fortified small town. (*Simpleton* 125)

Mike Mitchell's introduction to his translation of *Der Seltzame Springenfeld*, titled *Tearaway*, includes a chronology of the campaigns and battles discussed within the novel, referencing the opening quote that identifies each event, citing the year and, when possible, the exact date of each occurrence. Mitchell's guide is organized in an outline of

⁵ Siebenburgen, then in Hungary, is now Bratislava, the capitol of Slovakia.

the quotations by chapter. Mitchell adds a map showing the main regions of Tearaway's travels and one depicting the main towns and battles mentioned within the novel. The existence of the maps and timeline provided by Mitchell lends credence to the practical function of Grimmelshausen's documentation.

Grimmelshausen exposes the immoral actions of people who profit from war. He records numerous petty and serious forms of exploitation that become possible when people are desperate and anarchy prevails. Through Tearaway's confession of how he dishonestly recruits soldiers to join the army, Grimmelshausen documents such behavior for posterity and presents a robust image of the full wartime milieu that informs our historical understanding:

There were some Venetian recruiting officers there who hired me to draw the crowds with my fiddle playing and my amusing and mystifying conjuring tricks. Besides food and drink, they gave me half an imperial thaler a day, and when they saw that I was more effective than three minstrels or other decoys they might have had to lure men into their rap, they persuaded me to take money and pretend I had earned it by joining up as a soldier. The result was that through my persuasion I entangled many men, who would otherwise not have joined up, in their army⁶. (*Tearaway* 148)

Tearaway also provides insight into the nature of and differences between the various forces he joins, and in so doing, identifies conflicting philosophies of seventeenth century southern and central Europe:

This manner of waging war irritated me, so that there on Crete I felt moved to praise the Swedes' way of recognizing merit and valuing their non-noble soldiers, whether Swedish or foreign, higher than their fellow-countrymen who, though noble, did not go to war. (155)

⁶ Record of this sort of manipulative recruitment also exists in the fictional depictions of the Seven Years War in *The Poor Man of Toggenburg* written by Ulrich Braeker in 1789, 119 years after the publication of *Tearaway*.

This insight into regional peculiarities is especially valuable because it reveals the views of a member of society not likely to be voiced in other contexts. The typical war report comes from a general or some person of high status, not from a lowly musketeer.

Grimmelshausen is able to express the varied perspectives of his time because of his genre. Often, he addresses standard notions of class hierarchy. Some of which appear novel to a modern day observer, as when his Simplicius questions a man's decision to work as a physician rather than enjoy his wealth as a gentleman of leisure:

One day I asked him why he did not take the style and title of a manor he had recently bought near Paris for 20,000 crowns, and why he wanted to make doctors of his two sons and made them study so hard. Since he already had the right to a title, would it not be better if he bought them some office, as other cavaliers did, and established them at Court? "No," he replied, "if I visit a prince he says, 'Pray be seated, doctor', but a nobleman is told to wait his turn in the ante-chamber." "But are you not aware, Sir," I said, "that a doctor has three faces? First, of an angel when he arrives; then, of a god if he cures; and finally, of a devil when the patient is restored and wants to be rid of him? So a doctor's standing lasts no longer than the wind in his patient's bowels; when it is gone and the rumbling over the doctor's standing, too, has an end and he is shown the door." (*Simpleton* 159)

On another occasion, Simplicius reports that he "began to loot like a Bohemian" (108).

These statements, regarding Venetian military in Crete and Swedish military structure, doctors, and Bohemians, give both topical information about ethnic and regional stereotypes and testimony regarding the social mores and expectations of Grimmelshausen's period.

Facts in Bey's Fiction

Assessments of historical accuracy are not as easy to make in the case of Bey. Over the course of centuries, scholars have culled Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus* cycle for points of interest. Considerably less critical attention has been paid to Bey's writing. Bey writes, in 1931, about an area of the world he claims to know intimately. But, even that is not certain. He writes for a public that is largely uninformed about his subject and unlikely to reject misstatements. His characterization of the Caucasus contains such hyperbole that a twenty-first century reader can hardly take any claims of factual representation seriously. Each society Bey depicts is a fantastic oddity. His descriptions of his engagements with the people he encounters are often self-aggrandizing. Serious historians would not likely regard his self-described guidebooks as legitimate historical source.

All of these arguments against the use of Bey's novels as historical record are refutable. Bey's over-the-top depictions of people, places, and customs of the Caucasus are, most often, rooted in facts. These facts were just as likely drawn from Bey's considerable scholarship as from his personal experience. The tone of his writing suggests invention. Many of the fanciful customs and mythologies described, however, did exist, or were believed to exist (an interesting historical note within itself). It is also true that Bey's style of embellishment was in keeping with the traditional European treatment of the Caucasus. The sources Bey would have accessed were similarly guilty of overstatement and romanticization.

Bey describes his father's reverence for books and the abundance of reading available to him in childhood. It is very likely that he grew up with the traditional

melodramatic views of his childhood home that appeared in most Russian libraries during his youth:

Beginning with Pushkin's famous narrative poem of 1822, 'Prisoner of the Caucasus', Russian readers have been active consumers of the kinds of captivity narratives that were popular earlier in England, the Americas and the Ottoman Empire.
(Grant and Yalcin-Heckmann *Caucasus Paradigms* 11)

Writers had represented the Caucasus with larger than life characterizations long before Alexander Pushkin:

Roman writers claimed that scores of translators were required when traders sought to do business [in the Caucasus], while Arab geographers sometimes labeled the region the *djabal al-alsun*, the mountain of languages. According to the tenth-century Arab scholar al-Masudi, the peoples who lived there could only be numbered by Him who made them. In the 1870s the American traveler George Kennan expressed a similar view: 'The Caucasian mountaineers as a whole are made up of fragments of almost every race and people in Europe and Western Asia, from the flat-faced Mongol to the regular-featured Greek.... How such a heterogeneous collection of the taters, ends, and odd bits of humanity every blended into one coherent and consistent whole I don't know; but there they are, offering problems to ethnologists and comparative philologists which will be found very hard to resolve.' (King *The Ghost of Freedom* 8-9)

Bey must have been raised on such notions of his childhood home. Reiss' collection of Bey's family photos show young Lev Nussimbaum posed in full frontier costume. He is shown at about six, wearing an extravagant fur hat and bandolier with a riding crop in one hand (292).

In a picture from Nussimbaum's childhood taken at a Christmas party, the fluidity of cultural identity in Baku comes through. More than forty children, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish, in various sorts of traditional dress, are seen posing together to celebrate a Christian holiday. This amalgamation of custom and culture is a defining feature of the Baku that Bey describes (Reiss 292). His writing emphasizes connections between groups

created by shared interest in oil-derived wealth as well as transgressors who move between groups. Bey's writing elevates villages and families whom he describes as polymorphic. He shows respect for communities that take the customs they cherish from their background along with those that they admire from their neighbors.' One might wonder whether Bey sought and emphasized such cultural transgressions as a support of his own life choices. Twenty-first century anthropologists, however, identify the cultural diversity and fluidity Bey describes as distinctly characteristic of the Caucasus region.

To state that the Caucasus has long been known for its pluralisms is at times an understatement: for example, on the question of communication, writers have historically struggled to describe the hundreds of languages and dialects found over such compact territory ... If the "surfeit of languages" is one of the Caucasus' most famous branding elements, the romance of mountain life is never far behind.

(Grant and Yalcin-Heckmann *Caucasus Paradigms* 10)

Alongside many of Bey's justifiable claims lies a less credible element. It is impossible to know whether Bey purposefully misrepresented some of what he garnered through his studies and experience or if his partial inaccuracies were the result of limited access, insufficient research, or equally inaccurate sources. Bey's ethno-linguistic descriptions are examples of such half-truths. His description of the Abkhaz language, for example, mixes fact with fiction:

Even the Circassians cannot find an alphabet for their language. And for this very reason they give themselves terrific airs and say: 'Our language is too noble to be chained by signs.' And yet, all these tongues, the Ingush, the Tabasar, and the Avar, are not nearly as hard as the Abkhasian, which is spoken by a fairly numerous and intelligent race of people on the shores of the Black Sea. A famous German philologist of the last century, Baron Uslar, who devoted his life to the successful study of Caucasian languages, once wanted to explore this language too. He journeyed to Abkhasia, spent two years there, and said later that he--the philologist--not only had not learnt Abkhasian, but had no idea how the Abkhasians could understand one another. It is impossible to pronounce Abkhasian words,

although the individual sounds are perfectly normal one. (*Twelve Secrets* 132)

The Uslar whom Bey mentions was, in fact, a Russian army general who, in 1862 started a scientific study of the Abkhazian language. Together with Konstantin Machavariani, Uslar created an alphabet based on Russian script (Cyrillic). Uslar wrote the first full description of Abkhazian grammar, work that was translated into German shortly after (Tuite). Undoubtedly, Bey would have had the opportunity to research scholarship on the subject. One cannot help but wonder why Bey would have misrepresented Uslar's work since doing so could hardly serve any purpose except to emphasize the unique and foreign quality of the language. In defense of Bey's exaggerated writing style, Uslar's colleague Machavariani's description of the Abkhazian language is equally subjective and unscientific:

The Abkhazian language is very flexible and sonorous; it gives not only the solemn tones, but it caresses an ear with the tenderest expressions. Both terrible sounds of nature and the melody of the quiet wind puff, the streamlet purl, sorrow and joy, anger and kindness, are fully expressed in this language. (Amichba "The Abkhazian Language")

Literary representations of the Caucasus have historically gone hand in hand with romance. In the 1960s, the Khevsur village of Shatili in Georgia was deemed so picturesque that the entire population was resettled in order to allow the empty village to be used as a setting for a series of films. In his essay, "Love, Khevsur Style," Paul Manning explains:

The romance of the mountains allows Khevsureti to be a paradigmatic locus for the Georgian ethnographic imagination; mountaineer romance allows Khevsureti to become a paradigmatic locus for "traditional" love stories, particularly filmic ones. (*Caucasus Paradigms* 25)

When Reiss notes Bey's dramatic descriptions of Khevsuria he does not seem aware of Khevsuria's place in literary or film history. Reiss supports his critical analysis of Bey's

unobjective writing with correspondences between Bey and a reviewer from the *New York Herald Tribune*. After reading *Twelve Secrets*, the critic requested clarity in finding Khevsuria on a map. Bey offered the following explanation: “Khevsuria is quite near Tiflis [Tbilisi], and yet the land is free, independent, and no policeman dares to follow his victim there. A gigantic wall of rock surrounds Khevsuria and separates it from the world“ (Reiss 224). Reiss also notes that Bey published a longer article about Khevsuria in a geographical journal in which Khevsurians are described as Christians with outlandish practices that he does not seem to find believable. Reiss quotes Bey’s response to the critic:

The Khevsurs are Christian [...] but Jesus is unknown to them; they keep kosher, practice polygamy, and worship beer. Out of respect for every religion they keep the Sabbath on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, but also on Monday--“to prove the Khevsurs are different from all other people--a free people who can do as they please.” (224-25)

For Reiss, this kind of imaginative imagery is a prime example of Bey’s audacious fabrication:

This is the Orient that Lev is from: a mountainous realm insulated from political and ethnic conflict, a refuge where no secret policeman can follow and where anyone with the courage to climb down a rope into the abyss is accepted--in short, the Orient of the imagination (225)

What Reiss does not note is that Khevsureti is, while arguably not *near* Tbilisi, about 100 km. north of Tbilisi. The religious tradition of Khevsur is, in fact, a peculiar amalgamation of Georgian Orthodox Christianity and pre-Christian cults. In this instance, Bey is, again, knowledgeable, if not completely scrupulous in his attention to the facts. His scintillating approach does not necessarily amount to dishonest invention. Bey’s readers would have had little interest in dry, unprejudiced reportage. Detached,

dispassionate documentation was not the norm even in academic writing before the mid-twentieth century.

Bey's narratives expose many preconceptions found in late nineteenth and early twentieth century German society. Many of his contemporaries would have heard of the legendary Caucasian Native Mounted Division of the Imperial Russian Army known as the 'Wild Division' or 'Savage Division.' The appeal of Bey's Caucasus is in large part due to his attention to popular interests and his ability to wend his own heroic tale into the most exciting elements:

In 1918, shortly after the Russian revolution, [Bey's childhood friend] left, and became an officer in the famous "Wild Division", which then was the object of my longing, too (but I was five years younger than Memed. The "Wild Division" consisted of representatives of the best families of Azerbaijan, and was notorious for the fact that the members (officers and soldiers) not only fought in the battle with bayonets, daggers, and other weapons, but also know how to bite through the throats of their opponents by a particular trick. (*Blood and Oil* 71)

Whether or not Bey personally encountered the many shapers of history he describes, is perhaps irrelevant. The following paragraph, which serves as the background information for a story of Bey's wild exploits with Prince Alania of Kizil-Zu, shows the technique--straightforward reporting followed by storytelling--that makes Bey's writing so engaging:

As the reader probably knows, in March, 1918, twenty-six Armenian and Caucasian communists seized control in Azerbaijan after a cruel massacre. These twenty-six were members of Stalin's famous body of followers, the Transcaucasian Activists, who terrorized the whole Caucasus in the years 1917-18. Actually there were twenty-seven of them. The twenty-seventh, the Armenian Mikgan, survived by chance and later became dictator of Armenia and leader of the Cheka of the Caucasus. (103-04)

In Bey's tale of the twenty-six Stalinists he enters the story as a privileged observer, invited into the desert to view the execution of "the most intimate friends and assistants

of Stalin and Lenin” (104). Bey’s story requires his ubiquity. Bey is selling a history that is as unequivocally pro-Bey as it is anti-Communist. His expertise is tied to the moral superiority of his Caucasian cause:

For weeks we lived in Samarkand, enjoying the fairy-tale life of its three sections, till the general restlessness which kept growing in Turkestan forced us to continue our journey to Persia. Enemies advanced towards the city from all sides. Even the Emir of Bucharria and the Khan of Chiwa were not equal to them. The nomads became robbers, robbers became statesmen who did not wish to give up anything of their original nature. The desert threatened to conquer the cities; the eternal revolution in Turkestan’s history again repeated itself. Later came the Soviets, in part they were already there. The desert was subjugated by the power of the red star. But it still lives; the nomads, the Basmatschi, as they are now called, awakened by the storm of the revolution, have not yet ceased to fight against the city. **Since the Bolsheviks rule the cities, they are called anti-communists. But they are really only nomads.** (143 emphasis added)

Bey’s observation here is prescient. He notes that outsiders are often unaware of the local political precedents that make up regional alliances. In so doing, Bey predicts Cold War psychology that later defined the United States versus Soviet support of rebel factions in non-allied nations throughout the majority of the twenty-first century. Whether in Vietnam, Nicaragua, Angola, Mozambique, Iran, or Afghanistan, the U.S. and her allies and the U.S.S.R. and her allies viewed rebel factions’ anti or pro communist posturing without understanding completely unrelated conflicts that predated the Cold War.

Blood and Oil in the Orient and *Twelve Secrets of the Caucasus* were both marketed as gruesome true tales that could also serve as lively guidebooks. The books fulfilled the claims of the publisher, relating horrible histories that allege insider information. Each of Bey’s accounts is fixed in enchanting mythology:

The grave of Timur, which has been depicted a thousand times and has been included in all encyclopedias, I need not describe. As is well known, it is situated in his romantic capital, Samarkand, which owes its existence to Alexander the Great [...] Timur! The word is like the blade of a scimitar; it contains within it the legends of the slit-eyed people that came out of the desert, numerous as the gods of India, and overthrew thrones, destroyed cities, bathed in blood, and knew no other god than the tail of the horse of the steppes. Timur-Leng, the lord of his people, the grandson of Genghis Khan, was short, slit-eyed, lame, and immortal from the time of his birth. When the nomads gathered about the fire in the evening they would tell stories about him. These tales are melancholy, naïve, and saturated with blood, as is all that comes from the desert; they are the mirror of the nomad people, who see themselves in it. (*Blood and Oil* 131)

Bey sets the Uzbeki nomads' daily lives against a provocative backdrop of thrilling history and mythology. Because he uses irreverent and vividly descriptive language to tell the evocative tale of Tamerlane, readers might write off the entirety of his account of Samarkand. The bones of each of Bey's stories, however, are more likely true than not. For example, his observation of Islamic passion plays reference Shiite martyrdom dramas that continue to be customary today. Bey intentionally shocks with reports of religious practices that would have been derided by his readership:

Men in white garment walk through the streets, their bodies bleed, one wound after another is cut. The old cry: "Shah Hussein, Wai Hussein!" resounds. It is the cry of the pious for the Prophet's grandson [...] Some pierce their hands, ears, and fleshy parts of their bodies with thin steel needles or daggers, on which heavy weights are hung [...] All day long these bleeding martyrs stand in one spot, and with heavy chains scourge the few remaining parts of their bodies that are not yet pierced. (*Blood and Oil* 165)

Even the most unlikely of Bey's topics are revealed to come from truth. Of all Bey's assertions, his description of the Okochoki seems the most far-fetched. Yet, even this tall tale has authentic origins:

There are no absolutely savage tribes in the mountains, with the possible exception of one semi-mythical race know as the *Okochoki* and supposed to inhabit the jungles of the south-west Caucasus between the main range

and Svanetia. Their very existence is a matter of dispute and conjecture. The wild forest-dwellers are credited with knowing absolutely nothing of clothing, weapons, or domestic utensils, nor of articulate language (*Twelve Secrets* 133).

Bey did not make up even the Okochokia completely from whole cloth. Strange apelike creatures allegedly resembling Neanderthal man are reported to live in every part of the world, including the Caucasus Mountains, according to the numerous internet and print publications that center on the strange and unproven. Bey and his childhood friends undoubtedly told stories about such creatures, as children everywhere always have.

Bey's representation of the "Mountain Jews of the Caucasus" is an accurate, if dramatic, portrayal of the supposed origins, locations, languages, manners, and customs of the disparate Jewish communities found in the Caucasus:

The Mountain Jews are a self-contained Caucasian race, leading the life of all the Caucasian races, but not mingling with the others, and possessing a few, if not many, customs which are peculiar to themselves. At first, when one visits the villages of these Jews, one notices no departure from the manners of other communities. The houses and the dress of the inhabitants do not differ at all from those of the Caucasian villages, and even the house of God completely resembled the mountain mosque [...] Everything in the house is governed by the Old Testament. The Mountain Jew knows no other laws. During the week they carry swords and daggers, which they lay aside only on the Sabbath [...] The language spoken by these Jews is a Persian dialect. (*Twelve Secrets* 148-49)

Bey describes a Judaism that exists in a universe parallel to the Judaism of Europe-- something far away from the anti-Semitic caricatures known to his reading audience. His report is remarkably similar in places to the reference to Caucasian Jews found in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* originally published 1901-06:

The Caucasian Jews differ greatly from the European Jews. Their language, dress, education, employment, and their whole character render them almost a separate people; and they even differ greatly among themselves [...] The Georgian, Lesghian, and Ossete Jews differ as much from one another as do the countries in which they live. The Jews of

Daghestan have nothing in common with the foregoing, either in language, dress, mode of life, or moral views. They differ little from the other warlike mountain tribes among whom they dwell. They only differ from their Mohammedan and Christian neighbors in their adoption of the Tat language. They all dress in the Circassian style, and go about armed with daggers, pistols, and swords; even being armed when they go to bed or when praying in the synagogue. They are skilled horse-men. (628)

The content of Bey's coverage of the Mountain Jews of the Caucasus is supported by both early twentieth and twenty-first century sources. He writes on this topic in both *Twelve Secrets* and *Blood and Oil*, differentiating throughout between the Jewish culture known to his readers and this foreign sect:

Towards the foreign, especially the Russian Jews, the "Kipta" are inimical. [...] the "Kipta" despises the white Jew. He considers him corrupt, inferior, and of lower social rank, a feeling that finds its explanation in the Russian laws for the Jews. The free nomad does not want to recognize a Czar's Jew, without any rights, as his brother in faith. (*Blood and Oil* 83)

To what extent do Bey's depictions of the Kipta reveal his own difficulty with his Jewish identity in early nineteenth century Germany? It is an identity he attempts to deny, but which shapes his every experience. The picture of the Kipta he paints appears very similar to the figure he cut in his guise as a Muslim adventurer. A general analysis of Bey's heavy focus on the otherness of Jews in the Caucasus, as representative of Russian or German Jews' insecurity, suggests that hope for acceptance was looked for not only in assimilation but also in a cultural richness that offers an attractive contrast to anti-Semitic stereotypes.

Bey intertwines his significant scholarship with hyperbole and his vignettes are often farcical. These passages undermine his reliability but boost reader interest. Still, descriptions like the following from *Twelve Secrets* manage both to entertain and inform

because Bey uses colorful imagery to provide insight into the tone of regional governments:

The famous Caucasian health springs lie in the north of the mountains in the land of Kabardia [...] A Kabardian prince is the embodiment of all Caucasian ideals in the eyes of Caucasians, the exemplary type of all the virtues of this earth, an untouchable person who must be treated as if he were sacred [...] When they journey through the land, everyone who meets them must stop, however much of a hurry he may be in, and accompany the prince until he is dismissed with a proud gesture (so far so good). When the prince blows his nose, everybody present must do likewise, and, if he is obliged to answer the call of nature on a journey, all his companions, the whole court, indeed every person that is visible in the region, must follow his example on the highway. (174-75)

Bey writes in superlatives and continuously harkens his reader back to a fairytale history of the East: “Such incidents are still possible only in the most remote regions of the land of Zarathustra” (*Blood and Oil* 242). His memories are gripping tales of life and death as when he explains that he is unable to tell of his father’s flight from Baku:

A friend of mine who fled in a similar manner through a different border village has told the details elsewhere. As a result, that border village no longer exists today, nor do most of the inhabitants of that border region. They had to walk the path to the Cheka “because of support of the enemies of the people.” So I shall rather remain silent. (246-47)

Bey demands utter confidence in his expertise, as in the aside, “By the way, that was the only case in Islam’s history of a dervish condemned because of his belief” (161). He poses as an insider who reports the truth with the storytelling talent of Scheherazade. He boasts that his reports of legends come from his own literal translations, an unlikely reality. He is also occasionally omniscient and always privileged in his access to important people and historic events. Such serendipity is too much to be true, and makes Bey a sort of Zelig or Forrest Gump of the Russian Revolution. In *Blood and Oil*, Bey attaches his story to those of famous individuals as in his reminisces over the occasion when he was kidnapped to earn money for political radicals:

This method of raising money for election campaigns and propaganda was general among the political parties of the Orient, even if, all too often, the money which had been so raised disappeared in the pockets of the party-members. The best expert in such financial transactions was, in his time, the Georgian, Joseph Dzshugaschvili, who was then just exchanging his notorious revolutionary pseudonym 'Nischeradse' for the simple name Stalin. (67)

This amiable, kind, and wise general had a favourite son named Memed, who was a good friend of mine, and became the indirect cause of one of the worst massacres that the Orient has ever known. (70)

Bey's chance meetings with local luminaries provide record of historical events

constructed as tantalizing unveilings. These disclosures keep the reader captivated.

Contrast Bey's writing style with dry summaries found in standard history textbooks and the allure of his climactic story arc is apparent.

Bey's description of Baku in the years of his childhood is seen through the eyes of a young oil prince. When discussing the years before Baku came under Bolshevik control he focuses on the eccentricities of the wealthy. The civil war that breaks out in Baku following the Bolshevik revolution allows him to shift toward the politics of that event and reference major political actors while inferring his close proximity:

Since I had nothing to do, I regularly took part in these [revolutionary] meetings, sang the Internationale, quoted Lenin, and fought against the oil-sharks [...] a nineteen-year-old Armenian boy, who was unusually capable of rattling off startling nonsense, attracted attention. At that time he was still lean, modest, and stupid; he did not become clever and fat until later, when he, Comrade Mikoian, had become Stalin's private secretary, Minister of the Interior of the Union, and second most powerful man in Russia. (88)

Often, Bey justifies his importance by stating that he alone has access to the information he imparts. Because he is the self-proclaimed voice of authority, his word is unimpeachable.

I was in Kizil-Su on that warm winter day when the fine nose of the Prince Alania scented the twenty-six. I was the first to be notified of their arrival,

and I recall the cold night in the desert when twenty-six shots drew a bloody line under a chapter in the history of the greatest of all revolutions. As perhaps the only impartial one who remained alive. (103)

Bey reinforces his credibility by deriding others as gullible. In an ironic twist he draws attention to the phenomenon of Europeans being misled by clever performers who exploited interest in the Orient by putting on silly costumes and acting the part of the wild savage:

Kislovodsk is in fact the first town in the world to invent the genuine guaranteed wild man, a species which also found recognition in Europe later on. Today, there is scarcely a single town of moderate size in Western Europe which does not possess an Oriental night club with a wild Circassian at the door. (*Twelve Secrets* 179)

In this case, there is no question about Bey's insider perspective. His knowledge of such mimicry was absolutely first hand.

Section 3 The Use of Character Perspective to Convey Truth and Sincerity

The fiction writer has a toolbox of literary devices that is unavailable to the historian. Character nuances shed light on any given situation. When writing historical, political, or philosophical treatises, obvious prejudices draw away from the author's message. Not so, in a novel. An innocent character who is convincingly sincere is a much more credible witness than the author who openly opines. When multiple characters' voices provide evidence in support of an author's argument, that argument draws additional confirmation with each new viewpoint.

Presented as engrossing tales, neither Grimmelshausen nor Bey's serried stories need to be represented as offering only verifiable, unbiased historical statements. Despite ambiguous ties to the historical realities of their own lives, both authors make powerful arguments in favor of and (more often) against aspects of their societies. This is, in one part, due to their use of the first person to present each statement, and, in another, by the palpability with which praise and castigation can be dispensed when characters and dramatic action catch the reader's imagination. Grimmelshausen presents his opinions through the first person accounts of Simplicius, Courage, Tearaway, and, within Tearaway's tale, Philarchus. Bey contends that each of his stories is autobiographical. The historian might, at first glance, view the texts of both as intractable – what occurred and what did not? Bey's work has been described as unrepentantly spurious. But, in point of fact, the use of fictional characters allows Grimmelshausen to scrutinize murky elements of social relationships that are rarely disclosed in terse historical accounts. Bey, on the other hand, inadvertently divulges an image of what he wishes to project in the character he concocts for himself while simultaneously disclosing what his readers were

likely to expect from an author claiming first-hand knowledge of the peoples of the Caucasus.

Peter Burke writes in his *What is Cultural History (What is History?)*:

The traditional view of autobiographies as either telling the truth or lying has gradually been replaced by a more subtle approach that takes into account the conventions or rules for self-presentation in a given culture, the perception of the self in terms of certain roles (the honorable nobleman, the virtuous wife or the inspired artist) and the perception of lives in terms of certain plots (the rise from rags to riches, for instance, or the sinner's repentance or conversion). (91)

Grimmelshausen's characters are presented as many autobiographical roles. He writes almost uniformly in the first person with each of his characters engaged in a fight for his/her survival. At some point, each loses all of his/her material resources and loved ones to the war. Grimmelshausen finds new ways to present this basically, hopeless fight for survival motif with each individual story.

Grimmelshausen's Simplicius is, upon his introduction, a complete innocent. Simplicius lacks knowledge of books, religion, and the world outside the farm where he lives. He does not even know his name or that of his parents. He describes himself--as a narrator relating his past--as barely human. A guileless Simplicius describes the poverty of his early youth, the attack upon his family farm by cavalry, the lives of a hermit and a village priest, and the decadence of nobility as a blind person might describe an object. Simplicius Simplicissimus receives his name upon his first introduction to the world outside his farm as a descriptor or sobriquet. Using Simplicius as an artless observer, Grimmelshausen rebukes his society, not by telling but by showing:

By the age of ten I had mastered the rudiments of my Dad's aristocratic pursuits, but as far as learning was concerned I could barely count the fingers on my hand. Perhaps my Dad's mind dwelt above such things, like those of other noblemen of our day who can't be bothered with studies

[...] But as for my knowledge of religion, nothing will convince me that I was not unique for my age in all Christendom; for I knew neither God nor man, heaven nor hell, angel nor devil; nor yet the difference between good and evil. It is easy to see, therefore, that in this respect I lived like our first parents in Paradise, who in their innocence knew nothing of sickness, death, or resurrection. Indeed, so perfect was my ignorance that I was not even in the least aware of it. (*Simpleton* 2-3)

Simplicius is a blameless but ignoble savage of sorts. Unlike Rousseau's *Emile*, this wild child is defined by his lack of civilized behavior and religious education. But his *tabula rasa* status makes him the perfect canvas upon which to paint the images and shadow images of the war:

I found myself and my herd of sheep surrounded by a troop of heavy cavalry who had lost their way in the deep forest [...] "Aha," I thought to myself, "so here we are! There must be the four-legged rogues and thieves my Dad told me of." For I mistook horse and rider (as the American natives did the Spanish cavalry) for a single creature, and was convinced that these must be wolves. I therefore sought to frighten the terrifying centaurs and to chase them away. (6)

The barely identified narrator of *Tearaway's* life story is another young innocent, Philarchus. His existence within the book offers proof that the story of *Tearaway* has not been manipulated by *Tearaway* or the other subjects therein. Occasionally, the true meaning of each event and scene is known by the reader before Philarchus, suggesting that he could not possibly be inventing his story or manipulating his audience.

Italo Michele Battafarano's essay "Grimmelshausen's 'Autobiographies' and the Art of the Novel" in *A Companion to the Works of Grimmelshausen* focuses on the narrative perspective of the naïve shepherd boy Simplicius who only understands what he sees. Battafarano writes that this is but one of many devices Grimmelshausen employs to prove his own perspective. Battafarano identifies the relationship of perception, conviction, and knowledge to reality as a central theme in all of the *Simplicissimus* novels. Grimmelshausen develops this theme in part by using multiple characters who

each see the same event, interpret it differently, but corroborate unwittingly to fully convince the reader of his message (48-50).

Battafarano's point is easily proven. The three characters, Simplicius, Courage, and Tearaway appear in each of the three books. Events they describe in the first person are described again in the second and third person. Simplicius, for example, describes his brief acrimonious relationship with Courage in his "autobiography." Courage then describes the relationship further and tells of a trick she believes she played at Simplicius' expense. She addresses Simplicius directly:

But now, Simplicius, I must finally tell you what a sound rating I gave you. For this reason I will no longer talk to you but to the reader. You may just as well listen, however, and if you think I am lying, don't hesitate to interrupt me. (*Courage* 202)

Philarchus confirms Courage's version of this event again when he addresses Simplicius and Tearaway in the novel devoted to Tearaway's story. Only in that third and last mention of the event does Grimmelshausen reveal the full truth of it: Courage set her maid's fatherless child on Simplicius' doorstep with a note reporting his paternity, which she believed to be a false accusation that would saddle her estranged lover with the care of another man's son. From Simplicius's perspective the mother of the boy is a mystery but the boy's resemblance to Simplicius and his lovely nature bring great joy. The news, decades later, from Philarchus, relaying the identity of the child's mother, brings the mystery to a close as Simplicius is able to determine that the boy is in fact his as he had had relations with both Courage and her maid.

Just as Grimmelshausen gives some of his characters knowledge of which others are unaware, so too does he show military battles from multiple angles. The Battle of Nördlingen marks the beginning of Simplicius' story. Tearaway evades death by

“heroically” hiding among the corpses while scavenging during the same battle. Courage notes that at the time the battle took place, 1634, she was twenty-seven and had already seen a great deal of the cruelties of the world, while Simplicius was but twelve.

Grimmelshausen imagines the Battle of Höchst (1622) from a full spectrum of perspectives. He envisions the death of a nobleman in combat. Then he has the nobleman’s hapless wife seek refuge for herself and her unborn child in the midst of battle. The expectant mother dies, leaving a fortuneless child (Simplicius) who will be cared for by a peasant farmer whose view of the entire ordeal is from far outside the fray. The newborn’s uncle mourns the loss of his brother and brother’s family. But, the nobleman, Simplicius’ father, the reader later discovers, is not dead. Rather, he is the hermit who, receding from the horrors of war to practice an austere form of religious piety that Grimmelshausen promotes throughout his cycle, will, twelve years later, unknowingly take in his own son, Simplicius, and serve as his mentor and spiritual guide.

Grimmelshausen places Courage beside Tearaway in this same battle; both fight on the side of the Catholic forces. The event takes place long before their paths cross. It is because of her victorious capture of a major in this battle that Courage is raped by an entire battalion. Tearaway notes that he had only just been made a musketeer when he assisted in defeating the Duke of Brunswick during the famously bloody battle. The varied experiences of these characters in the same time and place project a multifaceted picture of the event. Grimmelshausen’s literary platform allows him to reveal many individual truths and triangulate his own message regarding the horrors and futility of war.

The people whom Bey encounters in his adventures within the Caucasus are not developed into characters per se. Like Grimmelshausen's characters, however, these individuals and groups are projections of Bey's beliefs. Bey is his own protagonist: he uses the people he claims to have encountered as representations of the visions he wishes to impart.

Grimmelshausen makes his Simplicius a fool whose naivety forms a mirror to reflect the world he encounters. Simplicius envisions his world very differently from the way in which Grimmelshausen's contemporaries/first readers would have viewed their society and their place in it. Simplicius does not enter the world he describes in stages, so he has not adapted to every element. The wide-eyed quality of his perspective does not allow the commonplace to seem normal. Bey uses short encounters with the inhabitants of mountain villages to accomplish the same goal. Bey creates characters who are not complex. They resemble cardboard cutouts, lack any suggestion of an internal life, and are comprised of familiar features that fulfill stereotypes. At times, these individuals and groups are, like Simplicius, made into fools who reveal the 'normal' world of Bey's reading audience at a skewed angle:

[Ibragim] had incidental earnings which enabled him to spend long hours in leisure and chat with me about the advantages of European culture. In spite of his profession, Ibragim was a confirmed friend of Europe, wore only European clothing, shaved daily, had European coachmen, a dwelling equipped in European style, and a European mistress, of whom he was especially proud. When I visited him, he always spoke of the "backward superstitions" and "insufficient progress" in the country, which made him extremely unhappy. By superstition and backwardness he meant very curious things indeed. For example, when it was prohibited to fire at the passers-by on the street on the occasion of any happy event--which had formerly been the custom--he wrote an outraged letter to the ministry, maintaining that this was an interference in the private affairs of citizens would never be tolerated in Europe. He also regarded punctuality as a superstition, which was superfluous in the age of machinery that took care

of everything itself. These advanced views, however, did not prevent him from considering his profession something most necessary and valuable. According to his viewpoint, he, the upholder of culture and leader of bandits, was the pillar of the oil-industry, which he protected from ruin and anarchy--and in part this was true. "In Europe such a man as I would be the pride of his fatherland!" he used to say. In his profession he was the model of excellence. (*Blood and Oil* 61)

Bey reports behaviors and beliefs that turn the known world on its head. Bey's Ibragim parodies Europeans in their condescension toward the "backward" people abroad.

Ibragim's formal occupation as robber chieftain offers a satirical take on the European's esteem for the creation of wealth and acceptance of blood money. In a funny twist, Ibragim can even be seen as a parody of German Orientalism as he is its reverse, a badly performed caricature of the European. In this way Ibragim can be seen as a representative of the love of otherness that Bey's own Caucasian persona allows him to embody.

Bey also uses his subjects' simplistic worldview as a way to parody events within Europe. Bey shows ethnic divisions that are based on misunderstood science. He writes about the Georgian's and Armenian's misguided beliefs in their own genetic supremacy at the very time that anti-Semites are promoting a German Aryan history that is equally fallacious:

The grounds of this enmity were curiously enough neither political nor economic. It was now purely and simply a matter of a questionable old stone of absolute irrelevance [...] Some scientific expedition, consisting of globe-trotters rather than scholars, had found an old inscription on a stone which no member was able to decipher [...] some of the experts thought that it was old Georgian and others identified it as old Armenian. This was quite enough to unloose a quarrel between the two races [...] I once heard a pretty Armenian girl in Kislovodsk maintaining very earnestly that she, as a representative of the oldest human civilization, was not disposed to associate with such primitive people as the Georgians [...] the usually cautious Khan of Khiva, for example, suddenly declared himself to be the oldest civilized person in the world. (*Twelve Secrets* 183-85)

In the passage above, Bey trivializes cultural conflicts in a manner that is characteristic of all of his writing. Through the tone of the narrative Bey suggests that such conflicts are infantile. He uses his subjects' puerile ambitions to reveal the petty nature of ethnic chauvinism. As the vignette continues, the Georgians and Armenians both discover, to their horror, that they are equally incorrect in their assessments of their own cultural provenance. Bey reports that an impartial scholar then finds the ancient writing to be:

Neither old Georgian nor old Armenian, but an Assyrian cuneiform to the effect that the Assyrian army had once penetrated to the innermost part of the mountains under the guidance of Armenian and Georgian slaves. (185)

Bey writes a narrative that proves to his readers that such rivalries forsake reason. He uses a tongue-in-cheek style throughout all of his writing so that puritan dogmatists and intolerant racial and gender chauvinists become objects of ridicule.

Bey's character development is essential in expressing his worldview. He indicates his opinions through his portrayal of the Caucasian people, attempting to shape his European readers' understanding of regional traditions in such areas of life as informal government structures (i.e. robber bandit warlords) and gender relations. Women who are subjugated by their fathers or husbands overcome their subordination and are viewed favorably, while the dominating men are made comical.

Reiss reports that, in Bey's personal life, he crowed over his ability to take multiple wives if he were to return to his "native land" and theatrically threatened his wife with an ornamental dagger upon occasion. This is not necessarily proof of a misogynist attitude, but perhaps a part of the act Bey felt compelled to perform. In contrast to his affectation of a hot-tempered, virile, man of the mountains, Bey married a headstrong, independent Jewish woman whose image was far from demure—Erika

Loevendahl wore pantsuits and a short, man's haircut. She was independently wealthy, well educated, and audacious. From all accounts, Bey was, before and after their divorce, infatuated with her.

In his writing, Bey boasts of the warm reception he always receives in women's company. His literary persona lives out a male fantasy and offers an attractive world of sexual freedoms to his female readers. His portrayal of his subjects shows great sensitivity toward the possible suffering of females, and describes two legal or customary methods for women to overcome adversity as a counterbalance to every misogynistic tradition.

The majority of Bey's statements on gender relations are more wishful thinking than report of facts. "Nobody weds a woman for money, for she brings no dowry to the man by marriage, and he is never allowed to touch her private property. Any woman who should hand over her personal fortune to her husband would be a universal laughingstock" (*Twelve Secrets* 63). Each village community Bey sketches carries its own astounding method of keeping the sexes separate and unequal while simultaneously promoting female autonomy and sexual license. There can be little doubt but that Bey's literary success was in part due to his titillating promises to male and female readers of sexual freedoms unheard of in Western society:

The woman, who carries the weapons, chooses her future husband herself and makes the marriage proposal. She refuses to give up to her husband the least of her rights and duties. She does not like to permit him to leave the village and go abroad, so that it is seldom that one sees an 'idler' in the cities of Azerbaijan, isolated and reserved, they live in their settlements in the dark chasms near Sakataly. (*Blood and Oil* 41)

Nothing is easier than to be divorced in the canyon of the Jassaians [...] the law of the fathers says: "It is a sin to live with a man of whom one has become weary." (ibid)

It is customary for widows and women who have been forsaken by their husbands to lie down on the thresholds of their houses in the evening, with their eyes bandaged, and there to await the passers-by, to whom they are allowed to give themselves between the hours of two and three at night. (*Twelve Secrets* 108-09)

Throughout these passages Bey designs the Caucasus of his fantasies. The men and women he brings into being are visions of what could be. Their attitudes are his. The qualities they display that displease him are made to look ridiculous, so that he can lead the reader to agree with his view of what makes sense and what does not in the early nineteen thirties.

When viewed as author surrogates, the characters developed by Grimmelshausen and Bey can be seen to express the personal beliefs of the authors. Though not always realistic, these characters reveal a spectrum of responses to the conflicts of their time and place and the perceptions of these conflicts' geneses. Grimmelshausen's and Bey's characters are vehicles for the authors' social commentary. As popular writers covering topical issues, both authors reveal what is of primary concern to themselves and to their readership. Each character or subject group opens a window into what the author believes exists in his world (such as Grimmelshausen's mistreated women) and what should exist in the world but does not (such as Bey's free and tolerant Caucasian people). Such layered cultural references are possible due to the individual agency of each character. The many voices Grimmelshausen and Bey manipulate in their narratives, which present varying and contradictory points of view, mean that these novels offer record of their *zeitgeist* with more nuance and, therefore, insight than any single voice could possibly deliver.

Literary critics of all eras are in agreement that Grimmelshausen's texts are openly satirical, from his characters' names to their exaggerated behaviors. Grimmelshausen spreads raucous humor throughout his preaching. His characters speak lightheartedly about the most serious topics. Like his English contemporary, John Dryden, Grimmelshausen points deliberately toward a moral model while maintaining an airy tone through the use of witty narrative banter.

Many of Bey's characters are farcical figures too, but if his texts are works of satire they are veiled behind Bey's insistence that his voice is sincere and it is the nature of his subjects to appear outlandish. Their violence never results in the change they sought. Vindictive characters, like the Armenian and Georgian rivals discussed earlier, are seen as fools. Their stories are a demonstration of what one becomes when overcome by feelings of hostility.

Dustin Griffen writes in *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction* that satire is not meant to attack an adversary or idea but "to unsettle its readers, conduct an inquiry, or explore a paradox" (120). That is a fair analysis of both Grimmelshausen and Bey's texts. Their characters encounter a world gone mad where absurdities are the norm. They inhabit a time and place where anything can happen, one completely different from the mundane world of their readers and, therefore, inoffensive and entertaining. And yet there is a grave purpose to the authors' calling them into being. Grimmelshausen's characters' fantastic and terrible encounters set up arguments concerning injustice. Their lives give haunting insight into the social woes Grimmelshausen writes to condemn. Bey's characters parody what Bey finds most wrong in the world—ideological tyranny,

intolerance, and violence. Like *Doctor Strangelove*, Bey's ruthless aggressors are slow-witted, hot tempered and laughable, even as they threaten destruction.

Section 4 Grimmelshausen's and Bey's Focus on the Absurd, Fantastic, and Foreign

Due to the roguish quality of Grimmelshausen and Bey's writing, their texts read like sheer escapism. Even their most alarming and gruesome subjects seem comical. A lighthearted tone shapes readers' reception of the information imparted so that grotesquely evokative messages become less shocking. The distance created by the authors' storytelling techniques results in tragic scenes becoming tolerable and turns lists of places and events into enchanting anecdotes of wildly imaginative adventures. Moreover, their use of fictional prose narratives allows for modulation of the pace and force of their message presentation.

When the authors use playful language to dress and present their thoughts with nuanced delivery, the modern day reader can assess which issues were skirted due to sensitivities common to the authors' eras. Grimmelshausen uses biting satire to diffuse his moralistic proselytizing. His witty parodies of his contemporaries' lives tell the modern day historian something regarding the realities he witnessed **and** the strategic contrivances necessary in making spirited critical statements regarding his peers and superiors. Bey buries many of his author's statements in a fairytale tied to each new village. His melodramatic expression and blithely overt cultural bigotry tell more about prevalent European thought regarding Muslims or simply non-Europeans than about the subjects of his texts. The components of Grimmelshausen's and Bey's writing that are most dissimilar from standard historical documents, and yet quite historically useful, are the elements of the absurd and fantastic and the emphasis on the outlandishly foreign within their texts.

Grimmelshausen approaches none of his subjects head-on. His use of figurative language to describe the most mundane objects and events promotes lighthearted double entendres as it disguises social criticism with humor, as seen in the following account of Simplicius's boyhood home:

To make a proper show of his wealth and nobility my Dad had the walls around the castle built--not, as great lords do, of stones which you find lying by the wayside or dig out of the earth in barren places, much less of miserable bricks which you can make and bake in no time at all--but of oak, that useful and noble tree which takes a hundred years to grow to maturity. What monarch would have done the same? My Dad had his halls, rooms, and chambers thoroughly blackened with smoke, and for this reason only: that it is the most durable colour on earth and takes longer to reach true perfection than an artist devotes to his greatest masterpiece. His tapestries were of the most delicate weave in the world, made for him by spiders. In lieu of pages, footman, and grooms he had sheep, goats, and pigs, all neatly clad in their native liveries, who waited upon me often in the pasture until, weary of their company, I drove them home. His armoury was well stocked with ploughs, mattocks, axes, spades, and pitchforks, and with these weapons he exercised himself daily. (*Simpleton* 2)

Grimmelshausen introduces Simplicius' father and the family's humble rural existence via counterpoint. The events, people, and places described are written as a reflection of what they are not. Through such well-tuned oppositions, Grimmelshausen's crass descriptions of intense human suffering do not appear pedantic or bitter:

[The troopers ransack] even the privy, as though they thought the Golden Fleece might be hidden there [...] Others again smashed stoves and windows as if to herald an everlasting summer [...] Our maid, for shame, was so man-handled in the stable that she lay there like dead. Our man they threw bound to the earth, thrust a wedge between his teeth, and poured a bucket of liquid dung down his throat. They called it Swedish Punch, but he did not seem to like it all, pulling the oddest of faces [...] each had his own device for torturing the peasants, and each peasant received his individual torture. My Dad was of all of them the luckiest--as I then thought--for he confessed laughingly what was extracted from others with torment and pitiful moans [...] They put him near a fire, bound him so that he could move neither hand nor foot, rubbed the sole of his feet with damp salt, and then made our old goat lick it off, tickling him till

he well-nigh split his sides with laughter [...] to keep him company or because I knew no better, I joined in his merriment with all my heart. (8-9)

Grimmelshausen's stark understatements lampoon violent realities. The effect is to turn events on an angle to reveal their intrinsic absurdity. Grimmelshausen emphasizes the striking dichotomies found in times of war. The cruelties of war, for example, appear aberrant and unnecessary when placed in stark contrast to the uninterrupted natural world of the forest: "I therefore hid in a thicket from which I could hear both the shrieks of tortured peasants and the singing of nightingales" (10). As he often does, Grimmelshausen juxtaposes a visceral description of war's agony with a symbol of peace. In this case the birds continue singing as they always do, above the fray.⁷ Grimmelshausen does not emphasize whether one side or the other is the source of violence. Nor are the victims of one side identified as morally superior or inferior to the victims of the other. The violence is antithetical to nature and its purpose irrelevant. His message transcends the sometimes religious, but overwhelmingly political dispute that spurs on the generals conducting these troopers.

Magic plays a role in a number of Grimmelshausen's stories. Throughout most of his work, however, Grimmelshausen makes clear statements regarding the dishonesty of those who would claim their own or others' supernatural abilities. He exposes accusations of witchcraft as spiteful defamation. Simplicius, Courage, and Tearaway all confess their many cunning deceits performed in the guise of witchcraft as mere chicanery—i.e. Simplicius' roadside apothecary swindles and Courage's bogus man-

⁷ Allusions to pure and unscathed nature, such as this, can be seen as a metaphor for the separation from society that Grimmelshausen requires of his characters (such as Simplicius' hermit-father and Simplicius, himself) if they are to find moral rectitude.

eating calf. While most mentions of magic are actually descriptions of a hoax or misunderstanding, at the close of *Tearaway*, the soldier/beggar and his deceitful wife discover a magical bird's nest that makes anyone holding it invisible (an object to which Grimmelshausen dedicates an entire novel within the *Simplicissimus* cycle that is not discussed here).

Grimmelshausen makes no excuses and provides no explanation for the incongruence in introducing the magic bird's nest into a series of novels that consistently promotes skepticism. The inclusion of this plot device serves at least one obvious purpose for Grimmelshausen. The nest injects a charming amusement into a story that is, otherwise, notably more serious. The focus of this book is largely upon war reportage and the poor soldier Tearaway's meager existence, rather than the tumultuous and arresting life stories of Simplicius and Courage. Grimmelshausen introduces the bird's nest after chapters of detailed factual recount, just at the point at which a reader might begin to lose interest.⁸

Aylett cites the use of the bird's nest as part of a narrative shift at the end of the *Simplicissimus* cycle towards a less didactic, more conventional tone:

This shift at the end of the cycle is sudden and extreme in all respects, and given that it cannot be explained by a sudden artistic degeneration in the author, can best be seen as Grimmelshausen's calculated pandering to established literary taste and theory, having perhaps allowed himself too much license in the earlier section of the work, and also having advocated a religious and secular philosophy likely to cause unease, if not offence, in several quarters at once. The alternating, shifting structure of the cycle would seem to reflect the attitude of an author acutely aware of a possible

⁸ Like the best selling historian who frames his subject around its most appealing aspect, (i.e. Gavin Menzies's *1434: The Year China Discovered America* which covers the most controversial and, therefore, intriguing research regarding the Imperial fleet of the Song Dynasty), Grimmelshausen plays to his audience.

conflict between his won convictions and 'the acceptable', and aware also of the danger of his work being misunderstood. (241)

By dressing his message in whimsy, Grimmelshausen avoids criticism that a philosophical, political, or religious treatise would necessitate. Aylett, too, identifies literary device as a mechanism that allows Grimmelshausen to make his fictional accounts more honest than he could have managed in a direct discourse.

Grimmelshausen's emphasis upon the exotic lifestyle of the band of gypsies that Courage joins when conventional society has nothing left to offer her is another method of turning his own society at an oblique angle for closer viewing. The narrator of 'Tearaway' measures the happiness of the members of Courage's gypsy caravan as far greater than that of mainstream society where concerns often outnumber pleasures:

These people have no time for sadness, worries or care; they remind me of pine martens and foxes, which live in freedom, with no thought for the morrow, but which are cautious and cunning enough to slip into cover when danger threatens and can just as quickly take to their heels when it suits them. (*Tearaway* 49)

You'll soon realize what advantages our way of life has over other people's, especially when you see that none of our children would leave us, even if the greatest of princes were to offer to take them and make them a lord. These princely favours, which other servile people so fervently desire, are as nothing to them. (50)

Grimmelshausen idealizes the otherness of Courage's found family. He builds easily upon common, almost ancient beliefs regarding gypsy communities. The gypsy caravan is a classically paradigmatic representation of the social outsider. They are free and wild, their lifestyle should be both envied and despised. Grimmelshausen is part of a long tradition of writers who equate the life of the gypsy, and, in particular, the gypsy woman, with irascible passion, a lack of conscience and an indomitable desire for freedom:

For the commedia woman, whether the actress, or the character, often living at the margins of society, the female Gypsy offers both an image

that she can identify with, an image that may bring her comfort, and a sense of solidarity in suffering, or an image that she may dream to become, in terms of its associations with freedom. For the male artist or character, on the other hand, the female Gypsy has often been an object of desire, an object of the gaze, a sexual object to possess. Buzet's celebrated Carmen and Hugo's mesmerizing Esmeralda are there to prove it. A look at this vertigo of theatrical representation from the point of view of the female experience and creativity, urges us to be mindful not only of how we look at a Gypsy woman, but also of who is looking at a Gypsy woman. (Glajar 210)

Courage enters into the gypsy caravan as her destination of last resort. Her fantastic story closes with an almost predictable conclusion—a woman too strong for society can choose between being branded as a witch or living as a maligned outsider. Either way, there is no life available to her in mainstream civilization.

Grimmelshausen's treatment of Courage's gypsy horde is very similar to the way that Bey romanticizes and typecasts the people he discovers at each destination on his sojourn. Like Grimmelshausen's gypsies, Bey's wild Caucasian peoples live outside of the normal society of the reader. Bey creates a distance between his subjects and readers with each description of an odd tradition or belief. These points of contrast between European and Caucasian peoples are interesting historical cues within themselves. Whatever their imperfections as reference books, these texts function effectively as accessible guides to prevailing patterns of popular European ethnographic and anthropologic thought. Dramatic renderings of unimaginable beauty and everyday barbarity yield valuable information regarding the common perceptions Bey's European contemporaries had of his subject area. Like Grimmelshausen's gypsies, Bey describes the occupants of his Arabia as otherworldly, noble savages:

The caravan leader, the 'Chalwadar', is really the ruler of the desert; he knows all its secrets, knows its moods, feels safer in the ocean of sand than the European within his four walls, and can be replaced by nothing,

not even an aeroplane. This 'desert expert' is to be compared with no man; even among the nomads he occupies a special position and is prepared for his profession from early childhood. In my eyes the Chalwadar is hardly human; he possesses more animal than human characteristics. His profession is the peak of human specialization in the sense that, in the course of generations, he has probably replaced several attributes of man with qualities pertaining to animals. (*Blood and Oil* 116)

The nomads are wild, diligent, poor, and live in the constant hope of becoming settled some time or other; and if they do not succeed in that, at least of destroying all the cities and villages in the world. The nomad's hatred for the city is rooted mainly in the envy aroused in him by the city dwellers [...] Strange to say, the nomad is conscious of his inevitable inferiority, sometimes even too conscious of it, which leads to passivity. He simply does not consider himself capable of escaping the spells of habits thousands of years old. He is ashamed of some customs because he, too, feels they are barbaric, but does not know how to change. (121)

Bey describes one individual after another as different from all other men in the world.

Each village he visits holds traditions that are unique and unfamiliar and his sketches of landscapes depict each as completely foreign:

The hills looked grey, aloof, and threatening. Here still the wild boar and the leopard dwell; here immemorial ruins fall into decay, while the wild Lesghians sit at the doorways of their houses and shoot into the air when strangers venture near, by way of threat or welcome, as the case may be. (*Twelve Secrets* 15)

These extremes ensure that whatever stories Bey might tell regarding these strange people in this strange land, it is unlikely that his contemporaneous readers would accuse him of making serious statements critical of their culture. The many voices and many traditions Bey uses reinforce his subtle call for peace. No matter how outlandish the social mores Bey uncovers, they are always harmless, their practitioners are always reported to be "good hearted".

Bey's burlesque accounts of histrionic vengeance and cartoonlike violence are reminiscent of contemporaneous tales of the Wild West focused on the American

cowboy. Writing exaggerated depictions, Bey infantilizes his subjects and makes them more innocuous--as when an enraged but powerless Khan commissions the painting of a scene in which he is able to gain a bloody victory over his adversary: "Under the picture this inscription could be read: 'The conquest of Sweden by the troops of the mighty, invincible guardian of the faith, Feth-Ali-Khan. His Highness beheads the crafty King of Sweden'" (*Blood and Oil* 48).

Bey deflects the tragic results of real violence with a deliberately dismissive tone. When describing an experience in which an Armenian band kidnapped him with the hope of attaining a rich ransom, he presents his dilemma with jaunty humor that suggests he had never faced any actual danger:

Left alone, I still could not grasp the meaning of all that had happened. I approached the door and--since I had no idea who had really arrested me--began to swear loudly in Azerbaijani, Armenian, Persian, Georgian, and Russian. My stock of Asiatic curses exhausted, I switched to the European dialects, without materially improving my situation. (64)

A theme of Bey's writing is his own invincibility. He presents himself as a wise, bemused adult who patiently tolerates the childlike impulses of those he encounters:

It happened at the border of the provinces Mazendaran and Giljan [...] a Persian rider [...] said [...] the Khan-Djafar has reflected about your arrival and thinks it right to have you killed; he sent me to inform you of this decision' [...] We heard this pleasant news with surprise. (175)

Bey's many close-encounters with violence are unrealistic. However, whether compared to writers describing the peoples of the Caucasus in the twenty-first century or writers from his own era, Bey projects a view of ribald aggression that is concordant with widespread popular belief:

So much attention has been given to violence in the Caucasus that many readers have had to ask whether the region was ever anything more than a site of endless jihad. Colonial documentary histories long showcased the

resistance of Caucasus peoples to their would-be overseers, and this has been no less so today in the careful scrutiny of ethnic and military conflicts across the region. The result makes the entire Caucasus somehow emblematic of “natural belligerence.” (Grant and Yalcin-Heckmann 12)

Bey draws the same separations between early twentieth-century Christian Europe and his literary subjects⁹ that have shaped the collective conscience of the former for centuries. In his *Islamic Historiography*, Chase F. Robinson quotes the prescient American, world historian Marshall Hodgson, in saying that, “accuracy as to ‘fact’ was much less important [in Islamic histories] than validity as to life-vision” (153). Bey is, in no way, an “Islamic historian”--no matter what his book jacket or journalistic title purported. He is an adventure writer. If Bey’s writing, however, lends itself to being used as an historical source, it is due to his ability to create a life-vision, not of the people he portends to recall but rather of the East-West divide that shaped early twentieth century perspectives. He carefully builds this rift into his writing. With his cavalier accounts of one wild exploit after another, Bey plays to his readers’ preconceptions and interests, all the while reiterating the claim that he, Muslim of the mountains, is not average, and not like them:

“Hast though already slain unbelievers?” “No, not yet,” I answered ashamed. The Sheik shook his head reproachfully, recited a warlike Arabic verse, and ended up with: “When I was as old as though art, I had already killed two unbelievers and a blood enemy. It seems to me that the children of today develop very slowly.” (*Twelve Secrets* 31)

This melodramatic and clichéd scene could have come directly from a Rudolph Valentino movie or from the stage, as a number of theatrical performances played throughout the

⁹ Though Bey uses all of them, neither ‘Asiatic,’ ‘Oriental,’ or ‘Islamic’ work as descriptors for Bey’s subjects, as the Caucasus geographically connect Europe and Asia and the religious diversity is a defining factor of the vast region.

nineteen twenties and thirties in Berlin and Vienna alleged to bring to life the danger and the passion of the Mohammedan.

Bey's more absurd scenes are, while entertaining, condescending representations of the cultures with which Bey claims intimacy. He ridicules them with over-the-top depictions of an unsophisticated economy:

The forged notes were printed in Persia, and could not be distinguished from the genuine statement with the help of which one could distinguish the true banknotes from the false ones without further difficulty. The decree stated: 'Dampen the suspected note with water. If the colour does not fade the banknote is forged.' The genuine banknote lost its hue immediately upon contact with any sort of liquid [...] [other] notes had the following text: 'I, the thief Iwan, have forged this three-rouble note to buy myself vodka and sausage.'" (*Blood and Oil* 100)

Bey makes his subjects preposterous and unreal, but also insists that each of his recollections is a valid and accurate depiction of the event he describes:

This happened in 1908, but could occur today just as well. Only religion makes the Shiite a man of deeds, and the way this Shiah reigns over humanity is illustrated by the example of the Egyptian Shiitic Calif Al-Hakim, who cursed the sunlight in his grief at the assassination of the Prophet's grandchild. Upon his command no Egyptian was to see the sunlight. When the sun rose they had to hide in their houses, sleep, and not work. Not until evening was life to begin. The bazaars and government offices were opened in the evening; the farmer, the merchant, and the caliph worked at night. (158)

The notion of Islamic life (and Christian, when discussing the Georgians or Armenians) as something 'upside-down, topsy-turvy, a world gone mad' is recurrent. This fits what is known of Bey's own persona. Like a bombastic emir from one of his own stories, Bey played a theatrical role when in the public eye. Reiss's review of the nineteen thirties German press that covered Bey suggests that he projected an, unsurprisingly, histrionic temperament, reportedly shouting at a journalist, "I am a Mohammedan, a monarchist, and an Oriental!" (275).

Bey compares many of the traditions he observes or projects upon the people of the Caucasus to aspects of German life. These analogies serve as reflected images of Bey's readers' culture, most flattering, some teasing. His references to German people and practices are consistent throughout almost every vignette. Bey's emblematic style fits a pattern that more or less states, "Once upon a time, I was far, far, away, in a wonderfully, terribly, wild land, and then I saw something/someone reminiscent of you, gentle reader":

I found one amusement in Kizil-Su that the revolution did not destroy: the buck-fights which took place every week on Friday in the square in front of the government building. In Europe bull-fights are known, in North Africa cock-fights, in India one is acquainted with the elephant-fights at the courts of the maharajas. In Turkestan there are no elephants, cocks are expensive, and the bulls are weakly; therefore buck-fights [rams] have been customary for thousands of years, in the absence of other amusements. In Turkestan the ram is fat, stupid and above all cowardly; he has long, bent horns, which serve solely as ornament [...] The rams run around in a circle, and each persistently avoids his opponent ... Often red-hot iron spikes must be brought [...] one of the animals usually struggles through the crowd and, fleeing, leaves the field of honour [...] Years later I saw prize-fights in the *Sportpalast* in Berlin. Involuntarily I thought of the fights at the Caspian Sea. (*Blood and Oil* 101-02)

Bey not only admits the fantastic nature of his anecdotes, but revels in their unlikelihood while simultaneously asserting that these wild events are, against all odds, true. His soon familiar pattern of expression includes a declaration that truth is stranger than fiction: "This story, which seems like a fairy tale, actually happened not so very long ago, and serves as an example of the Oriental art of government" (169). The art of government Bey outlines is characteristically corrupt and chaotic. What is Bey's objective in trivializing the people he wishes to represent if not to make himself and his subject appear exotic while pandering to the ego of his parochial European reader? He describes the people of Persia (Iran) as delightfully degenerate:

The office of robber can be inherited or attained through personal merits. If robbers kept an ordered household, on the door would be written: 'Robber X. Y. Office hours from four to six and after prayers' (for the robbers are very pious) And their mail might have to be addressed: 'To Robber G., Garden-house next to the large mosque, Teheran, Persia.' (167)

Most of Bey's stories have enough truth within them to make them believable to at least his contemporary audience. He peppers the unbelievable with familiar and expected examples of credible behavior. Alternately, he presents incontestably authentic cultural practices with an emphasis upon the unlikely that makes the entire account seem fabricated. Bey expounds on the importance of poetry within Islamic culture with his characteristic superlatives but without any glaring inaccuracies:

I have read poems that offered one meaning when read from left to right, another from top to bottom, and a third from bottom to top, and they delighted the Azerbaijanian shepherd in the same way as the Persian Shah. There are poets who have sworn never to use certain letters, and others who find their pleasure in forming the most surprising metaphors from uncommon conceptions [...] Finally, the poet must understand the secret writing of poetry, a highly complicated art, which conceals certain ideas behind certain numbers, verses behind conceptions, and behind the verses a secret meaning comprehensible only to the initiated [...] Even the poorest peasant will pay for a good poem with a fat sheep or a donkey. What I have said is true, not only of Azerbaijan, but of the whole Islamic Orient. (*Blood and Oil* 238)

Predictably, Bey follows this testimony of a favorable foreign trait with an inspired story of sheer fantasy:

I have witnessed only one poetry contest, and that one became a sensation. It was won by a sixteen-year-old, nameless beggar-girl, who sang her love-songs dedicated to the moon, and with these carried off the victory. Nevertheless, she renounced all honours, because, as she said, she was in love with the moon and composed poems and lived for it alone [...] died because she married its earthly image in the water. (238-42)

Bey writes with a message that the European does not know everything. There is a promise of something else, something freer, far from the difficult and complex modern

lives of his German readers. Bey is like a huckster selling snake oil. He conjures powerful messages of medical miracles known only to the initiated¹⁰:

The native hakims, whose skills must not be underestimated, combat the numerous dangerous diseases of the country. Their ability is really great, especially in the treatment of the illnesses that occur only in Turkestan. Many a European physician studies under them when he wishes to settle in the country. These hakims, who are not to be confused with the ordinary magician, are among the most interesting people in the Orient. Almost illiterate, they are irreplaceable in all questions of medicine, especially in the treatment of diseases peculiar to the desert; for example, in curing pindinka, the scourge of Turkestan [...] With the most primitive instruments they perform complicated operations, whose fortunate outcome no doubt is due partly to the Oriental's enormous power of resistance. The preparation of the hakim is essentially different from that of the European physician. It is medieval. He visits no anatomical institute, dissects no corpses; instead he studies much theology, literary history, logic, and grammar. (128)

Again, Bey belittles his subject. He states first that the hakim is barely literate, then that the Unani medicinal practitioners study a range of classic subjects that would require a high degree of sophistication.

It becomes impossible to decipher whether Bey wraps his remembered and academically accrued anthropological knowledge in fantasy for his own pleasure or for that of his reader. When summarizing some of the “common medical practices” of which he purports to have knowledge, one can imagine Bey hosting a party in Berlin or Vienna with a parlor game themed, “the silliest prescription wins”:

[The Caucasian doctor must often treat] croup, which occurs frequently among women and children. The cure for this is simple. Two threads are drawn across the bed of the sick person and burnt; the ashes are thrown into water with which the soles of the patient's feet are then painted. At the same time, a cup of boiling water must be stood at the head of the invalid and red-hot iron thrown into it three times in succession. Then the patient is cured. Diseases of the mind are more difficult to deal with. If

¹⁰ Incidentally, this is the very sort of trickery that Grimmelshausen warns about in *Tearaway*.

water with prayers dipped in it has no effect, musicians must be hired to play Caucasian dances for a whole week without stopping, and to these the patient must dance. If that is no use, the illness is incurable. Diseases of the eyes are more complicated still. To cure them the doctor must have seven irreproachable virgins. (*Twelve Secrets* 197)

Bey's explanation of Caucasian medical practices is written to be dizzying. The simple cure is comically complex, while the treatment of mental disorders that Bey characterizes as "more difficult" is absurdly simplistic. It is also characteristic of Bey's writing that an ostensibly clinical account of a tradition becomes an erotic practice, typically one that Bey will be compelled to endure as a matter of etiquette.

Bey did not invent the sexually evocative Islam of male fantasy. Before images of subjugated women in full hijab dominated stereotyped views of Muslim women, the sensual woman of the east loomed large in the Western imagination. Bey hides titillating accounts of his mildly sexual encounters behind the presumption that he is only reporting the facts. He, rather unconvincingly, decries his subjection to customs that, without his scholarly status, would have been judged as subjects too perverse for publication:

A veiled figure of a woman appeared in broad, coloured trousers, with a child on her back. She stepped towards us in her gold-embroidered slippers, followed by a few armed men. "Assya," she cried, "Assya," and for the first time I heard the name which my wet nurse had given me as I lay at her breast. The woman then said something in the Lesghian tongue, and the guard turned away so as not to see her face, from which she now removed her veil. Only the eunuch and I were allowed to see her dark features with their great wild eyes. As she inclined herself before me, I expected a kiss, but instead of that my foster-mother began to smell me, lifting up my arms and smelling under them, and all around my breast and mouth. Finally she did kiss me and said contentedly: "Almost hast thou the smell of a man; it is good." Then she sat down upon the ground and, bidding me sit by her, she continued: "Assya-my son- they say that thou art ill. But I say unto thee that thou art not ill, thou art but hungry. I claimed thy hunger when thou didst lie in the cradle, and I will do it again now." And suddenly she bared her body to the waist, leant over towards me, and presented one of her breasts to my mouth [...] "Drink" said [the eunuch], "it is thus that people greet each other in the mountains." So I set

to bravely and drank for the last time from the breast of my nurse. (*Twelve Secrets* 17)

Bey's German readers would have purchased his adventure books with the expectation of outrageous libertine behaviors, it was promised on the cover! Their sensibilities are protected, however, by Bey's status as "expert" and the modesty he expresses as he "bravely" participates.

In a similarly blasé description of a scene that would have been shocking to his readers, Bey describes a gruesome cock fight in Turkestan in which the prize at stake is "a handsome eight-year-old Persian boy for whose favour the two honourable merchants were contesting." Bey appears to try to allay his readers' qualms about this report of pedophilia by stating that "The boy himself had declared that he felt equally attracted to each of the merchants" (*Blood and Oil* 135). The Persian boy's otherness existed in the minds of Bey's readers before they began to read his accounts and is encouraged through his treatment of each of his subjects as he places them in outrageous circumstances and striking settings. Framing his subjects as foreign allows Bey to dehumanize them. Readers might accept the assertion that an eight year old could consent to a sexual relationship when the eight year old is kept in the context of Bey's other many tales of unusual and unrestrained sexual customs¹¹.

A literary interpretation of Bey's more sordid subject material would include the axiomatic 'sex sells.' An historical interpretation must consider the reason why Bey makes his subjects so strange. If Bey shed his own Jewish identity in order to create for himself a treasured place in German society, then why choose **this** persona? Why create

this absurd, fantastic, and foreign culture? One answer might be that Bey's Europe was more comfortable with his outlandish role than with a wealthy, Jewish, oil baron's son who had been expelled from a source of income that might have brought a surge of hateful jealousy.

Although Bey represents his personal history and his adopted people as absurd, fantastic, and foreign, he also ensures that he and they are regarded as harmless and lovable:

Thus the peoples of the desert of the black sand live, thus they have lived for thousands of years. They complain of their poverty, breed their sheep, sell their girls; and if they have the opportunity to slay a stranger who comes uncalled for and without recommendation in the same manner as they kill their sheep--they cut open the belly, put in the hand, and so forth--they are happy. **On the whole, however, they are kind-hearted.** (125 emphasis added)

Bey's testimony insists upon his readers' good humor regarding those he has portrayed as *Other*. In so doing, Bey works to manipulate his contemporaries' mood toward those he claims to identify with, suggesting that the correct response to what is not understood is tolerant bemusement.

¹¹ The many ways in which Bey builds upon non-European "otherness" is a topic worth further consideration, but, unfortunately, is too large to fit into this paper.

Section 5 Grimmelshausen and Bey's Historical Consciousness

Jason Jones' examination of "Historical Consciousness in Victorian Literature"¹² references the argument made by Friedrich Nietzsche and, later, Michel Foucault that fiction provides an honest historical reference because the narrative therein poses only as interpretation and does not presume to be a discovery of causation (8). Jones writes that "the historical novel awakens its readers to movements of history" and that "people write obsessively about what they cannot find in the world" (16). Both statements aptly describe Grimmelshausen and Bey's efforts to convey messages regarding the futility of war and the natural outcomes of intolerance. As witnesses to the violence of their times, Grimmelshausen and Bey encapsulate their messages in narrative that proves, rather than tells, their messages, and provides a vision that includes what could and should exist.

Grimmelshausen's characters state that their stories are unvarnished truth. While these characters are fictional, their fictional lives encompass the reality Grimmelshausen wishes to impart as an historic truth. Grimmelshausen provides numerous verifications of each character's claims through the concurring testimonies of other characters. Bey interjects into each of his vignettes an assertion of that story's veracity, despite his obvious fabrications. Claims of veracity made by fiction writers involve a tacit understanding between author and reader that the events described are too fantastic or numerous or instructive to have occurred as claimed within the text. There is also a

¹² In reading Jones' analysis of the historical consciousness within texts by Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, Charlotte Bronte, and George Eliot, I found that many of Jones' insights also apply to the texts by Grimmelshausen and Bey, suggesting a continuity in literary purpose and outcome outside of classification by period.

promise of entertainment that is both unnecessary and, to a certain extent, unseemly in an account written strictly for the objective of recordkeeping¹³.

There is, however, a sincere wish by these fiction authors to persuade their reader beyond the moment spent engrossed in reading. Both consciously adapted their historical record to fit the form of a novel and used the genre to convey their own idea of what should be remembered about the events they chronicled. Grimmelshausen avows the aesthetic life devoted to god, but separate from the hypocrisies found in many religious institutions. Bey uses his “autobiographical” evidence to promote tolerance and to scorn violent efforts for change¹⁴.

If one takes at face value Grimmelshausen’s assertions that his purpose for writing is to provide moral instruction and Bey’s promises of disclosing insider information, there are still questions regarding how much of their many messages the authors were conscious of communicating to future readers. Grimmelshausen and Bey could not have been aware of the degree to which their work would inform their readers’

¹³ Glen W. Bowerstock discusses two Greek writers, Celsus and Lucian, who (like Grimmelshausen and Bey), “chose to signal the issue of truth” by referring to their work as “True Stories” while writing imaginative works of fiction. Both authors are shown to have consciously considered the idea that such a thing as unvarnished truth might exist and that their work did not fit the description. Bowerstock reports that Lucian claimed not to have had any truly interesting experiences about which he could write and once declared, “that the only true statement in his work is that he is a liar, and he knows perfectly well that this means that the reader has no basis for believing that statement either“ (5).

¹⁴ Bowerstock’s reference to the philosophical writer Sextus Empiricus is also prescient in a discussion of Grimmelshausen and Bey’s historical usefulness, “History, [Sextus says] is the presentation of truths and of what actually happened [but also] of happenings that did not happen but resemble things that have happened”(10). I would venture to add that history is also what did not happen and could not have happened but is said by the author to have happened.

historical understanding. Generally, all writing, when examined closely, will be found to contain elements of unintentional self-disclosure. While an author of fiction or non-fiction may be aware of transmitting statements through the nature of his/her choices of topics, that author can not possibly remove him/herself so fully from his/her time, place, and social position to fathom all that can be derived by assessing such aspects as self-censorship or method of delivery. For example, descriptive writing meant to create a contemporary *mise en scène* effect can present, for the historian, a replica of the actual conditions and circumstances in which the author lives. Rooted in his *scène*, the author does not have the analytic distance that occurs with the passing of centuries. For Grimmelshausen to have conjured up a future in which his writing would be used to study seventeenth century hermitical life by scrutinizing descriptions of the dwelling where Simplicius' first teacher (and biological father) takes him in, would be a stretch. Some of the most historically interesting elements of Bey's writing are not those cultural traditions that he exuberantly proclaims unique, but his offhand comments, such as his rendering of Baku's smells, businesses, and building styles.

While Grimmelshausen and Bey note regularly that they write for posterity, their work provides much more to the greater historical understanding of the time periods in which they lived than they were likely to have imagined. It is not probable that Grimmelshausen considered how his treatment of Courage might be used to interpret nuanced gender norms in the early seventeenth century. It is equally doubtful that Bey could have prophesied the use of his writing to explore German notions of the East or to examine his projected image of self-reinvention. These elements of the authors' writing

are also part of the historical milieu and gain importance with each generation of distance that separates the reader/historian from the author/historian.

Just as it is impossible for Grimmelshausen and Bey to have been far enough removed from their own environments to ascertain aspects of historical relevance that would later become evident to readers who exist outside the authors' paradigms, neither could they have predicted what their writing would reveal indirectly in the form of reader responses. No author is likely to have considered, for example, the first generation of reception to their texts as bearing historical importance. Yet, as has been discussed, even the hypothetical role of those readers in the psyches of Grimmelshausen and Bey inevitably shaped their writing and informs the historian's understanding of the periods' social norms.

To a certain degree, however, Grimmelshausen and Bey are cognizant of the impact they wish to have on their readers. Periodically, both assert the historical relevance of their narratives as if to provide justification for their writing and as an excuse for their libertine subject matter¹⁵:

Although it was not my intention to invite the peaceable reader into my Dad's house and farm with these horsemen, who will wreak much havoc there, yet the course of my story demands that I should leave to posterity a picture of the horrifying and quite unheard-of cruelties sometimes perpetrated in this our German war. (*Simpleton* 7)

Grimmelshausen's declaration of intent is largely accepted by his critics as genuine. He cites the Thirty Years War as anomalous in its unrelenting violence and undertakes an

¹⁵ In the course of editing this paper, Harriet Stone noted a comparison between Grimmelshausen and eighteenth century French and British libertine authors who wrote similar justifications for the lascivious content in their criticism of religious and political establishments. This led me to Robert Darnton's *The Forbidden Best-*

endeavor to admonish the participants and apprise future generations. Gattafarano writes of Grimmelshausen:

He must have arrived at the realization that this war, which depleted and demoralized the civil population like no earlier conflict in European history, cannot be spoken of as an object. In order to have a better approach to the monstrosity of war and to expose it as a phenomenon that was simultaneously desired, created, experienced and suffered by people, Grimmelshausen makes his personal experience of the war the theme, while making use of the form of the autobiographical novel. (46)

Grimmelshausen made clear his own historical consciousness when he announced his first novel *Der Abenteurliche Simplicissimus Teutsch* in 1667. Within it he wrote, in effect, that only a novel could provide adequate treatment for the subject of war, without rendering emotionally charged events as objects to be catalogued. (Gattafarano 46)

As Grimmelshausen's reasons for choosing particular subjects for his critique are worthy of consideration, so too are his reasons for leaving other subjects unexamined. As on this occasion when he reports that he has omitted events that are part of his readers' common memory and, therefore, unnecessary to review:

But I will not dwell on tales of how the men in the conquered town [of Bragoditz by forces of the Imperial nations] were slaughtered by the captors, the women ravished, and the town itself plundered. All this became so widely known during the past long war that everyone can tell a tale about it. (*Courage* 94)

Grimmelshausen offers a second explanation for why he leaves some topics out of his manuscripts. He discusses, in a characteristically meta-cognizant narrative aside, his style of storytelling as well as his readers' reactions:

I told Simplicius it was a pity he had not put this story in his account of his life, but he replied that if he had included all similar episodes, the book

Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France, which provides a convincing argument that censorship is the most instructive muse.

would have ended up longer than Stumpf's *Chronicle of Switzerland*. In fact, he went on, he regretted having included so many amusing anecdotes. People read it instead of *Till Eulenspiegel*, more to pass the time than to learn from it. Then he asked me what I thought of his book and whether I had been improved or corrupted by it. (*Tearaway* 36)

Grimmelshausen critiques his writing within his writing, questioning the degree to which his message is effectively conveyed. The sophisticated, self-awareness found in his work separates his work from that of Bey. The latter similarly insists upon the substantive value of his annals and often makes comments directly to the reader regarding the tale he has told or will now begin. When Bey pauses to address his readers, however, it is to remind them that he was truly there and only he knows his story, making it his duty to record it. Unlike Grimmelshausen's tongue-in-cheek asides that create a complexly layered narrative, Bey merely boasts imperiously of his singular expertise as if he foresees his readers' disbelief:

I should like to tell the reader what I know of the Jassaians from my own experience. For this nation is extraordinary, as the "Society for the Exploration of Azerbaijan" may have suspected (*Blood and Oil* 40)

I heard many wonderful stories in the Caucasus about robbers, soldiers of liberty, buried treasures, and fair ladies. Perhaps a great many of them were fables. But nevertheless they are just as true as anything that can be proven by inscriptions, old manuscripts, or yellowing archives and registers. To learn to know the Caucasus one need not go a-burrowing among old parchments and doubtful museum pieces. (*Twelve Secrets* 233)

As nearly every chapter of both *Blood and Oil* and *Twelve Secrets* mentions Germans, one can deduce that Bey's intentions in his writing involved an awareness of his largest group of readers. Many questions emerge when attempting to decipher who Bey believed to be his audience. In his study of "German Images of Islam in West Africa," Holger Weiss identifies a shift in German thinking regarding the relationship of Germany to the Islamic world. Weiss notes that German sentiment towards Muslims was

at its peak at the close of the nineteenth century when German emperor Wilhelm II made grand gestures of friendship toward the Muslim world, likely due to his desire to compete with the British and French as Germany chartered its short colonial period. By Bey's time, however, Germany's attempts at empire had ended (in part due to Mahdist-inspired uprisings) and the Ottoman Empire had fallen rendering any mention of either a romantic allusion to a time past and, therefore, simpler. German culture was becoming infiltrated by false notions of a German Indo/Aryan history. Bey was writing, at least in part, for a fascist audience .

The most basic purpose in highlighting all things German was likely to connect with readers and maintain their interest:

Following the civil uprising in Baku [...] "In the city, however, not only the Armenians and communists ruled, but also hunger, true Oriental hunger, of which even the war-conditions in Germany can give no conception. (*Blood and Oil* 87)

Bey makes nods to his readers regularly, in the form of comparisons, complements, and claims of German descendents who offer an alternative way of life:

This single European was, strange to say, a German, and indeed a hundred per cent, genuine German, who bore the proud name, Baron von Osten-Sacken, and so was Baltic. Why this man lived in voluntary exile in Kizil-Su I still do not know; I only know that he, this sole cultured person, without being bound to the place in any business way, spent thirty years in retirement in this nest with his German wife. He did not associate with any 'coloured' person and seldom left his house, in which, on the wall above the desk, hung the Gothic inscription: 'May God protect this home.' When I visited him, he told me about Germany, but never spoke of the city of Kizil-Su or Turkestan, as if this country I which he had been living for thirty years did not exist for him at all. (*Blood and Oil* 99)

There are odd discrepancies in his work, as when, in the quote above, his subjects reveal themselves to him as racist when he, as an Azerbaijani Muslim, should also fall into the 'coloured' category. Though this quote suggests a German superiority, some of Bey's

German subjects set an example of multicultural acceptance that is a consistent theme throughout his writing:

[In Samarkand] All were friendly to the Germans, mainly because there were German prisoners in the city, a few of whom had been converted to Islam, bravely had themselves circumcised, and married brown girls. I myself have seen these people, who were admired because of the circumcision. (142)

These German converts show Bey engaging in wishful thinking on two counts. First, his German subjects are able to successfully alter their identities to become exactly that which he is forcibly attempting to be. Second, the admiration that they receive presents a positive response to circumcision, which here relates to their move to Islam, but for Bey, most likely, occurred at a Jewish Bris.

Chapter fourteen of *Twelve Secrets* describes a mountain village of German ancestry that only Bey can see, let alone access, due to “an ample palisade-fence” obstructing outsiders’ vision, and “spring-guns and pitfalls” that ensure total privacy:

If you ask one of these blue-eyed Ossetes about his origin, he tells--if he is one of their wise-men and is capable of giving information--the usual boastful story cited above, about the great knights [...] and then adds a very remarkable statement which is much more interesting than his other explanations: he gives the name of the knights who were his forefathers. ‘They were called Alleman.’ [...] Many customs and habits of the Caucasians have quite an extraordinary similarity to those of the old Germans [...] The Orient has sufficient knightly peoples of its own; why should the German Crusaders be the ones especially selected, from whom the proudest of the Caucasians derive their origin? (100-01)

That settlers from German states migrated into parts of the Caucasus in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is known (Bade 131). Yet, here again, Bey does not provide an accurate anthropological record of the subject he claims to describe though he does provide a noteworthy account record of his own attitudes and those of his Central European contemporaries toward the role of German cultural and genetic legacies outside

of Europe. His fabrication reveals more about how he wishes to be perceived and what he believes his readers to expect than anything regarding a community of German-Caucasian transplants. Bey's discovery of Germans in the Caucasus who are descendents of "great knights" is not a random coincidence. Bey's Germany saw the end come to its short-lived Empire. Hitler was loudly promoting a vision of Germans as members of a "master race." Bey's testimonies to German superiority in far corners of the globe would have appealed to a sizable fraction of his reading audience as well as the members of the committee that placed his name in the list of authors suitable for Nazi reading.¹⁶

If both authors intended to portray a vision that readers would accept as genuinely representative of their subjects, Grimmelshausen fares much better than Bey in perpetuity. Of course, Grimmelshausen does not make the many claims of personal privilege or insist upon a false identity as Bey does. However, there is overlap in the comparison of their conscious awareness of the messages they sent directly and indirectly. As the following section demonstrates, both Grimmelshausen and Bey tried to actively shape their readers' world-view and to provoke change in their society.

¹⁶ See section 1, page 14

Section 6 Lessons through Storytelling; Arguments Made in the Historical Narratives of Grimmelshausen and Bey

One might differentiate between history and fiction by the objectivity expected in the former and the degree of opinion allowed in the latter. Fiction serves as a legitimate platform for an author to espouse beliefs--political, religious, philosophical—to readers who have tuned in for entertainment. Robert Berkhofer, like Hayden White, views historical texts as just as likely a platform for moral messaging. Berkhofer writes in *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse*:

That historical time is conceived as having direction encourages historians to draw lessons “from” history in the discourses they construct. That the textualization of [a] history is always after the fact means that historians always know how [in their opinion] things might have turned out as well as how they did turn out. That such hindsight is always considered accurate grounds the very construction of histories and the practice of history in general. Reinforcing these foundational prejudices are certain long-standard ways of plotting histories in our society that give meaning to time as history and offer a message to the present. Such master narratives as progress and degeneration once patterned all of history as moral lessons in addition to providing an emplotment of that story. (125)

While the emplotment and the moral lessons Berkhofer describes are often objected to in historical writing, both elements are almost impossible to detach from the “facts” that are the vital charge of the field.

Several schools of historiography tie history to moral instruction. Hegel viewed the recording of history as a progressive, though often ineffective, lesson, taught by cumulative generations:

Pragmatic (didactic) reflections, though in their nature decidedly abstract, are truly and indefeasibly of the Present, and quicken the annals of the dead Past with the life of today. Whether, indeed, such reflections are truly interesting and enlivening, depends on the writer’s own spirit. Moral reflections must here be specially noticed—the moral teaching expected from history; which latter has not infrequently been treated with a direct view to the former. It may be allowed that examples of virtue elevate the

soul and are applicable in the moral instruction of children for impressing excellence upon their minds [...] Rulers, Statesmen, Nation, are wont to be emphatically commended to the teaching which experience offers in history. But what experience and history teach is this—that peoples and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it. (6)

Hegel conducts his analysis of the pragmatic purposes of history by reviewing all types of sociological evidence, including the various sorts of fiction he had previously denounced in his statement regarding the hazy quality of legends, ballads, and traditions¹⁷.

In the nineteenth century, historians such as Thomas Carlyle promoted the notion that the history of any time period could best be recorded by collecting the life stories of the greatest men of that era, as examples to be honored and followed. Regarding historical documentation as an expression of moral beliefs is not merely a ‘Western’ phenomenon. Chase Robinson writes in his comprehensive *Islamic Historiography* that “because the function of [Islamic] history was principally to exemplify truths and teach lessons, it should come as no surprise that real license was taken in historical narration” (152).

Grimmelshausen’s Simplicius explains throughout both *Simplicius* and *Tearaway* that he has only provided his history of the Thirty Years War to instruct others. He ties his and others’ hardships to misdeeds and criticizes all members of society--clergy, nobleman, beggar, soldier—for their hypocrisies and their sins.

Gentle reader, I tell this tale not to make you laugh, but so that my story may be complete, and to make you realize what seemly fruits are to be expected from such dancing. For of this I am sure: many a wanton bargain is struck at these dances of which afterwards the whole company has cause to be ashamed. (*Simpleton* 52)

¹⁷ See Section 2, page 19 for Hegel quote referenced here.

While Grimmelshausen places the responsibility for wrongdoing on individuals whatever the circumstances of their failings, the lesson he imparts through the stories of his characters' lives are neither simplistic nor expected. For example, Simplicius suggests that the lack of religious exposure provided by his adoptive father necessitated his violent introduction to the world outside of his childhood farm. At the same time, Grimmelshausen leaves no doubt that the violent scourge his innocent family experiences is not a just punishment, but a senseless travesty. Courage may claim that she receives only what she deserves, but Grimmelshausen shows the opposite. Tearaway, too, is given a full story that reveals his kidnapping in youth as the beginning of an incremental trajectory of bad fortune leading to his corresponding moral decline, and not the reverse. Grimmelshausen spares neither his protagonists nor their antagonists, all are guilty, all are victims. Aylett writes that "an important part of the overall philosophy of the *Simplicissimus* cycle [is] a realistic attitude towards a hazardous life governed by fickle chance" (99).

Although he clearly recognizes the onslaught of horrors each character experiences, Grimmelshausen acknowledges and denounces immoral behavior he has only just shown to be nearly inevitable. His characters move through a war-formed environment that is detrimental to their wellbeing, but Grimmelshausen insists upon the function of free will and on the ability and value of repentance. Misery is unavoidable in Grimmelshausen's worldview. Escape can only come from a spiritualism that is not found within corrupt society. Grimmelshausen's moral hero finds his solace, despite the world around him, within his pious soul.

At every point in Grimmelshausen's chronicles, war brings anarchy and turns morality on its head. The war is only superficially focused on religious belief. None of those involved--princes and their generals through foot soldiers and battlefield scavengers—are true followers of their faith. Rather, all are opportunists with varying degrees of material success, who gain nothing of spiritual, or authentic value. Grimmelshausen holds no reverence for the “glories“ of war. His characters' stories leave the impression that the German war is a series of pointless injustices:

When [Count Tilly]¹⁸ robbed the city of Magdeburg of its proud record of never having been taken, while the soldiers under his command robbed it of all its goods and wealth. The general heard that one of his common soldiers had taken a huge haul of money, all gold coins, and immediately lost it again at dice [...] “With that money you could have lived like a lord for the rest of your days if you had only wanted to. Since, however, you are no use to yourself, I cannot see what use you can be to the Emperor.” And the general, who otherwise had the reputation of being like a father to his men, decreed that the soldier, being a useless burden on the earth, should be hanged in the air, which verdict was carried out on the spot. (*Tearaway* 80-1)

Grimmelshausen makes an overarching objection to war and expresses clear disbelief that good can come of warfare. He holds those who participate in the folly accountable for the elements they control. He does not describe a good or just battle. No military success is a cause for celebration. Indeed, the result of each campaign is destruction, looting, and attacks on civilians. Still, there are degrees of horror:

In the Spanish wars the soldiers were sent into battle, but they were paid and their lives not lightly put at risk, while in the German wars they were unpaid, the countries ruined and soldiers and peasants alike were abandoned to starvation and the sword. (87)

¹⁸ Johann Tserclaes, Count of Tilly was one of the key military protagonists of the Spanish-Imperial forces. His victories are mentioned as the backdrop of several scenes described by each of Grimmelshausen's narrators. (Patrick 1334)

Grimmelshausen attests that the message within his *Simplicissimus* cycle is a cry for Christian virtue. He does not, however, provide significant support for either a Catholic or Protestant model of virtue. Those who declare themselves to be on the side of one denomination readily exchange their allegiance when conversion leads to opportunity. The powerless members of society are, predictably, the most vulnerable to religious persecution. From the early stages of the war, the unaligned peasant class provides the targeted pawns in a battle of political power, pitting those Bohemians caught in the wake of Ferdinand II and the Imperial army against those swept up with the followers of Frederick of the Bohemia. Battafarano notes in his interpretation of Grimmelshausen's work that the author's religiosity takes into consideration the plight of fortune seekers and the fallacious premises of either side's military campaign:

In a world governed by war and thus by force, by hate, envy, greed, and deceit, Grimmelshausen's heroes learn quickly that neither solidarity nor cooperation governs the actions of humankind. This they learn in a world that, however, claims to be a Christian world and that claims to be fighting war in the name of a true Christianity. (51)

Grimmelshausen decries the war and its practitioners' tangled logic by describing the quick and easy movement from one side to another. When captured by the Swedes (Protestants) while in Soest, Simplicius reports that in this conflict, neither side is better than the other, and few soldiers regard themselves as tied by ethical persuasion to any religious representative:

We prisoners were taken straightway to the Commandant, who was amazed at my youth. He asked me if I had ever served on the Swedish side and where I came from. When I told him the truth he asked me if I would not like to fight for the Swedes again. I replied that I did not really care one way or the other, but seeing that I had sworn allegiance to the Emperor it seemed to me that I ought to keep it. (*Simpleton* 140)

The offer presented to Simplicius in Soest is one he cannot refuse. Simplicius is asked to shift allegiances. There is no discussion of religious or political belief, only of loyalty to one commander or another. The reward for loyalty would likely be death, though death, injury or a torturous existence is the eventual fate awaiting nearly every individual whom Grimmelshausen's readers encounter. When Tearaway looks back at his wartime experience, he notes the unjust lack of anticipated glory following his decades of service:

Along with many others, I had hoped to be crowned with laurel wreaths and showered with gold, but all we got was a bed in the hospital, where I had to fend for myself until I was well again and could hobble round on my wooden leg. (*Tearaway* 156)

Tearaway is never showered with gold, making his wartime experience one of many lessons on the outcome of war on individual's fortune. Simplicius and Courage, on the other hand, find themselves awash in stolen booty after one battle and completely desolate after another. Their wealth, when accrued, does nothing to add to their security or happiness. Simplicius is the only character to find peace while on earth and that is tied intrinsically to his spiritual awakening. His story ends with his pockets full, but only because he has earned his wealth through scrupulous methods with his adopted father.

One feature of the Thirty Years War that Grimmelshausen illustrates as each of his characters moves from personal to political scenes is the shifting field of battle. Utter peace reigns in regions neighboring complete devastation. Simplicius waxes on for several pages about his surprise at the tranquility he finds in the spa village of Bad Griesbach in the Black Forest:

Sometimes I thought of returning to the war, but then it occurred to me that the humblest peasant hereabouts led a happier life than a colonel, for no partisans ever came into these mountains, nor could I conceive why any army should want to lay them waste. Here every farmyard was prosperous and the stables as full of cattle as in peacetime, whereas down

in the plain you could not find so much as a cat or a dog in the deserted villages. (*Simpleton* 221)

As in his characteristic notice of the pastoral nature that surrounds the violence of battle, Grimmelshausen points to the unnatural state of war, a human creation to which man and woman are drawn, but that does not stand the test of reason or (as seen in Tearaway's lament regarding the failure of collective memory to honor his service in battle) the test of time.

In much the same way that Grimmelshausen attacks the logic of war, so too does he decry the intemperance of those who make up the ruling classes. While in the position of court fool, Simplicius artfully discerns the less noble aspects of the Governor of Hanau's (unbeknownst to him, his uncle) leadership:

'I assure you, my lord, that you are the most miserable person in Hanau... Moreover, you must see to it that there is never any lack of money, ammunition, supplies, or troops. For this, you must hold the surrounding countryside to ransom. When you send your men out for this purpose their usual course is robbery, pillage, theft, arson, and murder. Within the last few days they have plundered the village of Orb, sacked Braunfels, and laid Staden in ashes. They have their boot, but you bear a heavy responsibility before God. I do not count that, with the honour, you enjoy the material benefits of such sorties. But you do know who, in the end, will profit from the treasures you may be hoarding. Even if you succeed in keeping these riches--which is doubtful--you cannot take them with you when you die. Only the sins with which you have burdened yourself in amassing them will accompany you on your last journey. And if you are fortunate enough to thrive on your plunder it is the sweat and blood of the Poor from which you profit--those who are now suffering hardship and want, and, maybe, dying of hunger. (66)

Grimmelshausen gives the same Governor and the company he keeps a thorough thrashing in his diatribe on gluttony and vice. He provides a two-page description of the food wasted on account of the Governor's guests vomiting the contents of their stomachs after excessive alcohol consumption. He draws a direct connection between the indulgences of the privileged classes and the deprivation of the poor.

Yet if their capacity failed them other means prevailed: one had imbibed thirst with the very wine he drank, another could not decline a toast to a friend's good health, a third was kept at it by that Teutonic probity which insists on a man matching his neighbour glass for glass [...] Whereat many broke out in a cold sweat, their eyes starting from their sockets; yet still the drinking must go on. (45)

So I looked on in silence as they wantonly wasted food and drink, heedless of poor Lazarus, who stood at the door in the persons of several hundred homeless peasants, hunger staring from their eyes, who would have been glad of it. For there was famine in the town. (46)

These passages are pulled from long, focused rants on unrecognized vice among those who would call themselves good Christians. Grimmelshausen's focus on the moral messages of his writing rarely wavers. Even when describing some playful entertainment or off-color antic he often notes the immoral state of affairs he observes as if in passing: "In short, I fared like the widows whom everyone abandons" (*Courage* 202).

The fate of women, in general, appears utterly dismal as Grimmelshausen depicts it. Aylett perceives a fundamental difference in the moral and spiritual possibility offered to Grimmelshausen's men and his women:

The core of Simplex's existential problem lies in his inability to live up to theoretical standards in a world which demands opportunism and amoral expediency from its inhabitants. Courasche's, however, is a wholly different situation: in the same chaotic, labyrinthine, morally almost valueless world, she is cast adrift with no positive guiding influence. (102)

Courage is the prime example of the Grimmelshausen woman. She is strong, of noble birth, intelligent, and able to determine right from wrong. Yet, she is pulled down a sinful path to her own demise, a path that she suggests others might avoid:

Therefore, let me warn you, my dear girls, you who have kept your honor and virtue still intact, not to let yourselves be carelessly robbed of them, because with them you lose your freedom in exchange for nothing but torture and slavery which are more difficult to endure than death itself. (*Courage* 103)

But Grimmelshausen has shown throughout Courage's story that she was not carelessly robbed of her virginity, that she fought hard for her honor. Here Grimmelshausen seems to find himself caught in a logic trap. His heroines are strong and worthy but they cannot succeed. Grimmelshausen tells the reader about the death of Tearaway's wife without even a hint of sentiment, although she, like Courage, has clearly sunk to depravities only as she fought for her own survival: "her lecherous itch had made her an adulteress, a murderer (not to mention me a cuckold) and brought her to a lamentable end, even sent her to the fire" (*Tearaway* 165).

Aylett aptly notes the discrepancy between Grimmelshausen's male characters' chances of moral rectitude and those of his female characters. Grimmelshausen's Courage, however, never suggests an excuse for her own nefarious behavior outside of her characteristic 'what could I do?' She does not admit to any difference between her ability to lead a morally upstanding life and that of her male counterparts:

From all this the whole world will learn that goose and gander, whore and whoremonger are of the same lot, and neither of them is a jot better than the other. 'Birds of a feather flock to together,' said the Devil to the collier, and sins and sinners are usually punished by sins and sinners. (*Courage* 92)

The punishment Courage alludes to is not material. Grimmelshausen shows the reward for incorruptibility to be spiritual fulfillment. Misery and pain are just as likely to visit the chaste innocent as the evildoer. The virtuous are rewarded only by their goodness and their faith.

The moral conviction expressed by Simplicius by the close of the first and third books of the series serve as a sort of denouement, providing Grimmelshausen's explanation for the outcomes of his characters. Simplicius's biological, and by a twist of fate, adopted father, is the pinnacle of stoic, self-restraint. This saintly hermit establishes

the model of good behavior within Grimmelshausen's literary world. The hermit's devotion to Christianity is not tied to tradition or institutional trappings. He is committed to the denial of earthly temptations and, though his most basic needs are provided for by a village parson, his religious devotion is without the input of church and completely outside of the physical or theoretical causes of the religious wars ravaging Europe

Simplicius, like his father, finds spiritual fulfillment late in life and, like his father, he finds solace for his soul by retreating from the wicked world. Grimmelshausen pleads for the recovery of all men's souls through Simplicius' fight to save his friend

Tearaway:

'My wish would be', replied Simplicissimus, 'that you would live the kind of life here on earth that would not jeopardize your eternal life in heaven.'
(*Tearaway* 166)

[Simplicius] invited Tearaway to spend the winter on his farm, assuring me he was not doing it for his few hundred ducats, but to see if he could lead him to the Christian way to a godly life. As I have since heard, he died last March, though not before Simplicissimus had completely transformed him in his old age and persuaded him to lead a better, Christian life. (167)

Courage does not have this opportunity for redemption. Her ruin is permanent:

Listen, you priests, there was a time, there was a time when you could have shown me the way which you now urge me to take. But that time was long ago, when in the flower of my girlhood, I lived in a state of innocence. For although I ran quickly into the dangers of an itching temptation, it would then have been easier to control my sanguine disposition than it now is for me to combat the strong pressure of the three worst humors combined. Turn to the young, therefore, whose hearts are not yet soiled with other images; teach, admonish, beg them, yes, plead with them that they should never stray as far in their thoughtlessness as poor Courage has done. (*Courage* 92)

Occasionally, Grimmelshausen suggests the existence of an alternate reality in which women could maintain their own integrity. The adoptive peasant couple with whom Simplicius spends his childhood is an example of virtue among the completely

irreligious. Grimmelshausen's Simplicius imagines a paradise of peaceful relations and shared labor, then suggests that such a thing does exist, among a Christian sect denounced by both Catholics and other Protestants:

Yet from all my studies and the knowledge they vouchsafed me I discovered at last that there was no greater or better art than theology, the science which teaches us to love and serve God. Under its guidance I invented a mode of life for mankind which, if practiced right, might achieve a very paradise on earth. I envisaged a community of men and women, married and single, under a prudent Governor, who, like the Anabaptists, would devote the work of their hands merely to providing for their bodily needs, and for the rest would labour in the praise and service of God, and their souls' salvation. Such was the way of life I had seen on the Anabaptists' farms in Hungary, and it so impressed me [...] had these good people not been otherwise involved in false and abominable heresies. (*Simpleton* 231)

The perfectly functioning Anabaptist community is Grimmelshausen's ideal. The rejection of the Anabaptists by mainstream Christians represents the contradiction Grimmelshausen perceives in standard religious beliefs. Complete equality, perfect physical health, and economic prosperity are impossible in the world inhabited by Simplicius, Courage, and Tearaway. Simplicius' adoptive parents, his hermit father, and the Anabaptists all live outside of the corruption that Grimmelshausen identifies and instructs against.

Grimmelshausen's themes regarding the futility of war and cause for religious tolerance also emerge in Bey's writing, though with markedly different nuances to the content and construct of the messages. That war opens up the exchange of power from one ruthless, ambitious, opportunistic group or individual to the next is also a critical motif within Bey's writing:

Not until the outbreak of the Russian Revolution did the actual disintegration begin which affected the whole of the East. How the revolution began, what causes brought it about, no one in Azerbaijan knew. In the last analysis, we were indifferent to those causes. One day the

notice simply came that the Czar had abdicated and his brother would occupy the throne. This news was received rather diffidently. Everyone in the Orient knows that monarchs renounce their thrones from time to time for enigmatic reasons. The Turkish Sultan did it, the Shah, too--why shouldn't the Czar abdicate once, also? In his place will come a new Czar, without any need for his subjects to become excited about it. In any case, for them nothing would change in the slightest degree. (*Blood and Oil* 57)

Similar to Grimmelshausen's characters' experiences of the Thirty Years War, Bey's depiction of war in Azerbaijan reveals a violent conflict only vaguely connected to politics although it is intensely disruptive.

Let me describe this time of anarchy, of ruin, of fierce battles. Baku was an industrial city, the only industrial city in the country. Her hundreds of thousands of workers were most eagerly encouraged to revolt by socialists of all degrees. The first encounters came about in the workers' settlements. To Baku, from all corners of the country, streamed Russian and Armenian bandits who had visions of good business in the rich oil-city at this time. First they contended themselves with simple robberies of harmless passers-by on the streets; later they ventured to attack the oil-lords, and soon began to play a part in politics. I, too, suffered at their hands in rather a mild way. Later the situation became more critical. Peace was over in the East. (58)

Bey pointedly refuses to characterize this or any violent conflict as a righteous product of idealism. Socialist revolution is the impetus for civil war in Azerbaijan, but not the driving force that continues to motivate the resulting killing and destruction. The goals of the political insurgents are tangled up in the self-serving interests of unaligned mercenaries. Bey describes the unintelligible brutality he witnesses during the gruesome Armenian uprising in Baku:

Women, children, and aged men were killed in their homes. In the mosques, where the inhabitants sought refuge, massacres took place. [Armenian nationalist] Stepa-Lalai, communist and oil-magnate, searched the whole city for Mohammedan children, grasped them by the legs, whirled them through the air, and dashed their skulls to pieces against the paving stones. He killed a hundred children in this way, and after every murder he yelled: 'Revenge for my parents!' They had been stabbed twelve years before by Mohammedans. (76)

Though purportedly about political power, then religious resentments, the violence in Baku is, in actuality, about access to oil:

The strangest thing of all was that no one knew at first against whom he was fighting. The government itself did not know and simply called the unknown opponent ‘bands’. Only some time later was it discovered that the mysterious bands were under the leadership of Kress von Kressenstein, the German general¹⁹. Gradually the revolution began to develop, and it showed in the growing restlessness and the increasing uncertainty. (89)

War, according to Bey, is, more than anything else, a disruption to the standard equilibrium of mundane power broking and harmless corruption. Like his well-respected robbers, whose place in society is important because it helps to maintain the status quo, Bey’s wealthy oil barons are essential to maintaining a steady balance in the social, political, and economic order:

And in the midst of the battle, in the cellars and rooms that were safe from the enemy, the oil-owners sat trembling—Mohammedans, Armenians, Russians, Jews—the telephone-receivers pressed to their ears, and guarded the black gold. Their wan faces glowed with fever, with oil-fever. (77)

Many of Bey’s anecdotes are playful arguments affirming his anti-war stance. He does not promote peace or decry the horrors of war as often as he pokes fun at groups and individuals uncouth enough to use violence to attain ends that, he attests, are rarely worthwhile and, even less frequently, the actual, intended result of such actions. To this end, Bey tells the story of the Khan of Teke who put down a rebellion by giving his

¹⁹ The Battle of Baku was the result of an agreement between the government of the failing German Empire and Soviet Russia in which Germany was promised access to Baku oil in return for the suppression of the Ottoman Army of Islam. Kress’ accounts of the Armenian Massacre that took place in Baku and elsewhere in 1918 are an essential source of documentary record of that event (Chamy Twelve4). Bey suggests that Armenian hostility toward Muslims in 1918 is largely due to the memory of the 1905 conflict between the Armenians and Azeris in Baku.

hitherto angry nomadic populace bright red trousers for which the men were “prepared to sell their fatherland:”

Thus happened the monarchist plot, which, however ludicrous it may seem, did not differ fundamentally from other upheavals in the world. I have experienced the fall of many a government, seen many an overthrow, and could never get rid of the feeling that in each revolution some sort of red trousers were at the root of the matter. (111)

Bey represents violent upheavals as nonsensical and promotes comparatively stable monarchies in 1931--the year Japan invaded Manchuria, King Alfonso of Spain was forced into exile as Spain became a republic, the USSR began a program of massive rearmament. 1931 also marked the beginning of Hitler’s ascension to become Germany’s Führer.

Bey pairs two historic moments: the story of the massacre of Stalin’s twenty-six Transcaucasian activists who had to dig their own graves in the sand with the deaths of the twenty-six’s executors. Like many of Bey’s belligerent characters, these men are caught in a karmic cycle of retaliation, put in place by fate, in which each bloody action is eventually met by an equally savage blow:

Two years later in Daghestan [Prince Alania] fell into the hands of the wild mountain tribes, who happened to be communists. They cut open his belly, put sand and stones in, and sewed it together again. Dead also are all those who were connected with the murder of the twenty-six, even the sailors of the steamer; also their brothers, cousins, and friends. They all died in the revolution. They were killed by the bullets of the Red troops, which later came from the north. They lie in the sand like the twenty-six. (108)

From Berlin, then Vienna, New York, and finally Positano, Bey repeatedly declared himself fervently anti-communist, looking back longingly on the peace ensured by the control of the Russian and Ottoman Empires. These statements seem at least partially disingenuous in the light of the fact that his Jewish family could only have experienced,

at best, a tentative security in either empire. Yet, even when seen from that vantage point, there is still an argument to be made that Bey's actual childhood in Baku came at a time of relative peace. Considering the events that followed the civil war in Azerbaijan; the city of Baku was a multicultural haven before war brought anarchy to the Caucasus. There Bey's family could blend in with the many other disparate peoples who had achieved wealth due to oil. Bey's anecdotal accounts are not convincingly anti-communist. Through them Bey instructs that all deaths in war are meaningless and that ruthlessness is not limited to any specific group of political, religious, or philosophical followers:

A communist who reads this will say, perhaps, that here the solidarity of capital won a victory over the national hatred of the individual capitalists. He is wrong; for people protected the oil wells without knowing whether they would come out of the battle alive themselves. More than one owner was killed. The national hatred that raged in the streets spared no one. The Armenians, who were victors this time, took the bloodiest revenge for 1905. (75)

Just as Bey is, generally, even-handed in his accusations of pitiless aggression, so, too, when he ridicules his subjects' religious beliefs and customs he scorns them all equally. In his chapter titled "The Wild Jews" he diminishes the "lost tribe" to the point that no one could possibly associate his original, oft despised, religion with wealth, sophistication, or power:

The Jews now have little comprehension of the past glory of their race. The majority of them are illiterates, rough warriors and cowherds who differ from all other Jews in the world in their peculiar customs, usage, and laws ... In conflicts with Mohammedans the 'Adat', the Azerbaijanian prescriptive law, and not the church law, 'Chariot', was generally decisive. Only a few questions were regulated separately; for example, the atonement for the murder of a Jew. The murderer, even if he was a Mohammedan, had to tear the skin from the body of the murdered, fill it with silver, and surrender it to the family of the dead as the price of his

life. This mandate was seldom followed, however, as the Jews, like the other Azerbaijanians, usually insisted on mortal revenge. (82)

As Bey discounts entire religious sects and their traditions he also promotes an image of inter-faith acceptance. Like all his Caucasian subjects, these Jews, Muslims, and Christians are childlike and, Bey insists, harmless:

With their [the Kipta's] neighbours, the Mohammedans and Christians, on the contrary, they live in the best imaginable relations, as far as it is possible with the constant small marauding expeditions. Very often the so-called blood-brotherhood occurs. A Jew and a Mohammedan exchange weapons; then each slits the left arm of the other and sucks blood from the wound. After this ceremony they are called 'Karadaschlar', and are considered brothers, and are treated as such. Until not long ago it was still customary to lead the new brother to one's mother, who gave him the breast as a symbol of admission into the family. Now this custom is seldom observed. (83-4)

Like the utopian Anabaptist community Grimmelshausen finds, Bey exhibits, in his writing, a populace that exemplifies his belief in tolerance and friendship across all divides, testimony that peaceful coexistence is possible.

Bey tries to wend open the minds of his German readers by recounting Johann Wolfgang Goethe's love for Islamic poetry and culture revealed a century and a half before in his *West-Eastern Divan*. Goethe, arguably Germany's favorite literary son, is a logical ally for Bey to call in as a support for German multiculturalism. Goethe's interest in the Islamic world was respectful and scholarly and endured throughout his life:

Goethe's quotation or borrowing from the Qur'an was by no means fortuitous. As research in his sprawling opus has shown, Goethe during this time was busy copying numerous verses from the Qur'an for his own purposes. He also wrote a review of a new German translation of the Qur'an produced by a somewhat bigoted Frankfurt professor--who in his preface did not hesitate to denounce Muhammad as a "false prophet and anti-Christ" and the Qur'an as a "tissue of lies" (Luegenbuch). Although appreciating the labor invested by the professor, Goethe's review expressed the hope that another translation might soon be produced –

written “under Oriental sky” and with greater sensitivity for Islamic poetry and religion. (Dallmayr 150)

With similar intent, Bey portrays Sufi dervishes as representative of an open and intelligent form of religious adherence. Bey’s respectful descriptions of Sufi practitioners is particularly striking when seen in the light of his many depictions of cultural and religious traditions as nonsensical. Again, he frames his story to champion tolerance. His report of widespread European conversions vindicates his own cross-cultural leap:

The wandering dervishes walk through the streets in tattered clothes wear their hair long, and usually stop at crossroads or in front of any rich passers-by, raise their hands, and loudly recite some mystic formula in order to beg for alms [...] merchants, warriors, princes, even foreigners, can be seen in their company. One need not be surprised at being addressed in German, French, or English, by a ragged, long-haired beggar in the street. (*Blood and Oil* 159)

In contrast, a characteristically bemused Bey belittles Persian Shi’a who segregate and shun non-Shi’a:

[In fanatical Persia], in the bazaar, if a Sunnite or Christian has touched one melon of a heap of watermelons with his hand, he is legally bound to purchase the whole stock. No Persian can be expected to eat a watermelon that was lying near one which a Sunnite has touched. Especially odious are the names of the first Sunnite califs who wrested the throne from Ali. There are some who have these names painted on the soles of their slippers so that they can step on them constantly and cover them with dirt. No European, I believe, has ever yet hit upon the idea of satisfying his hatred in this manner. (160)

With positive portrayals of religiously and ethnically open societies and consistent denouncements of group hostilities, Bey promotes his vision of peaceful social acceptance.

While Bey clearly revels in the analyses of varied social norms, he describes none as without value. He treats ethnic divisions and the more extreme customs--violent or sexual--as humorous. This approach is in keeping with Bey’s personal choices throughout

his life. In his writing, he does not seem to reject any group, but wants to be a special individual within each. That he attempted to achieve acceptance by German Nazis and Italian Fascists is surprising. Perhaps it can be explained in part by his desire to be admitted and recognized as a distinguished member of his society. This theory is furthered by elements in his writing that promote romantic cultural relativism and by his need to be seen as a cultural paragon in a multi-cultural world of his own making.

Like Grimmelshausen, Bey instructs with playful morality tales. The lessons these writers impart are somewhat antithetical. Grimmelshausen's characters make light of the miserable ends that they reach as a result of their immorality. Bey's characters are harmlessly immoral and find peaceful resolution in the status quo:

The profiteer never thought for an instant of returning the money; on the contrary, when they pressed him for it, he pushed off together with his servants. The whole affair was hushed up [...] Anyway, the indignant gentlemen in Kislovodsk soon forgot their loss; no poor men were affected by it. (*Twelve Secrets* 192)

Again and again, Bey's characters present a disruption to the usual state of affairs only to resolve the situation by turning a blind eye to others' trespasses. Bey advocates a government that maintains order through benevolent neglect. Today, Bey's social ideals might be called libertarian. His desire to remove taboo constraints from society and allow all types of moral transgressions contrasts sharply with Grimmelshausen's emphasis on the pious aesthetic life.

Conclusion

In an historical analysis of Grimmelshausen and Bey's work the disinhibition created by the authors' hidden identities and writing styles becomes an historical asset. The medium of fiction gave Grimmelshausen and Bey the freedom to shape their narratives as best fit their purposes. The historical usefulness of their texts is buried in their choices for delivery—literary device, character perspective, atmosphere, tone—and in the messages the authors deliver, intentionally or not. The presentation of the political events they chronicle is not objective or completely unique. Other records of the Battles of Nördlingen, White Mountain, and Wimpfen exist besides Grimmelshausen's. Though the existence of the majority of the people, places, and events Bey describes is supported by other sources, most depictions are embellished or distorted and some of Bey's assertions are impossible. Bey's testimony is not needed to record Stalin's early career in the Caucasus.

Yet, in each of these fictional accounts the historian will find thesis and antithesis, presented through multiple character voices whose complementary expression of diverse experiences inform one another and provide evaluations of the causes and effects of historical events. The historian is not merely responsible for chronicling evidence of such events, but also for collecting testimonies that allow for interpretation of those events and discernment of their meaning. Historians benefit from the authors' emplotment as these fictional narratives bear strong witness to the complexity of their historical subjects through the delineation of historical circumstances that is inherent in good story telling.

These authors' texts are also historically valuable, in part, by the mere fact that they were popular reading at one time. The reception of their work is relevant to understanding the political and cultural milieu that allowed for their work to be received

so favorably. Their writing responds emotionally to the disruption, instability, and unfathomable horror that war brings to the delicate balance of communities. The beliefs and prejudices of the authors and their times gain resonance through a chorus of characters' voices. Grimmelshausen and Bey's fictional accounts are historically relevant manifestos on the senselessness of war and the value of peaceful communities of diverse people with varied beliefs, articulated in the context of their authors' paradigms.

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