



# Maigret, Simenon and France: Social Dimensions of the Novels and Stories

*Bill Alder*

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Georges Simenon (1903-1989) was a phenomenally successful author of crime fiction. His 75 Maigret novels and 28 Maigret short stories were published between 1931 and 1972 to great international acclaim (he is the only non-anglophone crime writer to have achieved such renown). His Maigret stories are regarded by many as having established a new direction in crime fiction, emphasizing social and psychological portraiture rather than focussing on a puzzle to be solved or on "action." This book examines the importance of social class and social change in the Maigret stories, giving a particular emphasis to the early formative novels and the development of plot, characterization and setting. The author seeks to establish the extent to which Simenon's portrait of French society is historically accurate and the nature of the influence of the author's own class position and ideology on his fiction.

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