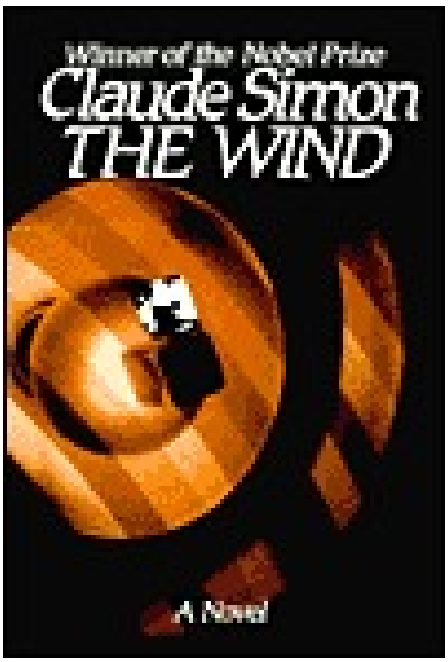

The Wind

Claude Simon

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The Wind Details

Date	:	Published 1986 by George Braziller (first published 1957)
ISBN	:	9780807611579
Author	:	Claude Simon
Format	:	Hardcover 254 pages
Genre	:	Fiction, Nobel Prize, Cultural, France, European Literature, French Literature

From Reader Review The Wind for online ebook

Teresa Proença says

Processos romanescos da obra de Claude Simon:
"deslocação da cronologia, longas frases carregadas de incidentes e de parênteses, multiplicação dos adjectivos - agrupados, em geral, em blocos de três - que dão a impressão de um martelamento, o uso repetido do «porque», do «como se», do «talvez» que anula as explicações, as comparações e as hipóteses, acumulando-as"
A obra de Simon contribui para um alargamento de perspectivas estéticas e de mentalidade. Traz o incómodo da novidade. Mas feito o necessário esforço de compreensão, o leitor culto terá de reconhecer que o seu panorama cultural se alargou."

Pois... se eu tivesse vislumbrado algo mais além da estética (possivelmente estará totalmente velado por esta) talvez pudesse ter alargado o referido panorama. Folha após folha, fui colhendo palavras vãs, que logo esvoaçavam, deixando-me desalentada, céptica, apreensiva, como se sem esperança de encontrar o oásis prometido porque, a cada página, se acumulavam os grãos de areia que se desfaziam em poeira cinzenta, compacta, inóspita... Éolo não foi benevolente comigo, não me insuflou com um pouco do que não me abunda: vida, paciência, inteligência, sabedoria,... para não apreender **O Vento** apenas como um enigma que me quebra a cabeça mas não o coração. Já sem qualquer ilusão, abandono-o a mei...

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"As palavras têm um poder tremendo de abordar e confrontar, que, sem elas, faria com que tudo continuasse espalhado pelo tempo e pelo espaço mensurável."
*— **Claude Simon***

Claude Simon nasceu em Antananarivo, **Madagascar**, no dia 10 de Outubro de 1913 e morreu em Paris, França, no dia 06 de Julho de 2005. Foi sepultado, no Cemitério de Montmartre.
Lutou contra os Franquistas na Guerra Civil Espanhola e no exército francês na Segunda Guerra Mundial onde foi feito prisioneiro, conseguindo fugir do campo de concentração. Ao regressar a França, juntou-se à Resistência. No final da guerra, dedicou-se à vinicultura.
Na sua obra é influenciado, principalmente, por Faulkner na forma e por Proust no tema (a memória).
Ganhou o Prémio Nobel da Literatura em 1985 porque *"no seu romance combina a criatividade do poeta e a do pintor com um sentido aprofundado do tempo no retrato que faz da condição humana"*

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Mathias says

Mumies, gypsies, boxers, read!

Jim Rayder says

I go a long way back to Simon and the "New Novel". I discovered this very informal "school" first through novelist Robbe-Grillet's "For A New Novel", a collection of rather aggressive essays written in the 1950 that gave writers like Pinget, Simon, Sarraute et al a special attention that helped to lift them from obscurity. / I was 17, in 1969, wanted to write a novel and was already a Francophile, though my French still sucks. / I first read Robbe-Grillet's "The Erasers" and though it was quite nouveau I found it more accessible than anticipated. I then read "Three Plays" by Pinget (his novels unavailable in local library) then Sarraute's "Tropisms" which I also found accessible, albeit offbeat, cerebral, challenging. Then I tried Simon's "Histoire"--his fifth novel in this style--and found it near-impenetrable. It took me about two months to finish it. (The title can mean either "story" or "history")./ (My first novel got to only 60-odd pgs, one meticulous passage, a la AR-G, I thought, describing high school cafeteria desserts; "Oh, this is so cute, it's like Claes Oldenburg!" said my sister.)/ I returned to Simon about 27 years later and read the four novels that preceded "Histoire": "The Grass", "The Wind", "The Flanders Road", "The Palace"--this last is where he gets denser, tres difficile. / I just read "The Wind" again and feel like saying that Simon is the most moving novelist of this school and, for all his stylistic avant turns , the most traditional. His philosophy is essentially that life and the world are painfully meaningless but redeemed somewhat by their beauty and strangeness, fascinating even in their horror and absurdity. / Et Antoine Montes, c'est lui!

Vasha7 says

The Wind reminds me a bit of film noir or hard-boiled stories; the "movie" of the book is definitely black-and-white. The town (not named, I don't think) has a distinct atmosphere, with its impoverished landscape, swirling with dust kicked up by the monotonous wind, and its sour inhabitants, ready for dirty deals and petty crime. Into this is dropped a character (Montès) who's completely out of step with it; but he's no incorruptible detective, merely possessed of very obstinate naïveté.

But of course, what has to be mentioned is the extraordinary style this story is written in. I doubt that this book contains the longest sentence ever committed to print, but certainly many of its sentences are serious contenders for that distinction. One that starts on the first page runs on for three more pages! Luckily, though, I quickly realized that, in spite of the lengthy parentheses and subordinate clauses, it's not necessary to completely map out the sentences in order to get the gist of the prose; by a few chapters in, I was almost never going back to reread a paragraph, though my overall speed was certainly slowed down.

So, is this a good stylistic choice, or is it done just for novelty? I'll have to reserve judgment on that for the moment. But it seems to me that those astonishing sentences are only one part of a style that creates a fluidity of time, intimations of future events blending seamlessly with narration and with background information; the life of the town seems timelessly repetitive (the inhabitants seem to have been thoroughly in a groove

before Montès' arrival) but Montès perceives time as rushing inexorably, and the writing suits the mood. Later on, great narrative gaps leap toward the crisis point, and then stasis sets in. Simon spends some effort discussing the perception of time. I was going to quote a couple of memorable instances, but I found that I can't extract quotes from those tangled paragraphs.

The characters are naturalistic, not at all romantic, and their dialogue is terse, even inarticulate. And yet there is an odd duality: the narrator (a writer) sometimes claims that the accounts they gave him, telling him of events, were as imaginative and elaborate as his own narration: for example, the process-server is represented as saying that Montès stared at him "[a]s if one of those jackdaws, one of those carrion crows had just eaten his own eyes, thinking he was really a corpse, and left those birds' eyes instead..." This contrast makes it clear that the narrator is attributing to people recollections that they can't have had, and yet he puts quotes around those words. I wonder why.

Chris says

Reminded me a lot of Faulkner, I liked it.

Andy says

Mid-century, wandering French men and I sometimes feel a similar sense of floating.

Sean says

Down-at-the-heels photography enthusiast Montès arrives in the sleepy beach town where he was conceived, following the death of the father he never knew, having been sheltered by his mother in the place where she had returned, immediately upon her discovery of his father engaged in relations with the maid. Despite being due an inheritance of land worth millions, Montès shows no interest in his pending financial concerns, instead choosing to shack up in a cheap hotel, befriending the maid's children and carrying on a tentative emotional relationship with their mother, while trying to steer clear of their father, a has-been boxer and petty thief. Thus is the stage set for tragedy.

Simon's style is expansive and cinematic, with long elegant sentences sometimes stretching for pages at a time. Narrated by an unnamed acquaintance of Montès, the story moves along at a steady clip, enhanced rather than hampered by the rich level of scenic description. Montès himself is an enigmatic character: magnetic yet unaware of his magnetism, imbued with a poet's sensibility, passive to the point of near inertia.

Simon has 706 ratings and 66 reviews on Goodreads, which is pretty modest for someone who wrote 21 books and won the Nobel Prize for Literature (1985). For comparison, consider Emmanuel Bove, a still relatively buried writer currently undergoing a slight renaissance, who has 411 ratings and 49 reviews. Finally, think about someone like Anna Kavan, who in her post-GR heyday now boasts 2,253 ratings and 356 ratings.

Fun fact about Simon from his obituary in The Guardian: even after becoming a Nobel laureate, he insisted on his profession being recorded as viticulteur, or grape farmer, instead of writer.

Some excerpts from a 1992 interview with Claude Simon in the Paris Review:

INTERVIEWER

Did the writings of Sartre and Camus have a great influence on your own work?

SIMON

I consider the writings of Camus and Sartre to be absolutely worthless. Sartre's work is, above all else, dishonest and malevolent. If I have admitted to any influences, they have been those of Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Joyce, Proust, and Faulkner. All my writing comes from personal experience.

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INTERVIEWER

Some have said that it was after you wrote Le Sacre du printemps in the fifties that you became a "new novelist."

SIMON

Since the majority of professional critics do not read the books of which they speak, mountains of nonsense have been spoken and written about the nouveau roman. The name refers to a group of several French writers who find the conventional and academic forms of the novel insupportable, just as Proust and Joyce did long before them. Apart from this common refusal, each of us has worked through his own voice; the voices are very different, but this does not prevent us from having mutual esteem and a feeling of solidarity with one another.

INTERVIEWER

What distinguishes your voice from those of the other new novelists?

SIMON

Beginning with *The Grass*, my novels are more and more based on my life and require very little fiction—in the end, really none at all.

INTERVIEWER

If you had to attach a label to your type of writing, what would it be, if not *nouveau roman*?

SIMON

Labels are always dangerous. You oblige me to repeat myself: if there is anything new in the novel, after the abandonment of the fable, it began in this century with Joyce and Proust.

INTERVIEWER

You once said you were bored by nineteenth-century realism. Did you choose your style of writing in reaction to this, to write a novel you felt was truly representative of reality?

SIMON

There is no such thing as a “real” representation of “reality.” Except, perhaps, in algebraic formulae. All the literary schools pretend that they are more realistic than their predecessors. Who knows what reality is? The impressionists stopped pretending to represent the visible world and presented the public with the “impressions” they received from it. If it’s true that we only perceive the exterior world in fragments, the canvases of the cubists’ “synthetic” period are realistic. More realistic still are the “assemblages” of Schwitters, Rauschenberg, or Nevelson.

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INTERVIEWER

What do you want your readers to learn from your books?

SIMON

They’ll learn nothing. I have no messages to deliver. I hope only that they will find pleasure. The nature of this pleasure is difficult to define. One part is what Roland Barthes has called recognition—the recognition of sentiments or feelings one has experienced oneself. The other is the discovery of what one had *not* known about oneself. Johann Sebastian Bach defined this sort of pleasure as “the expected unexpected.”

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INTERVIEWER

Trains appear often in your novels—what do they symbolize?

SIMON

Nothing but trains.

Jamie says

This book deserves a review, so I am writing one.

This is post-modern French literature, written in a stream-of-consciousness style. I first read it in an upper level English lit class, and fell in love with it instantly. Most of my classmates thought I was crazy, but my professor smiled and nodded his head. I think it is still my favorite book of all time, but honestly, I have been unable to read it all the way through again, and have been rereading parts of it for the last ten years. This is the kind of book that requires plenty of time and complete dedication from the reader. It is the kind of book you study intently, and then write a dissertation.

The narrator's first sentence is five pages long, and contains dialogue and parentheses, and parentheses within parentheses. The entire book continues like that. If you lose track of the narrative, the whole thing blurs, you reread the same passage over and over, your eyes close, and you have no idea what is happening in the story when you wake up an hour later. (This has happened to me countless times.) I find I can keep my focus when I read this aloud. When I do this, I am stunned by the beauty of its construction. I marvel at the

adjectives (usually three at a time, each more descriptive and specific than the last), revel in the way the words flow, and am amazed at how easy it is to understand and comprehend. I love the awkwardness of the main character, Montes, and the smallness and meanness of many of the other characters. This book is about the struggle for survival, and being human, but that doesn't describe the book at all. I feel more accurate by saying this book is art, an art form at its very best.

Scott Cox says

This was a rather dark, surreal-type novel, not atypical for Claude Simon's "nouveau roman" style. This was an individualistic experimental writing style, not unlike that used by Franz Kafka or other "absurdist" writers (Becket, etc.). This novel is a story of a middle-aged Frenchman, Antoine Montes, and the colorful people he meets (hotel waitress, Gypsies) in a small French town in the Pyrenees. The wind, a frequent metaphor in the book, may pertain to the somewhat circular aspect of the plot, or the lives of the characters. I would relate the following section to highlight Simon's thought: "That is, beyond wondering if someone was good or bad, or if life itself was good or bad, and even, more simply, what terms like ‘good’ or ‘bad’ could mean and what ingenious subtlety or (if, as is commonly admitted, what we call ‘right,’ the law, is only the ratification of an equilibrium of forces) what forces determine the line not to be crossed, the limit separating what is bad from what is not, what is permitted from what is not . . . “ By the way, Simon’s writing style is also noted for his massively long sentences and paragraphs, with or without punctuation.

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Fathi says

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