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February 2005
'Je pense, donc je suis les traces':
a literary and historical analysis
of the Enlightenment, modernity
and detective fiction in French

E. H. Caswell

Presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of BA(Hons)
in French at the University of Otago

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Introduction

« Ces longues chaînes de raisons, toutes simples et faciles, dont les géomètres ont coutume de se servir pour parvenir à leurs plus difficiles démonstrations, m'avaient donné occasion de m'imaginer que toutes les choses qui peuvent tomber sous la connaissance des hommes s'entresuivent en même façon, et, que, pourvu seulement qu'on s'abstienne d'en recevoir aucune pour vraie qui ne le soit, et qu'on garde toujours l'ordre qu'il faut pour les déduire les unes des autres, il n'y en peut avoir de si éloignées auxquelles enfin on ne parvienne... »

(From René Descartes Discours de la méthode, 1637)

Detective fiction, it has been suggested, “...more than any other form of literature, is the product of a society and a way of life.” The aim of this study is to investigate the ways in which detective fiction is a product of the modern era. It will be argued in my dissertation that the modern notion of reason, an idea in development since the seventeenth century and vital to the eighteenth-century siècle des Lumières, lies at the basis of modern thought. As such, it is key to understanding the historical changes which led to industrialisation and urban modernity. As both the idea of reason and the material conditions of modernity are referenced in prominent ways in the detective fiction genre, it will be an important aim of this thesis to show how the connection between these concepts has helped to shape the genre. In order to achieve this aim, three authors writing in French whose careers span the twentieth and early twenty-first century have been chosen, with a select

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1 Rene Descartes, Discours de la méthode, 1637, reprinted with an introduction and notes by Gilbert Gadoffre (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1949), 19.
2 Julian Symons, Bloody Murder: from the detective story to the crime novel: a history (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 241. Other authors echo this sentiment. See, for example, the work of Jacques Dubois, who states that “[i]l n’est guère de genre plus ancré dans son temps, plus inscrit dans sa culture,” or Francis Lacassin’s description of it as “un produit, une scorie de la civilisation urbaine.” Jacques Dubois, Le Roman policier ou la modernité (Paris: Armand Colin, 2005), 26, 46; Francis Lacassin, Mythologie du roman policier, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Paris: Union Générale d’Éditions, 1987), 1:13-14.
number of works from their writings analysed in detail. The authors in question, Maurice Leblanc, Georges Simenon and Fred Vargas, have a number of similarities and differences which, I argue, make the present study both a worthwhile endeavour and an interesting one. All three authors have received acclaim for their writing. Although Leblanc’s acclaim was bestowed by the public rather than critics (perhaps owing to the low status of writing in this genre at the time), both Simenon and Vargas have been recognised by the public and literary critics alike. In addition, the fact that all three authors use recurring characters has allowed me to investigate the reasoning methods of these fictional detectives over more than one of their works. By combining literary and historical discussion with close reading of the selected texts, I will show that the basis of detective fiction lies in a special connection between reason and modernity, as well as indicating certain changes that have occurred within the genre over the course of the last century.

The notion of reason and its relationship with modernity is the subject of the first chapter of this dissertation. Both the Enlightenment and modernity are slippery notions which mean different things to different people. The innumerable scholarly viewpoints on how the Enlightenment might best be understood indicate the pitfalls for scholars in these areas. Modernity is also a much-debated notion. The etymological roots of the concept of modernity can variously be traced to the mediaeval period in Latin, to the seventeenth century in English or to mid-nineteenth century France. For some modernity is an artistic concept first developed by the critic and poet Charles Baudelaire in the 1860s. Modernity in this framework is a preoccupation with documenting the particular ephemeral beauty of an age, and is therefore more

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like a variety of successive modernities than one historical tradition.\textsuperscript{5} The idea of modernity as all that is present, ephemeral or fugitive has also been discussed outside the confines of art.\textsuperscript{6} The first chapter of my work will synthesise elements of the two concepts – establishing, first, the centrality of reason to the Enlightenment, and then, secondly, the legacy reason has bequeathed to the modern world, and the way in which industrial modernity (more than aesthetic modernity) can be seen as a product of the eighteenth-century revolution in knowledge.

The emergence of detective fiction and its connection with the centrality of reason in ‘enlightened’ modernity is the focus of my second chapter. The genre has long been maligned for its interest in and readership among the lower levels of society, its pandering to the violent desires of readers and its lack of literary merit.\textsuperscript{7} The notion of a prurient interest on the part of detective fiction in violent impulses or behaviours has since been rejected by critics, along with the notion that detective novels are an inferior form of literature. It is clear that many readers of detective fiction, particularly in the early stages of the genre, can have had little objection to the often sanitised representation of violent crime which the works portrayed, due in large part to the violence in their own lives.\textsuperscript{8} The argument regarding the merits of detective fiction is part of the rich background of scholarship on the topic of the detective fiction genre, some of which I will attempt to synthesise in my work.

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 48-49.
\textsuperscript{7} The connection between detective fiction and sexual preoccupations has also been investigated, although seemingly less thoroughly. Dennis Porter, \textit{The Pursuit of Crime: art and ideology in detective fiction} (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981), 53-54; Dubois, 145.
\textsuperscript{8} Symons, 19; Dubois, 178. This is especially true since it has been argued that it was possible to distance oneself from the reality of the dead bodies seen in the morgue, let alone the fictional ones of detective stories. Schwartz, 87.
Detective fiction, with its playing out of the age-old opposition of good and evil, has often been seen to have strong links to modernity.\(^9\) It is self-evidently the case that the emergence of detective fiction coincided with that of modern capitalism (although the roots of the latter can be found in the Middle Ages).\(^{10}\) Although some scholars have seen the origins of the detective tale anywhere from the Bible or the myth of Oedipus, to the ratiocinative feats of Voltaire’s Zadig, it first emerged in a clearly recognisable form in Edgar Allen Poe’s 1841 short story, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*. Poe’s example was not imitated for some time, the next major figure being the Sherlock Holmes stories of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, written from the late 1880s. In the French context, detective fiction began to become popular from the late nineteenth century, with authors such as Emile Gaboriau, Gaston Leroux and Maurice Leblanc contributing works. Many scholars have remarked upon the almost simultaneous development of modernity and detective fiction. The figure of the detective and the preoccupation with finding a rational solution to the most seemingly unsolvable mysteries can be taken as proof of the centrality of reason to detective fiction. These ideas, as well as the ways in which detective fiction discusses aspects of industrial modernity, will be explored in this second section of my argument.

In the third chapter, I undertake a close analysis of the chosen texts in order to test the hypotheses of the previous two sections. Arsène Lupin was, at least in the period before World War I, one of the best-loved heroes of

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\(^9\) Dubois, 55, 98, 100, 109, 120, 135; Lacassin, 1:14-16; Nelly Stéphane, “Mais où sont les Lupins d’antan?” *Europe: revue mensuelle littéraire* 604-605 (August-September 1979), 85; Sue Neale, “Contemporary French Crime Fiction: a search for the hidden with particular reference to *Sous les vents de Neptune* by Fred Vargas,” 2001 Group E-Journal (September 2006) <http://www.extra.rdg.ac.uk/2001group/Articles-StudyDay/Vargas%20(Sue%20Neale).pdf> (26 Sep 2006), 8; Sara Poole, “Rompols not of the Bailey: Fred Vargas and the polar as mini-proto-mythe,” *French Cultural Studies* xii (2001), 105. It has, in fact, been asserted that detective fiction is, as a subgenre of the *roman populaire*, one of the only genres to have been created as a product of modernity, and, aside from the later medical novel, one of the genres of most recent creation. Dubois, 16.

\(^{10}\) Jacques Dubois, for example, highlights the emergence of the genre in more than one country “...au moment où le capitalisme libéral ébranle l’ancien monde et crée les conditions d’émergence d’une culture neuve...” Dubois, 7. Ernst Kaemmel’s findings are similar. Ernst Kaemmel, “Literature Under the Table: the detective novel and its social mission,” trans. Glenn W. Most, in Glenn W. Most and William W. Stowe, eds., *The Poetics of Murder: detective fiction and literary theory* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), 57.
popular literature.\textsuperscript{11} Appearing in over fifty works between 1905 and 1939, he would have been cast aside early as a character, had public and editorial pressure not convinced Leblanc to continue using him.\textsuperscript{12} Although Lupin was not strictly speaking a detective, the function he fulfils in the texts is largely that of the classic investigator.\textsuperscript{13} It was for this reason, as well as the fact that official members of the police force are well represented in the texts, that the works were chosen for the present study. Much of Lupin’s success was tied up in his lack of respect for authority, as well as the fact that he first appeared at a time when anarchism was enjoying a phase of popularity.\textsuperscript{14} He has even been seen as a prototype for the working class hero made good.\textsuperscript{15} From inauspicious beginnings, Lupin was able to raise himself up to a position where he passed unremarked through the highest social circles, all the better to relieve those he encountered of their most precious possessions. By the end of Leblanc’s series of novels and short stories, Lupin’s status had evolved from the somewhat irreverent position of solving enigmas and robbing the rich to a more heroic role in transforming the fate of his native France—a shift which can be seen as either Lupin’s atonement for his past sins or as the hyperbolic extension of a successful formula.\textsuperscript{16} Overall, however, the episodes are resplendent with Lupin’s wit and insight, and all of his adventures take place with a sense of humour that lightens the mood of even the tensest situations.\textsuperscript{17}

The work of Georges Simenon has certainly been assigned a full share of literary merit. His extensive oeuvre, totalling over 100 works in the Maigret series alone, has been received well both by the public and by

\textsuperscript{11} Porter, 206; Jean-Paul Colin, “Modernisme ou modernité du langage lupinien?” \textit{Europe: revue mensuelle littéraire} 604-605 (August-September 1979), 56.


\textsuperscript{13} Porter, 206. Lupin was also known, amongst his many disguises, to present himself as a detective.

\textsuperscript{14} Claude Aziza and Anne Rey, \textit{La Littérature policière} (Paris: Pocket, 2003), 49; Symons, 18; Wolf, 12; Olivier-Martin, 5; Maurice Dubourg, “Arsène Lupin, témoin de son temps et témoin de l’histoire,” \textit{Europe: revue mensuelle littéraire} 604-605 (August-September 1979), 17, 19.

\textsuperscript{15} Aziza and Rey, 49; Olivier-Martin, 5. Nelly Wolf challenges this view. Wolf, 13.

\textsuperscript{16} Symons, 18; Lacassin, I:144-146; Dubourg, 17.

\textsuperscript{17} Aziza and Rey, 49.
critics. 18 Julian Symons, writing in the 1970s, named him as the only Continental crime writer since Gaston Leroux and Maurice Leblanc to have become famous outside of his own country. 19 Scholars have investigated, among other aspects of his work, the ways in which he drew on the tradition of French realism and his almost unparalleled ability to evoke atmosphere. 20 His characters come from a variety of social settings, together representing a slice of “average Frenchness” from whence the works’ richness is drawn. 21 The central character certainly displays none of Lupin’s ostentatiousness, but is instead unpretentious and approachable, and perhaps more human than many earlier fictional detectives. 22 His home life is stable and comfortable, helped by the fact that his wife, who cannot even bring herself to use his first name, is “the most unliberated of females”. 23 The scholarly consensus is that it is his empathy – his gift for “absorbing [human nature] like a sponge” – rather than an overly developed intellect which helps Maigret to solve crimes. 24 His world is one in which any person (even Maigret himself) can become an assassin in the right circumstances, and where many criminals deserve sympathy. 25 Another of Simenon’s strengths was his ability to invoke fully-formed atmospheres without lengthy descriptions, and the control exerted in his writing as a whole was praised. 26

Overall, the Maigret novels have been seen to “encapsulate the peculiar charm of the Frenchness of things French”, an ability which has seen them win countless fans both in francophone Europe and elsewhere. 27 The

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18 Symons, 143; Vareille, L’Homme masqué, 173; Dubois, 171.
19 Symons, 143.
20 Simenon, Maigret à New York, 580, 590, 646; Monsieur Gallet, 9, 103, 120; Porter, 70; Symons, 143-144; Dubois, 82, 122, 171; Cobb, 188, 193, 197-198; Lacassin, II:15; Michel Lemoine, Paris chez Simenon (Paris: Société d’Édition des Belles Lettres, 2000), 10.
21 Porter, 70.
23 Cobb, 195. In the chosen works she variously frets over setting the table and fails to question her husband as to his reasons for travelling more or less unannounced to the south of France, Switzerland, or even America. Simenon, Maigret à New York, 583, 683; Maigret voyage, 127. She does, however, appear to be happy in her role. Gilles Henry, Commissaire Maigret, qui êtes-vous? (Paris: Plon, 1977), 137, 151, 161.
24 Porter, 207-208; Symons, 146.
25 Aziza and Rey, 69; Dubois, 172, 185.
26 Porter, 71, 214; Symons, 145.
27 Porter, 71.
fact that the author was Belgian has not been overlooked either by critics or, indeed, in the present study. It appears that Simenon’s status as something of an outsider to French culture gave him both a certain distance and high degree of insider knowledge. While the detective fiction studied here is often referred to in the following pages as ‘French’, this has simply been used as shorthand for ‘detective fiction in French’ or ‘francophone detective fiction’, the latter term tending to imply writing from further afield than France or Belgium. It also reflects the fact that the Maigret series is set, for the most part, in Paris, and centres on a French detective. The importance of this urban setting will also be discussed in the following chapters.

The literary reputation of Fred Vargas’ works, “exceptionally well-made, and well-written, contributions to the roman policier,” is assured. Since the publication of her first novel in the 1980s to the present day, she has enjoyed both critical and public acclaim, which has seen her take a place in “la meilleure tradition française”. In a market where the average detective novel sells 5000 copies, she has been known to regularly sell three times that number or even substantially more. In her works, she can be seen to draw on her training as an archaeologist and historian in order to create texts which are complex and rich in historical and cultural allusions. Her recurring detective, Jean-Baptiste Adamsberg, has been a favourite of fans since his first appearance, and is the character studied here. The humour found in her novels, which is absent from the works of many of her contemporaries, engages the reader and makes her novels a pleasure to read. Her work both belongs to and transcends the French detective fiction and néo-polar trends, and provides a rich tapestry of characters, settings, themes and allusions upon which I have been able to draw.

28 Porter, 202.  
29 Poole, 108.  
30 Aziza and Rey, 183; Poole, 95.  
32 Poole, 99-100.  
33 Sara Poole describes how Vargas has gone beyond the “nitty-gritty social realism” of her early néo-polar works. Ibid., 96, 98-99.
Notes on sources:

In undertaking this research I have encountered a number of problems which, while not insurmountable, have made the task at hand more difficult. The first of these was to do with the availability of sources. Because of the nature of the topic chosen, I have suffered variously from both an abundance and a scarcity of sources. The various strands of scholarship which I have woven into my argument meant, on the one hand, that it was not possible for me to be fully versed in all the complexities of debates. I was therefore reliant to a certain extent on informative secondary sources, such as those of Dorinda Outram, Harold Mah and Dena Goodman on the topic of the Enlightenment, which gave an overview of major works, and pointed to certain problems with the notion of Enlightenment. It was in no way feasible, nor intended, to deal with the scholarly debate about this period in great depth. Rather, I set out to indicate the importance of this discussion for the detective fiction genre. On the other hand, I have found that a small number of works were difficult, if not impossible, to source. While I was able to use a number of French sources while in Paris on in-country study, for any sources that came to light since my return I have been largely at the mercy of the resources available locally. This problem was not only one of secondary sources, but also of primary. Gaston Leroux’s Le Mystère de la chambre jaune, for example, was available only in a version written in simplified French. When selecting works by or on my chosen authors, particularly in the case of Fred Vargas, I was similarly limited to what was readily available. While I have been able to use a suitable range of works, therefore, and no essential works were lacking, certain important difficulties have nevertheless been encountered. I have not found it necessary to enter here into a detailed discussion of the works selected and my own position within the scholarship, as this will be achieved both within my argument and in the critical bibliography.

Notes on Terminology:

I have used the phrase ‘detective fiction’ (along with a few synonyms added for variety) to cover the entirety of a genre which is sometimes broken down into subgroups including ‘crime stories’, ‘mystery stories’, ‘police
novels' ‘and thrillers’. In this I am following the example of scholars such as Julian Symons or Sue Neale who see the variety of labels as being more confusing than helpful. It is my belief that it is more useful to acknowledge such issues at the outset and decide on a method of proceeding, rather than using various labels and further complicating issues which are by no means simple.

Final Postscript: I hope that by taking this approach to the study of detective fiction I am not falling into the trap highlighted by the scholars Anne Mullen and Emer O’Beirne. In their introduction to an edited volume on the genre, Mullen and O’Beirne lamented those studies which see merit in detective fiction only insofar as it is a mirror for society. While my own background in history has perhaps led me to investigate elements of style and technique to a lesser extent than would a literary scholar, it is not because I value only those works in which the style is so neutral and unobtrusive as to appear invisible. The authors I have chosen have merit for their literary accomplishments as well as for their reflection of various attitudes towards modernity — accomplishments which have been recognised by various fans and critics and have been recompensed both in terms of sales and of prizes awarded. I feel, furthermore, that the third chapter of my work, which consists largely of a close reading of the chosen texts, gives sufficient space to the works themselves.

The willing scholar could find many issues within this work which merit further study. This study may be understood primarily as a synthesis of various areas of research, and is therefore more of an overview than a comprehensive study. Subsequent studies could develop either the issues relating to reason or those relating to modernity in greater detail, could focus on only one of the authors chosen in this survey or could select different

34 See, for example, Deleuze, “Introduction,” 10, 27.
35 Symons, 9; Neale, 1. I have, however, chosen to use ‘detective novel’ rather than Symons’ ‘crime novel’ or Neale’s ‘crime fiction’.
36 Anne Mullen and Emer O’Beirne, “Introduction,” in Anne Mullen and Emer O’Beirne, eds., Crime Scenes: detective narratives in European culture since 1945 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 1. The function of this genre as a mirror for society has been treated less problematically by other scholars. Porter, 1, 115.
authors entirely. The changing status of women within the works is an interesting element which has been largely overlooked in this dissertation, while the conclusions which I have ultimately drawn, including the reflection of postmodernism within the genre, are also areas of possible further study. While the various areas of research covered in this study have been extensively written on, there have been few attempts to combine these various elements, and thus to gain a better understanding of a fascinating genre. While my work is by no means comprehensive, therefore, it is a starting point from which further study on the changing relationship between the Enlightenment, modernity and detective fiction in French could be undertaken.

Before beginning my argument proper, I wish to briefly mention the title I have chosen for this work. "Je pense, donc je suis les traces" is an obvious pun on the philosophe Descartes' statement. Descartes, although predating the historical period of the Enlightenment, developed theories on reason which were central to the ideas of later scholars, an idea which will be expanded on in the first chapter of this survey. Scholars have seen his systematic rejection of authority in any and all spheres of knowledge as a basis upon which Enlightenment and modern thought was able to develop.37

1. Reason and Modernity

« Je me promenais vers le petit bois, où j’ai rencontré depuis le vénérable Eunuque et le très illustre grand Veneur. J’ai vu sur le sable les traces d’un animal, et j’ai jugé aisément que c’était celles d’un petit chien. Des sillons légers et longs, imprimés sur de petites éminences de sable entre les traces des pattes, m’ont fait connaître que c’était une chienne dont les mamelles étaient pendantes, et qu’ainsi elle avait fait des petits il y a peu de jours. D’autres traces en un sens différent, qui paraissaient toujours avoir rasé la surface du sable à côté des pattes de devant, m’ont appris qu’elle avait les oreilles très longues... »

(From the episode Le Chien et le cheval in Zadig, ou la destinée.)

While even a superficial study of the Enlightenment reveals the centrality of the idea of reason to this period, what is not as immediately obvious is that this idea has remained important to our day. Many historical studies of modernity overlook the importance of Enlightenment thought entirely. Instead they focus on an examination of industrialisation, which in turn led to the growth of cities, new social models and other developments associated with the modern period. The major limitation of such an argument is that it fails to consider the notion of reason as the organising principle lying behind and anticipating these historical changes.

The legacy of the Enlightenment was manifold, but can be reduced for the present purposes to two major trends. Firstly, as the very notion of light within its name suggests, the Enlightenment took as its basis the concept of reason clearing away the shadows to illuminate a radiant future for mankind. Beginning with scholars such as Francis Bacon and René Descartes, and continuing through the Enlightenment proper in the works of Voltaire, Diderot, d’Alembert and others, new theories on the acquisition of knowledge.

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emerged, in which the inductive procedure of testing what constituted ‘clear and distinct’ knowledge – that is, the epistemological foundation of knowledge – became paramount. This new position about the status of reason contrasted with the older position about inherited knowledge, especially the revealed truth of religion (which focused on the truth of a transcendent God rather than the rationality of human beings themselves). Secondly, and concomitantly, with the Enlightenment a new sense of what man’s ultimate goals were arose. Rather than enduring conditions on Earth in the hope of a happier life in the hereafter, the theorists of the Enlightenment believed firmly that progress was both possible and desirable, and rational progress would achieve a better life for human beings. The legacy of reason, therefore, with its echoes to the present day, is one which merits greater study.

The first concrete signs of an emerging revolution regarding knowledge can be seen in Francis Bacon’s 1620 Novum Organum.3 Building on the Renaissance interest on the human experience and the growing interest of scholars in the physical world around them, Bacon set out certain problems which existed at the time of writing.4 As Bacon saw it, the major flaw in the methods then used to acquire knowledge was that, if the correct principles had not been used from the outset, errors would continue to accrue:

“Though all the wits of the ages should meet together and combine and transmit their labors, yet will no great progress ever be made in science by means of anticipations; because radical errors in the first concoction of the mind are not to be cured by the excellence of functions and remedies subsequent.”5

The solution, according to Bacon, was to “begin anew from the very foundations”, clearing away ‘idols’ and ascertaining what was actually true

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4 Laurent, 14.

5 Bacon, 40.
through the method of induction, or reasoning from detailed facts to general principles, rather than simply taking as given the beliefs of the majority.\(^6\)

The ideas seen in this early document on the importance of a new procedural approach to the question of what we can know received confirmation in the work of René Descartes. Descartes echoed the ideas of Bacon in many ways, including his assertion that the reasoning abilities of one man could be equal to the knowledge accumulated by many over time.\(^7\) Rather than merely contenting himself with pointing out the faults of his predecessors, however, Descartes expanded on the method needed to arrive at objectively true knowledge. He did not suggest a wholesale rejection of all inherited ideas, but rather believed that only those ideas which stood up to reason could be accepted.\(^8\) Reason for Descartes was a process based on mathematical principles.\(^9\) By using this inductive method, he believed it possible to avoid all knowledge which he did not know to be true, to reduce all problems to the smallest knowable units in order better to test them, and to create a sense of order in his thoughts, moving from the simplest to the most complex.\(^10\) Any problem could be solved in this way, "...pourvu seulement qu'on s'abstienne d'en recevoir aucune pour vraie qui ne le soit, et qu'on garde toujours l'ordre qu'il faut pour les déduire les unes des autres."\(^11\) Descartes attached his importance to the method he had created rather than to the conclusions he had reached through its application.\(^12\) It was not because his ideas were entirely new that Descartes is so central to the idea of reason, but rather because he combined scepticism about inherited beliefs with a belief that systematic logic could reveal objective truths.\(^13\)

\(^6\) Ibid., 40-41.
\(^7\) Descartes, 13.
\(^8\) Ibid., 14. Descartes’ much quoted phrase “Je pense, donc je suis” is the ultimate reduction of his theory as, after all, our own existence is the only thing of which we can be absolutely certain. Frederick B. Artz, The Enlightenment in France (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 1968), 16.
\(^9\) Bouquet, 19; Artz, 16.
\(^10\) Descartes, 17-19.
\(^11\) Ibid., 19.
\(^12\) Ibid., 15. Later scholars have largely done the same. Bouquet, 19; Laurent, 15, 17, 33; Artz, 17.
\(^13\) Brumfitt, 28.
Before tracing the idea of reason in the Enlightenment proper, or *siècle des Lumières*, it is important to have an understanding of the period, and of the scholarly debates and problems which surround it. These include both general issues, such as the inclusion in scholarship of a consideration of different national contexts and social factors; and elements which pertain to France, such as the importance of censorship and its effect on publications and open debate. Firstly, one should consider, when studying the Enlightenment, to what extent scholarship has changed in recent years. Many founding works attempted to synthesise the thought of Enlightenment scholars, often equating common trends in France with the Enlightenment in general.¹⁴ Scholarship of this type is represented by the work of historians such as Peter Gay, whose large two-volume work *The Enlightenment: an interpretation* was published between 1966 and 1969.¹⁵ Most modern research, however, has strayed from this tendency. Scholars such as Dorinda Outram and Dena Goodman instead highlight the fact that many seemingly general trends varied between and even within national contexts.¹⁶ This is supported by evidence from primary sources, such as the early police reports of a Joseph d’Hémery, who never appears to have conceived of the various Enlightenment writers he investigated as belonging to any kind of cohesive group.¹⁷ Modern scholarship has similarly re-evaluated social factors as another context which

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¹⁵ Gay’s work was an attempt to rescue the period from those who felt that it was responsible for many of the problems of the modern age, and was a real achievement in terms of Enlightenment scholarship, even if subsequent works beginning with that of Robert Darnton have discredited his approach. Mah, 4-6, 8, 11; Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: a cultural history of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 64. Darton’s approach has likewise been criticised by later historians. Daniel Gordon, “The Great Enlightenment Massacre,” in Haydn T. Mason, ed., *The Darnton Debate: books and revolution in the eighteenth century* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1998), 129-132.

¹⁶ Mah, 6; Outram, 8; Leigh, 57, 66. Some earlier works also reject the idea of unified thought on certain topics, while still talking about some sort of ‘party line’: Artz, 36, 38.

¹⁷ Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (London: Penguin, 1991), 175. Even the contributors to the massive *Encyclopédie* project were not investigated in any systematic fashion. It does appear, however, that they began to be linked in some minds by the 1750s. Darnton, 177, 202.
coloured the experience of different countries.\(^{18}\) Goodman, for example, devotes a significant part of her work to rehabilitating the importance of the *salons* to the development of French thought, rather than seeing them, as some previous scholars had, as sites of corrupting social niceties and feminine influences.\(^{19}\)

Factors pertaining more particularly to the context of France should also be kept in mind when studying the Enlightenment. The level of censorship and repression in France was one such unique element.\(^{20}\) Both Church and State in eighteenth-century France were powerful and intolerant.\(^{21}\) This intolerance had an effect both on the number of publications in France and the development of a public sphere – elements upon which a modern understanding of the *siècle des Lumières* is based. An inspector of police had the responsibility for ensuring that new publications were not crossing the boundaries of appropriateness, but was also responsible for censoring pamphlets, songs and speeches.\(^{22}\) This inspector and his subordinates remained very much an organ of both Church and State.\(^{23}\) While many of the individual theorists of the period may have been French, many of their publications thus took place in more tolerant countries such as the Netherlands.\(^{24}\) The notion that the spread of Enlightenment thought can be traced through an explosion in publications cannot, therefore, be reconciled with the available evidence in France. The repressive climate in France

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\(^{18}\) Mah, 6, 9; Goodman, 61, 63. Brumfitt also provides an early example of attempting to re-evaluate the importance of social contexts for Enlightenment thought. Brumfitt, 24, 26.

\(^{19}\) Goodman, 3, 9, 304. This is seen in the work of other recent scholars. See, for example, Laurent, 27. For an example of the type of scholarship against which these works argue, see Artz, 42, 44-45.

\(^{20}\) Many scholars note a particularly repressive atmosphere in France. See, for example, Calinescu, 38; Allen, 9.


\(^{22}\) Harvey, 147; Williams, 212-213, 217, 221. Darnton states that the approximately 500 reports of Joseph d’Hémeray constitute something of a survey of literary Paris of the mid-eighteenth-century, covering around one third of all writers working in France. D’Hémeray’s approach is praised by Darnton for its methodical, almost modern aspects, although it is clear that he was still an instrument of a repressive government and not a forward-thinking independent bureaucrat. Darnton, 142-143, 146, 152, 154-55, 173.

\(^{23}\) As an agent of the French government and clergy, it was often works which displeased these forces which were singled out for persecution. Darnton, 153.

\(^{24}\) Laurent, 11.
similarly limited the development of the public sphere which Jürgen Habermas has singled out as being a key to modernity and the Enlightenment. The modern public sphere was a space in which new ideas were gathered and discussed, and where public opinion, whether favourable or critical, could form based on the use of reason.\textsuperscript{25} According to Habermas, it was around the time of the Enlightenment that this public sphere developed. What may have been overlooked, however, is the fact that this evidence applies mainly to the German context, the strong grip of the French government and church on open debate having effectively limited that country’s public debate.\textsuperscript{26} The importance of studying the French context in its own right, rather than merely following trends of Enlightenment scholarship, thus becomes evident.

The *siècle des Lumières*, traditionally dated from the period between the death of Louis XIV in 1715 to the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789, was a time of great progress on many intellectual fronts.\textsuperscript{27} A traditional view of the period states that for many thinkers it was a time in which the developments of the preceding century were built upon, and previously accepted limitations on intellectual pursuits were rejected wholesale.\textsuperscript{28} It was thus a time in which scholars attempted to revolt against the primacy of church teachings and the ramifications these had for human intelligence.\textsuperscript{29} In attempting this, scholars were continuing the work of those seventeenth-century predecessors who had begun to reject “the tyranny of medieval Scholasticism and the fetters of Renaissance idolatry of classical antiquity”.\textsuperscript{30} Importantly, however, the scholars of the Enlightenment were not simply rejecting what had gone before, but were attempting to install a new, and to

\textsuperscript{25} Whether or not this apparently representative public opinion truly reflected the views of the majority was another question Mah, 27-28. Other authors have based their arguments on the establishment of separate French private and public spheres in the modern sense by the time detective fiction was actually being written. Jacques Dubois, for example, discusses the genre as the growing middle class’s way of transgressing the divide and entering into the private sphere of the characters. Dubois, 28-29.

\textsuperscript{26} Other scholars do, however, make an argument for a public sphere having emerged at an earlier stage. See, for example, Goodman, 14-15, 165.

\textsuperscript{27} Bouquet, 25.

\textsuperscript{28} Artz, vii-viii, 30.

\textsuperscript{29} This was a release from a sort of ‘self-incurred immaturity’ in the German scholar Kant’s view. Outram, 1; Laurent, 3-4.

\textsuperscript{30} Călinescu, 23. See also Laurent, 33. This contrasts with the idea that Enlightenment scholars turned towards antiquity as an alternative authority to religious teachings. Mah, 71; Bouquet, 15-17, 64.
their minds better, method of acquiring information in its place.\textsuperscript{31} Reason was favoured as a way of arriving at an objective form of truth, and the theory was propounded that the only knowledge capable of being trusted was that which one could prove to oneself.\textsuperscript{32} This method had begun, as was previously established, in the works of Bacon and Descartes in the preceding century. While other thinkers chose not to maintain a sceptical belief only in one’s own rational existence, as Descartes had set out in his philosophy, there was nevertheless a general understanding that inherited knowledge must be questioned, and that true knowledge could only be acquired through reason and logic. This shift in the approach to intellectual problems led to the rise of the sciences and rational philosophy, and thus in turn to scientific methods of investigation and the emergence of scientific associations.\textsuperscript{33}

There were, however, limitations to this prominent treatment of reason. While the belief in reason was applicable to mankind in general, putting knowledge within the reach of any man who had the ability to reason, these same Enlightenment scholars largely excluded women as rational creatures.\textsuperscript{34} In addition, it should be kept in mind that, while Enlightenment theories clearly condemned some aspects of the church, the embracing of reason was not, in and of itself, anti-religious.\textsuperscript{35} Religious feeling varied from those who felt that reason was subordinate to the revealed truth of the Bible, to those deists who believed in a God, but not in the practices of the modern church.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{31}Brumfitt, 14. The new conceptualisation of the organisation of information was expressly set out by those writing the Encyclopédie. They rejected Francis Bacon’s earlier model of two trees of knowledge (one for revealed theology and one for natural) in favour of a single tree, on which both types of theology were subordinated to reason. The change can thus be seen to be revolutionary. Darnton, 195.

\textsuperscript{32}Artz, 31, 33.

\textsuperscript{33}Outram, 94; Bouquet, 66-67; Laurent, 17, 20, 28; Goodman, 269. It should be noted that the term ‘science’ is anachronistic in the period in question, being an invention of the nineteenth century to replace the term ‘natural philosophy’. Outram also notes that science did not then occupy the dominant position it holds in society today, although its importance grew during the Enlightenment. Outram, 101, 106, 108.

\textsuperscript{34}This fact was pointed out as early as the works of Mary Wollstonecraft. The ideas of more contemporary scholars on the salons can be seen as an extension of this notion. Outram, 79-80; Bouquet, 42; Artz, 30, 33.

\textsuperscript{35}Outram, 113; Bouquet, 43, 73-74. Călinescu argues that the connection between modern thought and secularism is relatively recent in its development and did not truly apply to many of the scholars working at the time. Călinescu, 59.

\textsuperscript{36}Brumfitt, 123; Bouquet, 22; Leigh, 71; Laurent, 3-4; Artz, 2. Blaise Pascal, although preceding the Enlightenment proper, is a good example of the idea that reason could
Then there were those, like Voltaire who, despite being deists, were strongly or even violently opposed to organised religion.\textsuperscript{37} It is possible to argue that some of the more extreme religious positions can be attributed in part to national context, and not merely to personal belief. In France, the level of oppression meant that the country’s Enlightenment tended, through necessity, to be particularly sceptical of the teachings of organised religion. In order to be able to freely discuss new ideas, French thinkers had often to favour highly radicalised positions about reason not maintained, for example, by Hume and Hobbes in the Scottish Enlightenment.\textsuperscript{38} It appears, furthermore, that the embracing of reason and science remained a form of protest in the French context for some time after the siècle des Lumières.\textsuperscript{39} It could thus be argued that reason came to be even more important to thinkers in the French context than it was elsewhere in the eighteenth century, or at least that the terrain was more contested that it was elsewhere. In any event, it is clear that both gender and religious feeling affected the way in which individuals approached the notion of reason.

The debate regarding reason can be traced in the arguments of innumerable Enlightenment thinkers, both in France and elsewhere. One of the major ideas which was propounded as a result of this development was that knowledge could be collected together, ordered and classified for the purpose of serving humanity.\textsuperscript{40} The first major dictionary and encyclopaedia projects thus began at this time. Foremost amongst the encyclopaedia projects of the eighteenth century, if for no other reason than for its scope and ambition, was the French Encyclopédie. Many scholars contributed sections to the work, but the names most associated with it are Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert, who oversaw it. Important information on the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{37} Artz, 79.
\item \textsuperscript{38} Brumfitt, 26; Artz, 34. The mass of ordinary French citizens, who were largely unconcerned by intellectual debates, continued despite even the upheavals of the Revolution to be practising, and probably unquestioning, Christians. Olwen Hufton, “What is Religious History Now?” in David Cannadine, ed., \textit{What is History Now?} (Basingstoke, England: Palgrave, 2002), 61, 75-76.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Harvey, 256-257.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Laurent, 23-25; Goodman, 33.
\end{itemize}
development of the idea of reason can be gleaned from d'Alembert's introduction to the *Encyclopédie* and Diderot's article on the subject of 'encyclopédie' itself.

The *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and d'Alembert was first published between 1751 and 1765 and spanned numerous volumes of text and illustrations. In his introduction, d'Alembert set out the goals of the project, which necessarily included discussion of the principle of reason employed by the contributors. According to d'Alembert, "[o]n peut diviser toutes nos connaissances en directes & en réfléchies...", that is to say into the facts whose truth can be ascertained immediately, and those which require the application of reason in order to make some sense of them.\(^{41}\) The reasoning method described by d'Alembert was similar to Descartes' inductive approach — information was to be broken down in a mathematical fashion into the smallest constituent parts and then reconstituted in order to arrive at objective truths. Hypotheses were to be avoided, and knowledge to be tested.\(^{42}\) Descartes had shown the way because he had "osé du moins montrer aux bons esprits à secoiffer le joug de la scholastique, de l'opinion, de l'autorité, en un mot des préjugés & de la barbarie..."\(^{43}\) The debt to Bacon was also acknowledged, with d'Alembert noting where the *Encyclopédie* had diverged from his course.\(^{44}\)

Denis Diderot expanded on the aim and method behind the project, highlighting the fact that Enlightenment thinkers wished to arrive at knowledge in order to share it with their fellow man and improve conditions

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\(^{41}\) Jean le Rond d'Alembert, "Discours préliminaire," in Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, eds., *L'Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts, et des métiers*, 1751-1765, reprinted in facsimile edition, 5 vols. (Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press, 1985), I:9. All spellings taken from the *Encyclopédie* are original, apart from the character 'f' which I have transcribed as 's'.

\(^{42}\) Ibid., I:10.

\(^{43}\) Ibid., I:15.

\(^{44}\) The main difference in the case of the encyclopaedists was that they, unlike Bacon, placed reason — the examination, comparison and digestion of information — above everything else, including religion. Ibid., I:14-15, 20, 22; Laurent, 38; Goodman, 25. D'Alembert described Bacon as "le plus grand, le plus universel, & le plus éloquent des Philosophes". D'Alembert, I:14.
for all.\textsuperscript{45} In praising the progress made thus far through the application of reason, Diderot can be seen to echo the writings of Descartes:

"Aujourd'hui que la Philosophie s'avance à grands pas; qu'elle soumet à son empire tous les objets de son effort; et que son ton est le ton dominant, & qu'on commence à secouer le joug de l'autorité & de l'exemple pour s'en tenir aux lois de la raison, il n'y a presque pas un ouvrage dont on soit entièrement satisfait. On trouve ces productions calquées sur celles des hommes, & non sur la vérité de la nature."\textsuperscript{46}

Like many other thinkers of his time, Diderot saw the solution to the problems which had long plagued mankind in the application of reason in an almost mathematical fashion, that is to say the reduction of problems to their constituent parts and their orderly reconstitution.\textsuperscript{47} The two major figures behind the \emph{Encyclopédie} thus showed it to be a true Enlightenment project both in the sense of being a product of its time and in the sense that it aimed to remove some of the darkness and confusion surrounding human knowledge.\textsuperscript{48}

The reasoning method on which the project was based was important both for contemporaries and for the subsequent development of rational thought.

Voltaire, in his \emph{Lettres sur les Anglais} of 1734, provides another insight into the development of the idea of reason by describing both the principles behind Bacon’s and Descartes’ works, and the contemporary reaction to them. Bacon, in Voltaire’s formulation, was a “grand philosophe, bon historien et écrivain élégant...”, whose legacy was immense.\textsuperscript{49} Voltaire cites Bacon’s \emph{Novum Organum} as the origin of a system by which man could truly come to know nature, even suggesting that the work of Isaac Newton was an extension of work already done by Bacon.\textsuperscript{50} As for Descartes, the transformation he had wrought on France effected, in Voltaire’s view, a huge

\textsuperscript{45}Diderot, I:1156, 1161; Goodman, 33.
\textsuperscript{46}Ibid., I:1156.
\textsuperscript{47}Ibid., I:1157-1161.
\textsuperscript{48}Bouquet, 111, 143.
\textsuperscript{49}François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, \emph{Lettres sur les Anglais}, 1733 [1734 in French], reprinted with an introduction and notes by Arthur Wilson-Green (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937), 40.
\textsuperscript{50}Ibid., 41, 43.
Despite the introduction of Newton’s ideas to the Continent, France continued to be firmly Cartesian for some time after it had become outmoded across the Channel. Voltaire admired the way in which Descartes had pursued his beliefs despite a high level of persecution in France, and saw his lasting influence in the transmission of the idea of reason to the world. As in the case of Bacon, Descartes’ importance was in his method for attaining reasoned knowledge. Voltaire can be seen to have taken on board the methods he had admired by the time he came to write his ‘conte philosophique’, *Zadig*, *ou la destinée*, in 1747. In a passage from *Zadig* the title character is seen to apply reason to evidence with results that verge on the supernatural. Moving from the simplest truths (the physical evidence he sees before him) to more complex conclusions, (the exact description of two animals), Zadig’s reasoning methods can be seen to have their origins in the theories of Voltaire himself, of his contemporaries Diderot and d’Alembert and of his predecessors Bacon and Descartes. By the time this story was published, therefore, the theories of reason which had been so radical a century before had become natural enough to be reproduced not only in reality, but also in fiction.

Having established the importance of the idea of reason to the Enlightenment, with reference to the French context, it is now useful to investigate the extent to which modern thought has as its basis the thought of the Enlightenment. Currents of thought changed radically over the period of Enlightenment – what was still in many ways mediaeval in the seventeenth century had become recognisably modern by the early nineteenth century. It has been suggested by some scholars that, although mankind has made unprecedented progress since the *siècle des Lumières*, the world is not far removed intellectually from the status quo of 1800. The achievements made

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51 Despite the supposedly English subject matter of the work, Descartes was included in a chapter on Newton.
52 Ibid., 53-54.
53 Ibid., 56.
55 Brumfitt, 11.
since then may have grown in scope, therefore, but the methods used are not seen to have changed substantially. On the social front (for example the belief in values such as liberty, tolerance and democracy), the same theorists would argue that we have changed even less. The theories of the Enlightenment, based on scientific methods of gathering information, the careful examination of evidence and testing of theories, are far closer to the modern approach than was the firm belief in revealed truth as a supreme, unquestionable authority.

It has been argued, furthermore, that the link between France and Enlightenment thought has remained particularly strong, with some scholars continuing to see trends of thought in France as Cartesian. This is supported by anecdotal evidence, such as the assertion of Francis Lacassin that Edgar Allen Poe naturally made his cerebral and ratiocinative detective a Frenchman, because of a long-standing connection between the French nation and rationality, at least in the opinion of the English-speaking world.

In order to be able to develop the argument that detective fiction reflects a kind of reason-based modernity, it is important to understand what is meant by modernity, as well as the way in which crucial historical changes took place in France. The transition to modernity is, as the name would suggest, the process of becoming modern. Different scholars hold different views on what the term truly means, and when the process began, but many see as key the process of industrialisation which began in Europe in the eighteenth century and continued in full force for some time afterwards. Industrialisation brought with it changes which led to the rise of cities, societies and economies which resemble that which we know today much more closely than the models which went before had done. Agrarian economies gave way to modern industry and factory production, large cities

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57 Brumfitt, 10; Artz, 35.
58 Bouquet, 19.
59 Lacassin, I:58; Porter, 202.
60 Other scholars differ in their approach, such as Matei Călinescu, who traces the idea of modernity to its linguistic roots in the medieval period, through the Renaissance, the quarrel between the ‘Ancients’ and the ‘Moderns’ and the Romantic age to the present day. Călinescu, 13, 16, 18-19, 23, 38. This is not to suggest that a classical interpretation of modernity is overlooked by Călinescu, who discusses, for example, the juxtaposition of the idea of capitalist time versus a personal sense of time as a key to modernity. The distinction between modernity as a period in history and modernity as aesthetic concept is also discussed. Ibid., 5, 9, 13, 19-20, 41-42, 51.
emerged as manufacturing centres or centres of commercial capital and social structures changed as those relocated or dislocated by industrialisation adapted from the closely-knit village society to the anonymity of the big city.\textsuperscript{61} For some theorists, these key elements can be reduced to the idea that modernity emerges when there is mass production using industrial techniques, and when the results are consumed by "most of the people, most of the time."\textsuperscript{62} Once capitalism and industrialisation had transformed societies, their associated technologies, including telegrams, railways and electricity, set about transforming urban centres such as Paris.\textsuperscript{63} More latent changes can also be detected as a result of modernity, one such example being the perceived increase which took place in the pace of life.\textsuperscript{64} The result of all of these changes on culture and literature has been a topic of scholarly debate, and will be investigated with reference to the detective fiction genre in the following chapter.\textsuperscript{65}

There are two ways in which one can understand the transition to modernity in France. The first sees the French Revolution of 1789 as an important modernising force and sees France's modernity as being a process which took place largely within a unique and drastic context. The second, which places industrialisation at the forefront, sees France as a tardy neighbour to England, slow to follow the progress which had been made there. The first view of modernisation in France, that based on the French Revolution, sees the revolutionary period and the reign of Napoleon as a time of key transformations. This was the initial view of the Revolution for many European scholars, who saw the changes wrought in French politics and

\textsuperscript{61} W. O. Henderson, \textit{The Industrial Revolution on the Continent: Germany, France, Russia, 1800-1914} (London: Cass, 1961), 1. The negative effects of this anonymity are discussed in David Harvey's work on Paris. Harvey, 206.

\textsuperscript{62} Schwartz, 7.

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 201.

\textsuperscript{64} That is to say, as new technologies succeeded one another and sweeping historical changes took the place of relatively stable social models, it began to seem to many that time itself had sped up. Harvey, 48, 50, 114-115; Colin, 59; Eric E. Lampard, "The Nature of Urbanization," in William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, eds., \textit{Visions of the Modern City: essays in history, art, and literature} (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 70. This sense that historical events has accelerated and a new phase of history had been entered into may have had its origins in the French Revolution. Mah, 159.

\textsuperscript{65} Grafia, xv-xvi.
society as the application of principles of reason to political reality. The inherited principle of the divine right of monarchy was ousted in favour of a form of government which, it was hoped, would rule in the best interests of the people. Economic and social innovations were also fostered. However, as the situation in France degenerated into violence, it became harder to support the idea that the Revolution was the practical application of unadulterated reason. This failure to truly modernise politically was combined with an economy which was similarly slow in its transformation. It is also clear, at the same time, that the French Revolution (and the reign of Napoleon) stimulated growth and development in many industries which had remained unchanged over a considerable period of time. The idea that France’s revolutionary period was a modernising one is therefore both useful and somewhat problematic.

The second view of modernity in France is based on the idea that England’s transition to modernity began with the Industrial Revolution. This period involved the application of reason to problems in production and resulted ultimately both in new technologies and in the transformation of economy and society. England’s progress was not immediately capitalised upon by its Continental neighbours, however. In many countries, the process of becoming modern was both more problematic and more piecemeal. France was not at the forefront of industrialisation or of modernity, despite being the leading continental power at the time England began its Industrial

66 Laurent, 4.
67 Henderson, 75, 77-79.
68 For example, a predominantly rural economy remained absolutely central to France for a longer period than was the case across the Channel. Mah, 159, 161, 164; Henderson, 92, 97.
69 Henderson, 79. James Smith Allen, for example, discusses the stimulus which the Revolution and Napoleonic Code provided in the printing industry. Allen, 29.
70 N.F.R. Crafts, “Industrial Revolution in England and France: some thoughts on the question “why was England first?”,” in Joel Mokyr, ed., The Economics of the Industrial Revolution (London: Allen and Unwin, 1985), 119; Henderson, 5. The Industrial Revolution was a time of speedy progress in industrialisation beginning in the eighteenth-century after the development of new technologies such as the spinning jenny and water frame in the cotton industry. Crafts, 121, 123; Henderson, 8.
71 The transformations in societies were important but not necessarily immediate. Eric Lampard states that, at the end of the eighteenth century, as much as ninety-five percent of the population still lived outside large urban centres. This figure hovered around fifty percent throughout the nineteenth century. Lampard, 52-53.
72 Henderson, 91-92.
Revolution.\textsuperscript{73} While it is difficult to ascertain whether England was in fact significantly more advanced beforehand, the fact that key inventions were often made first in England meant that France was quickly outstripped in terms of progress.\textsuperscript{74} It is thus more accurate to talk of industrialisation, and therefore industrial modernity, in terms of nineteenth-century rather than eighteenth-century France.\textsuperscript{75} It was thus in a country in the throes of modernising that the nascent genre of detective fiction underwent a part of its development.\textsuperscript{76}

As Paris features as the setting of choice in the works selected for this study, its centrality to modernity in France is of some relevance.\textsuperscript{77} While Paris has long been an important city, it has not always been a model of a modern city. In fact, it seems that for many decades after France did indeed begin to modernise, Paris continued to base its economy on the production or finishing of luxury goods – the type of work fulfilled by the out-workers of very early industry.\textsuperscript{78} Industry on a larger scale was often marginalised by the city – factories, for example, were pushed out to villages which were beyond the peripheries until they were later annexed by the city.\textsuperscript{79} With the arrival of Napoléon III and the Baron Haussmann on the scene, however, Paris truly began to modernise. ‘Haussmannization’ was, in some ways, the application of reason and a belief in practical progress to the science of urban planning.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{73} This fact has led historians to question why England pre-empted its neighbour to such an extent in the seemingly natural progression of applying the established principal of reason to produce practical results. Crafts, 119-120, 128; Henderson, 5-6.

\textsuperscript{74} Bouquet, 23; Crafts, 120, 123, 125, 127, 129; Henderson, 5, 91-95.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 96, 106, 108, 119, 135.

\textsuperscript{76} This may have had some bearing on France’s efforts to prove that it could create fiction equal to that of authors of other nationalities, or to create heroes who could compete against figures such as Sherlock Holmes. The function of Arsène Lupin, for example, was both to compete against Sherlock Holmes and to embody values and attributes important to France as a nation. As the series continued, Lupin’s exploits became increasing larger in scale, until, in later tales, he was conquering nations and attempting to negotiate an early end to WWI. Porter, 206-207, 216-217; Lacassin, 1:144-148; Dubourg, 17; Deleuse, “Introduction,” 44.

\textsuperscript{77} The city has been the key to modern life since it was first theorised. Hannoosh, 173.

\textsuperscript{78} Lenard R. Berlanstein, The Working People of Paris, 1871-1914 (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 4; Henderson, 94. This pattern took some time to change. Berlanstein, 126, 199.

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., 4, 9.

\textsuperscript{80} Schwartz, 16; Harvey, 3, 259-260. This tallies with the discussion of the modern city by William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock. William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, “From
Firstly, and most obviously, Haussmann swept away much of the mediaeval city in one fell swoop with his focus on wide, straight boulevards facilitating the movement of goods and people.81 'Haussmannization' also cleared slums and aided the introduction of a public sewage system, which reflects a modern concern with public health (and, once again, the desire for tangible progress).82 The wide boulevards and public parks brought with them 'monuments of modern life'.83 Although Haussmann disliked the working class necessary for a modern economy, therefore, and although hardship continued to be a fact of daily life for many of Paris's poor, the changes which he imposed upon the city helped France's drive to modernity in many ways.84

Paris, under Haussmann's direction, became a planned city representing physically the transition from a mediaeval acceptance of the status quo to the Enlightenment belief that change could and should be affected for the betterment of mankind. Some scholars have even suggested that the 'Haussmannization' of Paris was the fulfilment of a conscious desire on the part of the bourgeoisie to develop a suitable centre for modern commercial capitalism.85 Another argument states that the changes in Paris were an intentional modernisation on the part of Haussmann and Napoleon III, who needed to create a myth that they had been responsible for sweeping away all that had come before.86 After Haussmann's time, the possibilities for

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81 Larry Duffy, Le Grand Transit Moderne: mobility, modernity and French naturalist fiction (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 27; Harvey, 95, 109, 111; Theodore Reff, "Manet and the Paris of Haussmann and Baudelaire," in William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, eds., Visions of the Modern City: essays in history, art, and literature (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 143-144. It has been noted that Haussmann did not design or build many of the boulevards of Paris, but that his reconstruction of Paris merely recast existing urban practices in a new light (above all greatly increasing their scale). Napoleon III's plans for the city were likewise not drawn from thin air when he became emperor. Schwartz, 18; Harvey, 81-82, 85, 275; Reff, 143.

82 Berlanstein, 4, 56; Reff, 143. The issue of public health in Paris slightly predated Haussmann, first coming to light after an 1830s cholera epidemic. Harvey, 81-82.

83 Schwartz, 24; Harvey, 150; Hannoosh, 168, 173.

84 Schwartz, 3, 13; Claire Hancock, "Capitale du plaisir: the remaking of Imperial Paris," in Felix Driver and David Gilbert, eds., Imperial Cities: landscape, display and identity (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 66; Harvey, 150; Berlanstein, 5. 11, 39-41, 43, 91, 201.

85 Schwartz, 3; Duffy, 24-25; Hancock, 64; Harvey, 123.

86 Ibid., 10, 85, 212.
enriching modern leisure were multiplied by innovations from department stores to the newly important boulevards.\textsuperscript{87} The elevation of everyday life to a spectacle for mass consumption was a new development in the nineteenth century, and was just one of the ways in which Paris attempted to prove that it too could be a modern city to rival its English neighbours.\textsuperscript{88} By the time the fictional detective began to roam its streets, therefore, Paris’s modernity was assured.

The modernisation of France as a whole, however, did not necessarily follow suit with that of the capital.\textsuperscript{89} This notion can be investigated through reference to one effect of the modernising process: that of increased literacy.\textsuperscript{90} There are many ways in which changes in literacy levels and the way in which people read reflected the process of modernisation.\textsuperscript{91} Firstly and perhaps most importantly, it was the Enlightenment which freed information from the shackles that had been imposed on it by a privileged few. The Enlightenment both stimulated discussion and put knowledge within the grasp of all ‘reasonable’ men. Having effected such changes, there were then certain practical developments which were necessary for the transition to mass literacy. Firstly, the development of new technologies for printing and the production of paper greatly increased the amount of printed material available to the average person and thus revolutionised the way in which the printed word was perceived.\textsuperscript{92} Although there had long been publications mainly intended for a popular audience, such as broadsheets, the wider availability of printed material greatly reduced the price of books, made it possible for large numbers of newspapers to emerge, and meant that those living in cities were surrounded by printed matter, from books to posters and advertising.

\textsuperscript{87} Schwartz, 8; Duffy, 25, 107, 132.
\textsuperscript{88} Schwartz, 13, 16.
\textsuperscript{89} Berlanstein, xiii, 199, 202; Hufton, 75.
\textsuperscript{90} Literacy was pinpointed as an indicator of modernity by contemporaries, and continues to be seen as such today. Its importance for the spread of detective fiction is evident. Allen, 56.
\textsuperscript{91} Apart from the actual improvements in education and the way this was reflected in literacy figures, one can also consider increasingly comfortable homes and public spaces, the growing number of people wearing corrective glasses and improved indoor lighting as aspects of modernity which contributed to making reading as a pastime possible. Ibid., 66.
materials. The greater concentration of printed matter in Paris thus affected the experience there compared with that in the countryside. Secondly, the nature of modern industrial work encouraged the spread of literacy. Earlier generations had learnt a craft in its entirety, often handing down skills through the generations. As modernity began to take hold in France these practices became outmoded. Efficiency, as a by-product of reason, dictated increasing specialisation, and meant that workers tended to fulfil increasingly narrow tasks. While little skill was needed for many jobs, others, often those paying a living wage, required higher levels of skill for which literacy was clearly a bonus.

It was, nonetheless, a skill that was surprisingly slow in becoming anywhere near universal. James Smith Allen provides in his work on reading practices in France a table entitled ‘Estimate of Active Readers in France, 1801-1936.’ In the first year for which figures are available, 1801, it is stated that fifty percent of men and twenty-eight percent of women over the age of fourteen were literate. A century later in 1901, these figures had grown enormously, with ninety-six percent of men and ninety-four percent of women being classified as literate. Literacy levels had increased noticeably in every decade in the interim. The share of Paris in these figures also increased, as the population moved towards the capital. While in 1801 less than six percent of France’s population had been urban and literate, by 1901 this figure had grown to thirty percent. In 1841, the year of the publication of The Murders in the Rue Morgue, more than three million people (almost ten percent of the country’s population) were literate and lived in Paris. The city was both the centre of printed material in France, and the place in which most of the

93 Porter, 13; Allen, 201. Scholars have seen the mass newspaper as the epitome of the modern, urban form of disseminating information for its form and content as well as for its ephemeral nature. Schwartz, 26-27.
94 Stéphane, 85; Henderson, 2.
95 Harvey, 203; Berlanstein, 15, 17, 43, 74.
96 Allen, 61; 331. The distinction of ‘active’ readers from those with only basic abilities is a key one, as some studies have used the percentages of people signing their own names in marriage records to infer the literacy levels of the population.
97 Ibid., 331.
population able to read this material resided.\textsuperscript{98} James Smith Allen’s assertion that “[i]f not always a city of light, Paris was most certainly a city of print” can therefore be upheld, along with the idea that modernity did not arrive in the city in the same way as it did in France in general.\textsuperscript{99}

It soon becomes apparent that the link between reason and modernity is of far greater import than may be immediately apparent. Reason was the key to the \textit{siècle des Lumières}, and helped to radically change the way in which the world was understood. It also democratized the acquisition of knowledge, putting it within the reach of any man able to construct a reasoned argument. If one investigates the legacy of reason to the modern world, it becomes apparent that the major upheavals in economies and societies which have happened since the time of Voltaire, Diderot and d’Alembert are to a great extent the residual effects of these and other thinkers’ belief in the ability of reason to lead to change on a major scale. Since the Enlightenment, mankind has increasingly been focused on improving social conditions through the use of reason, rather than enduring situations in the knowledge that the way things were was the will of God and could not be altered. New technologies, modernised labour, even the transformation of Paris under Haussmann become in this equation the legacy of Enlightenment \textit{philosophes}. In the following chapters I will explore how the genre of detective fiction, as a manifestation of modernity, reflects this argument and illustrates the importance of the new focus on enlightened reason.

\textsuperscript{98} The centrality of Paris to the French reading experience is noted by some scholars. See, for example, Bellanger et al, 142; Allen, 201, 204.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 201. The concentration of industrial technologies in the capital likewise set its citizens apart from their fellow countrymen. Berlanstein, xiii.
The detective fiction genre and its origins have been the cause of great scholarly debate. While many scholars attribute the beginnings of the genre, at least in short-story format, to Edgar Allen Poe, others, in an effort to lend credibility to the genre, have seen the embryonic beginnings of the detective tale in far earlier works, from the Bible and the myth of Oedipus to the writings of Voltaire or gothic fiction. While the argument of this work favours the former interpretation, a brief survey of both is a valuable exercise, as the date at which the genre can be seen to emerge has obvious ramifications for any link which it can be seen to have with modernity.

The earliest sources which have been seen to be prototypes of detective fiction date back many hundreds or even thousands of years. One such source is the myth of Oedipus, whose search for his origins is seen to be akin to modern detective work. Another apparent founding source can be

2 Deleuse, "Introduction," 5, 29; Porter, 11-12; Denis Mellier, "L'Illusion logique du récit policière," in Colas Duflo, ed., *Philosophies du roman policière*, 2nd ed. (Fontenay-St Cloud: Feuillets de l'E.N.S. de Fontenay-St Cloud, 1995), 91. Even when it is not argued that
found in the Bible, with the tale of the footprints found by Daniel on the floor of a temple and used to prove that the god Bel did not exist. There are, however, obvious limitations to any such argument as, while these early tales may contain certain elements similar to trends seen within the genre, they are far from being detective novels themselves. As one scholar has pointed out, those who look for evidence of the genre in the distant past are looking for mysteries and puzzles, not detectives. In neither of the given examples is the main focus of the work the solution of a mystery, and neither is even close to containing all of the elements necessary to argue its value as a true ancestor of modern detective fiction. It appears that the efforts to link such texts is merely an effort to increase the credibility of a much-maligned genre. For many decades, detective fiction was seen to be little more than a game in which the author attempted to prevent the reader from guessing the solution before the end. This view stripped the genre of any literary merit. Finding parallels between detective stories and texts as important as the Bible or Shakespeare was one way in which defenders of the genre could argue its literary worth. So much, therefore, for the illustrious ancestors of Lupin, Maigret and Adamsberg.

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3 This episode is not contained within standard versions of the Bible, but within the apocrypha to the Book of Daniel. Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ, eds., *The Apocrypha of the Old Testament* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1957), 187-188.
4 Lacassin, I: 13.
5 Symons, 24.
6 Porter, 82; Lacassin, I: 9. It is important to keep in mind the fact that, although many critics dismissed the genre for many years, detective fiction was never completely overlooked, and had many important defenders from Charles Baudelaire through Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus to Alain Robbe-Grillet. Edmund Smyth, "Parodying the polar: Robbe-Grillet and the detective story," in Anne Mullen and Emer O’Beirne, eds., *Crime Scenes: detective narratives in European culture since 1945* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 60-61.
7 Porter, 3, 85. Even now, classic or even modern detective fiction is sometimes compared to a game or riddle. Steve Smith, “Between Detachment and Desire: Léo Malet’s French roman noir,” in Anne Mullen and Emer O’Beirne, eds., *Crime Scenes: detective narratives in European culture since 1945* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 125; Aziza and Rey, 47; Dubois, 76, 124, 132, 147; Lacassin, I:39; Neale, 1; Mellier, 89.
8 Deleuze, “Introduction,” 6. For some time now, the literary worth of the genre as a whole, if not of all writers within it, has ceased to be questioned. See, for example, Dubois, 7, 9, 13; Aziza and Rey, 7; Symons, 11-12; Vareille, *L’Homme masqué*, 90, 106; Neale, 2. A negative opinion can be seen, however, in the work of critics of the 1970s, and apparently remains in a residual fashion to the present day. Symons, 242; Dubois, 74.
There are likewise limitations when attempting to seek more recent forebears of detective fiction.⁹ One often cited example of a detective figure predating Poe is Voltaire’s Zadig.¹⁰ In Zadig, ou la destinée, Voltaire’s hero shows the importance of reason, but also its inability to deal with unreasonable people.¹¹ He displays reasoning powers of a type not often seen before characters such as Sherlock Holmes or Monsieur Lecoq. The importance of Voltaire for later writers can be seen if one is to compare this example with that of the reasoning powers of Arsène Lupin in L’Echarpe de soie rouge.¹² In Zadig, however, many of the crucial elements are once again missing. Zadig was not intending, in the passage, to fulfil the role of detective—he was merely observant and rational enough to have perceived the visual clues and have come to logical conclusions. It is, furthermore, an episodic work, in which there is no one mystery that provides structure.

The attempt to identify the first large-scale use of the theme of crime and criminals in the romantic period is problematic for the same reasons.¹³ Novels in the gothic tradition, despite an emphasis on mysterious crimes, are problematic as, in the other cases, they were not structured around a crime and its solution.¹⁴ They may have been pervaded by an atmosphere of mystery, but it was this atmosphere, and not the mystery and its solution, which was key to the genre. A supposed forebear of a different nature is the (semi) autobiographical work of Eugène Vidocq.¹⁵ Vidocq, a criminal who later reached the heights of the police force in France, published the memoirs of his

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⁹ This practice has been cited as ‘abusif’ by one scholar. Dubois, 32.
¹⁰ The tale appears to have been borrowed in turn from earlier sources. Symons, 25; Lacassin, I: 13, 58, 95.
¹¹ Symons, 25.
¹² On the basis of a few material clues Lupin is able to reconstruct the minutiae of a crime which has taken place and furnish all the necessary information for the apprehension of the criminal by his rival, Ganimard. This story is discussed at greater length in the third chapter. Leblanc, Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin, 122-125.
¹³ Dubois, 14.
¹⁵ Eugène Vidocq, Mémoires, 1828, reprinted with a slang dictionary as Les Mémoires de Vidocq, 2 vols. (Verviers, France: Gérard, 1966); Lacassin, I:17; Oliver-Martín, 7.
life and work to great acclaim. Although his somewhat embellished reminiscences were popular and influenced a variety of authors, especially in France, and although he appeared to represent a fairly modern type of policeman, the work was, once again, far from being a detective novel.16

The origins of what can truly be considered as detective fiction thus come to lie at the door of Edgar Allen Poe.17 His 1841 story The Murders in the Rue Morgue and the two subsequent stories in which Dupin appeared began many trends which were to be crucial to the development of the genre. The influence of his nocturnal, eccentric, highly cerebral detective, Auguste Dupin, can clearly be seen in later literary figures such as Sherlock Holmes and the gentleman-thief Arèsène Lupin; indeed, the majority of the central characters of the first ‘Golden Age’ of detective fiction were likewise detached rationalists, who collected puzzles as others collect objects, believing that any mystery is only a result of incorrect reasoning.18 For the first time with Poe, the atrocity of crime was confronted with the ‘gentleness’ of reason.19 Later authors drew upon the use of a mystery and its solution as a structuring device, the use of logic and reason, applied to evidence, to solve a seemingly unsolvable mystery, and more technical features such as the so-called ‘closed room mystery’ of The Murders in the Rue Morgue.20 Despite

16 Aziza and Rey, 27; Symons, 29, 71; Lacassin, I:58, 133; Neale, 4; Lardreau, 17.
17 Vareille, L’Homme masqué, 39; Lacassin, I:23, 61, 101; Neale, 4; Lardreau, 17; Mellier, 81, 90. It should be noted that some scholars believe the importance of Poe to the genre of detective fiction to have been exaggerated, or even invented some time later. Uri Eisenzweig, for example, writes that the genre itself was first perceived to be a cohesive grouping by critics writing in the 1890s, who developed for the genre rules which did not truly apply as a way of claiming such works as the epitome of all that was anti-literary. The fact remains, however, that Poe was the model on which countless subsequent writers of detective fiction have based their writings, and thus continues to be seen as the first of the genre. Dubois, 14, 36; Uri Eisenzweig, “Introduction,” in Uri Eisenzweig, ed., Autopsies du roman policier (Paris: Union Générale d’Éditions, 1983), 7, 11-16, 19-28; Deleuze, “Introduction,” 29-30.
19 Crime had long been a preoccupation of writers without any of them hitting upon such a formula. Porter, 16-17, 123.
some problems which have been noted in Dupin’s reasoning, therefore, Poe’s importance to the development of the genre is clear.21

Perhaps more importantly for the current survey, with the appearance on the literary stage of Dupin, a clear connection between France and the new genre of detective fiction was established.22 Some scholars have seen as natural the fact that Poe gave his hero French nationality, citing a perceived affinity since the time of Descartes between the French people and rationality, as well as the prestige of the French police force at the time Poe was writing.23 By creating the character of Dupin, and placing him in Paris, it could also be argued that Poe established this city as one suitably modern to provide a setting for works of this genre. Paris, at least in Poe’s view, contained the social structures, shady characters and anonymity needed for a genre which was from the outset predominantly modern and urban. The onus was then on French authors to prove themselves worthy of the importance assigned to their homeland by Poe.

Despite Poe’s example, however, the detective fiction genre was somewhat slow to develop.24 It is important to note, nonetheless, that although the next truly household name in detective fiction was the work of another English-speaking author, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, French authors played an important part in the early stages of detective fiction. France had of course contributed partial prototypes of detective works, from the aforementioned Zadig, to the police in Victor Hugo’s Les Misérables or the criminal episodes of Eugène Sue’s Les Mystères de Paris. The first truly important contribution of a French author to the genre was the work of Emile Gaboriau, whose detective stories featuring Monsieur Lecoq were the first time the detective genre had been adapted to the format of the novel.25 Dupin,

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21 Symons, 39, 41. The reason on which the genre as a whole is based is also questioned by some. See, for example, Lardreau, 31; Mellier, 79-81, 87-88, 90, 92, 95.
22 Guy Lardreau discusses the reasons behind the early association between France and the detective fiction genre. Lardreau, 17-18.
23 Lacassin, I:58; Porter, 202.
24 Perhaps because, as Dennis Porter has suggested, the feats of pure ratiocination as displayed by Poe’s character have never made for truly popular literature. Ibid., 163.
25 This innovation has led to him being seen, along with Poe, as a founder of the genre. Dubois, 16, 40-41; Aziza and Rey, 43; Symons, 55; Vareille, L’Homme masqué, 39, 63,
although ostensibly a character of romans judiciaries rather than romans policiers, can be seen as a detective along the lines of Dupin—a transitional character who suggests the scientific methods to come while still implementing archaic police methods. France also contributed other extremely popular early characters to the genre, including Maurice Leblanc’s Arsène Lupin. Lupin often plays the role of detective, solving mysteries with great feats of reason that dazzle those around him. Lupin’s eccentricities, his mastery of disguise and the inferiority of the police force are just some of the ways in which the works are representative of the first era of detective fiction.

The writings of authors such as Raymond Chandler or Dashiell Hammett represent the beginnings of the next major shift in detective fiction, and are commonly grouped under the ‘hard-boiled’ sub-genre. A similar movement within French detective writing around the end of World War II coined the term roman noir. A move away from the aristocratic milieu of classic detective fiction, hard-boiled novels took into account social concerns, and gave a more realistic, if more violent, depiction of the world. Although originally an American development, the effect of this more socially-aware fiction on writing in France is evident. Because of the American dominance of the sub-genre, writers of romans noirs in France were at first obliged to present themselves either as American writers whose works were being translated into French, or as French writers translating American works. As time passed, however, French noir writing became increasingly acceptable in its own right, and produced authors such as Léo Malet, whose sensationalised violence, urban settings and impulsive killers are all redolent of the noir.

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26 Aziza and Rey, 43; Symons, 55-56.
27 They also indicate the influence of Vidocq. Ibid., 90-91.
29 Évrard, 85; Dubois, 82; Vareille, L’Homme masqué, 131-132; Lacassin, I:19; Deleuse, “Introduction,” 32. In the French context, such novels often contained a sense of the anxiety and disillusionment of the post-war period. Hamilton, 228, 231.
30 Ibid., 230; Neale, 4.
The heroes of these novels are often marginalised characters, representing an apparent wide-spread sense of alienation and hopelessness brought on by the increasingly insurmountable class distinctions of the post-war period. If France was again modernising at this time, therefore, it was not necessarily perceived to be a force of good or of progress. Crime similarly became, in these novels, a symptom of a sick society rather than an isolated, individual event.

Works such as those of Georges Simenon, while not falling into the category of *romans noirs* also take into account ordinary people and their problems in a way not seen in the works of earlier authors. While Simenon does not deal solely in Parisian underworlds, his characters are from a France which is decidedly more average than that in which Arsène Lupin moved. This democratising focus, as well as the way in which the image of the police force can be seen to have evolved since the days of Lupin’s rival Ganimard, shows the ways in which the genre of detective fiction developed in leaps and bounds in a relatively short space of time, inside and outside the new *roman noir* category. The detective fiction genre thus proved its ability to reflect the changing situation in France over the first half of the twentieth century.

After the advent of hard-boiled or *roman noir* detective fiction, the French branch of the genre had to await the works of authors such as Jean Amila and Jean-Patrick Machette to see another major shift. Such novels are grouped under the *néo-polar* heading and, like earlier hard-boiled fiction, represent a new consideration of contemporary issues and social developments. *Néo-polar* works often provide a “vision aiguë” of troubled neighbourhoods and include characters previously marginalised by society.

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32 Hamilton, 233. It has been suggested that, because of the progress made by French women around the time of WWH, female authors of *romans noirs* took a more positive view of modernity and modernisation. Ibid., 235.
33 It can be argued that the events of the war had shaken the faith in reason, replacing this world view with one based on force. Hamilton, 235; Symons, 148.
34 Robert Deleuse disputes the idea that Jean-Patrick Manchette was a founder of the genre. Deleuse, “Introduction,” 49.
and fiction alike, from religious groups to ethnic minorities and immigrants.\textsuperscript{35} It has been suggested that the longevity of the detective fiction genre is largely a result of this ability to graft contemporary fears onto a relatively unchanged basic formula, allowing the relationship between good and evil, hero and villain to be updated.\textsuperscript{36} Just as the wave of innovation seen in American hard-boiled fiction (representing contemporary issues such as unprecedented crime, xenophobia and a sense of chaos) was transformed in the French context into the equally socially-aware \textit{roman noir}, the development of the \textit{néo-polar} is another major way in which the genre has demonstrated its ability to modernise.

The transformation of detective novel into \textit{néo-polar} did not simply entail a change in the subject matter dealt with, moreover, but in the way in which the figure of the detective is represented. \textit{Néo-polar} detectives are often far from the rational and composed figures of early works – they can even, as in the case of Patrick Modiano’s detectives, prove to be almost useless, solving crimes as if by accident, or not really managing to solve them at all.\textsuperscript{37} The most recent current in detective fiction in French can be seen in this study in the gritty social realities and multitude of marginalised characters in the works of Fred Vargas, whose novels include those who are outside society because of their ethnicity or socio-economic level (including the homeless) – characters, in other words, who would have been far outside the acquaintance of Maurice Leblanc’s pseudo-aristocratic \textit{gentleman-cambrioleur}.

It is thus evident that detective fiction in general, and in French in particular, has proved its link to modernity through its emergence at a key time in the modernisation of Europe, the themes and characters which it represents and its ability to keep itself up-to-date. It then becomes necessary

\textsuperscript{35} Dubois, 83; Neale, 5. Even more so than \textit{romans noirs}, \textit{néo-polars} can be seen to incorporate a challenging social and political agenda, the range of issues shifting to accommodate the passions of a particular author. Smyth, 71.

\textsuperscript{36} Porter, 127; Dubois, 49, 83, 107.

\textsuperscript{37} Akane Kawakami, “Patrick Modiano’s Unreliable Detectives,” in Anne Mullen and Emer O’Beirne, eds., \textit{Crime Scenes: detective narratives in European Culture since 1945} (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 195.
to investigate the link between the genre and reason (reason being, as previously discussed, the key to modernity). Having established that modern thought has as its foundation the theories of the Enlightenment, the way in which the genre of detective fiction is, in fact, a manifestation of ideas of reason becomes the next logical step. How, then, is reason incorporated into a work of detective fiction? The answer is twofold. Firstly, the idea of reason is the concept underpinning the very existence of a work in the genre. The detective's function as a character is to banish darkness and doubt and shine a light on reality. 38 The reader, since the time of Poe, has embarked on the task of reading a detective story in the knowledge that, while the mystery imposed at the outset may seem to be unsolvable, the detective will, in the end, reveal the murderer and return the world to its rightful state. 39 It is thus a world based on reason, with no mystery being immune to the detective's powers. 40 Secondly, the detective exists in the genre as the manifestation of reason. His sole function in the text is to collate the necessary evidence, come up with suitable hypotheses as to the solution of the mystery and test these hypotheses until the correct one is found and the truth revealed in a more or less Cartesian manner. The idea that the relationship between the genre and reason is a changing one merits greater exploration in later sections of this argument.

It has long been suggested by various scholars that the primary appeal of the detective genre is in its application of reason. 41 That is to say, the reader chooses to read a work of this type is because of the emotions provoked by the build-up of fear and its dissipation at the moment of the mystery’s solution. 42 The detective’s presence means that the character and the reader

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38 Alewyn, 68. It is, however, argued by Alewyn that the world of the detective is not as rational as it may appear. Alewyn, 68, 70.
39 Vareille, L'Homme masqué, 52.
40 This is despite a certain 'narrative chaos' which is necessary to keep the reader in suspense (meaning, for example, false leads or multiple suspects). Dubois, 61.
41 The notion that the genre is little more than the presentation of concepts such as those of reason and knowledge is theorised by Guy Lardreau. Lardreau, 13-14.
42 See, for example, Holquist, 158-159, 163-164. It should be noted that Fred Vargas consciously subscribes to this aspect of the genre. Christine Ferniot, interview with Fred Vargas, October-November 2001 <http://www.lire.fr/entretien.asp?idC=38100&idR=201&idTC=4&idG=> (20 September 2006), Ecrivains, question 10. Jacques Dubois sees the genre’s emergence as a shift within the roman populaire to privilege reason and science, and likewise sees its attraction in the short-term reassurance it provides. Dubois, 21, 65, 132, 141, 143, 145.
do not have to accept a state of affairs in which illogical or seemingly supernatural hypotheses are the only plausible ones, or in which solutions are outside human reasoning powers. Because the detective is able to reason, all is ultimately right with the world. Furthermore, the detective’s reasoning abilities are accessible for the reader because they are merely an extension of the long-established method of inductive ratiocination which can be experienced on a daily basis. Like any ordinary person, the detective moves along well-charted lines from visible evidence to ‘invisible’ conclusions and ultimate truths. Although this explanation may overlook the fact that the reader is not sure of a rational solution when starting a work of detective fiction, the average reader’s familiarity with the premise of the genre undoubtedly creates an expectation of this rational world view. It is thus acknowledged explicitly by critics and tacitly by the reader that the detective novel has reason at its heart.

The detective is key to the link between reason (and thus modernity) and the detective fiction genre, as it is this character who represents reason in the text. In classic detective novels, the detective generally enters a closed world, containing a limited number of characters and often geographically isolated, his only function to locate the murderer and solve the crime. In order to do this, the detective sought to reduce the information available to the basic, objective facts. Hypotheses could then be developed and tested which led, inevitably, to the revelation of the truth of the matter. The detective was thus the inductive, Cartesian reasoning method of the theorists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries personified. In more modern texts, although the setting has changed, the detective is still present as the representative of reason, albeit reason of a less certain nature. While later detectives are

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44 Porter, 84, 86-87, 228-230. It has been suggested that this expectation was established as early as Poe’s fiction. Aziza and Rey, 39.

45 This is a far more convincing argument than that which states that the detective is the agent for exorcising a type of collective guilt, and that changes in the genre are due to changes in attitude towards sin. This argument is put forward by, among others, Julian Symons. Symons, 16-17.
fulfilling the duties for which they are paid when solving crimes, rather than revealing murderers as a disinterested exercise in reasoning power, the modern detective still operates in a largely unchanged, if less flamboyant, manner.\textsuperscript{46} Even if the detective novel is no longer seen as being merely a game or puzzle, the fact is that the solution of a mystery is the key drive behind the plot. The detective is the character who helps the reader to examine the evidence and come up with the only correct solution from the many possibilities which arise throughout the text.\textsuperscript{47} While the author’s skill may prevent the reader from guessing the correct solution before the denouement, it is nonetheless true that the reader is engaged in a task of reasoning for which the detective is the stand-in in the text.\textsuperscript{48} Without reason, therefore, there would be little point to a detective novel.

Investigating the relationship between detective fiction and modernity is, however, not merely a matter of establishing that the genre has reason at its core. The argument is a far more complex one than that. In fact, there are a myriad of other factors involved in the process of modernisation which, it can be argued, were necessary for the emergence of the genre.\textsuperscript{49} The critic Julian Symons has linked the genre’s emergence to “the rise ... of a middle class with increasing leisure, the spread of reading, and the development of detective forces in several countries.” These key developments of modernity, according to Symons, meant that the writing of detective fiction was inevitable.\textsuperscript{50} Similar notions are seen in the work of other scholars.\textsuperscript{51} In other words, the link between the emergence of detective fiction and the

\textsuperscript{46}The fact also remains that, in any work of detective fiction, while the murderer has degraded a rational world view with the irrationality of the act of murder, the detective’s rationality remains, and often sets him apart as the sole seeker of absolute, rational truth in a world of duplicity and falsehood. Glenn W. Most, “The Hippocratic Smile: John le Carré and the traditions of the detective novel,” in Glenn W. Most and William W. Stowe, eds., \textit{The Poetics of Murder: detective fiction and literary theory} (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), 343.

\textsuperscript{47}That the work done by the detective parallels the act of reading has been theorised by some scholars. See, for example, Mellier, 83.

\textsuperscript{48}Most, 348.

\textsuperscript{49}Lacassin, 1:14, 20.

\textsuperscript{50}Symons, 42.

\textsuperscript{51}Jacques Dubois, for example, mentions the importance to the genre of the industrialisation and development of a society of leisure seen in the Second Empire. Dubois, 23-24.
transformations of modernity is not simply a question of there being a preoccupation with reason any more than it is a question of coincidental timing between the emergence of a modern economy and society and the publication of the first works in the genre. In order for the first detective stories to be written, certain important changes had to take place, the most important of which were a different relationship to the printed word through new printing technologies, a growth in literacy which increased exponentially the number of potential readers of a given work and a new type of police force and police procedure. Assessing what was involved in these changes and in what ways they contributed to the emergence of the genre adds another strata to the argument that sees detective fiction as a manifestation of modernity.

The first of these changes, the development of new printing technologies, began before the advent of the first detective stories. After having changed little since the fifteenth century, new and more practical ways of physically printing pages and arranging type revolutionised the amount of printed matter that it was feasible to produce in a given time.\(^{52}\) This development was supported by the change from using paper based on rags to a more easily available form of paper based on plant matter.\(^{53}\) As technologies improved throughout the period of modernisation, steam and later electricity simplified and sped up the printing process even further. The change from slow production by well-trained craftsmen to speedy printing by less highly trained industrial workers meant that the book went from being a valuable item available only to the elite of society, to being a far more democratic object.\(^{54}\) Technologies which facilitated the inclusion of illustrations in newspapers and books helped to grab attention and maximise potential audiences.\(^{55}\)

All of these developments had a major effect on the way people read. This was first theorised by a German scholar, Rolf Engelsing, who perceived a change from what he called ‘intensive’ reading (the repetitive reading of one

\(^{52}\) Allen, 29.  
^{53}\) Ibid., 31.  
^{54}\) Symons, 43; Bouquet, 33; Allen, 8, 28; Neale, 3.  
^{55}\) Schwartz, 2.
work, such as the Bible), to ‘extensive’ reading (the reading of a wide range of works, often only once) as Europe modernised.\textsuperscript{56} Novels, as works read predominantly for pleasure rather than for serious contemplation thus became far more important than they had once been.\textsuperscript{57} Whereas previously every book had been an individualised result of an artisan’s skills, with the paper, type and layout being inspected almost as closely as the actual information contained within, new printing technologies standardised the physical appearance of books, meaning that the content could be devoured and a new book sought out without the book being treasured in the same way as would otherwise have been the case.\textsuperscript{58} The detective genre, in which it is uncommon to reread many works, is the epitome of the ‘extensive’ mode of reading, and was thus dependent for its development on a supply of varied, cheap and widely available books, sometimes described as ‘throwaway’ works.\textsuperscript{59} Once these had become commonplace, modern ideas regarding publishing stepped in to ensure that the readers’ interest, as well as sales, remained high.\textsuperscript{60}

The next historical change necessary for the advent of detective fiction has already been discussed in some detail in the previous chapter, but can be reduced to the fact that by 1901 over ninety percent of French citizens had at least a basic ability to read (whether or not this means that they exercised this ability is another matter).\textsuperscript{61} The democratisation of literacy which modernity brought with it led to the development of new genres and types of fiction and printed material aimed specifically at a lower socio-economic market.\textsuperscript{62} One such genre led in part to the development of detective fiction. The new printing technologies discussed above, though somewhat slow in their spread, led not only to an increase in the number of readily available books, but also

\textsuperscript{56} Allen, 17. Some scholars question Engelsing’s methods, and therefore the existence of a revolution in reading. See, for example, Darnton, 218; Outram, 16-17; Allen, 17. It seems clear, however, that the massive changes which took place in printing technologies had some effect on the way in which books were perceived, even if Engelsing’s picture is not entirely accurate. Outram, 17; Allen, 5, 7, 9.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 51, 55.

\textsuperscript{58} Darnton, 244-245.

\textsuperscript{59} Porter, 7; Symons, 45; Vareille, L’Homme masqué, 136; Cobb, 194. The genre has, in fact, been called one of obsolescence, rapid consummation and consumption. Dubois, 8, 26-27, 47.

\textsuperscript{60} Allen, 32-33.

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 56, 61.

\textsuperscript{62} Vareille, L’Homme masqué, 16; Bellanger et al, 63, 65.
to the expansion of the press. Some newspapers were catered specifically to the common people, but, as the number of periodical publications grew, it became necessary for all to compete for readers. Lowering prices was one way to achieve this, but competition for readership was also reflected in the actual content of many newspapers.

The inclusion in newspapers from the 1860s onwards of faits divers, short snippets of information which hold the reader's attention both with their manageable length and with the unusual or bizarre subject matter they deal with, was one invention of modern French journalism designed to attract readers. Another successful formula was hit upon when novels were first serialised and then written specifically for serial publication from the 1840s. Many popular authors used this formula, including Alexandre Dumas père and Eugène Sue. The serialisation of novels proved to be a good way of ensuring solid sales figures, while the need for episodic, continually enthralling action led to a particular style of writing. Many romans feuilleton included episodes from the dark and mystifying underworld of crime (Eugène Sue’s Les Mystères de Paris is particularly illustrative of this point). It was an easy transition from crime-focused literature marketed at a less-than-academic audience to detective fiction, which has been much maligned for the same reasons.

The third way in which the advent of detective fiction can be seen to be related to modernity concerns the existence of a more or less modern police force using scientific procedures. In other words, while there can have been

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63 Évrard, 30; Graña, 31-32; Bellanger et al, 142; Berlanstein, 78-79.
64 Bellanger et al, 63, 142; Allen, 8, 27; Berlanstein, 135, 168. Le Petit journal, edited by Moïse Millau and first appearing in 1863, was the first daily newspaper to aim for wide distribution through low prices. Dubois, 17; Évrard, 30.
65 Schwartz, 34; Sophie Beaulé, “Functions and Meanings of the fait divers in French Detective Fiction,” in Anne Mullen and Emer O’Beirne, eds., Crime Scenes: detective narratives in European Culture since 1945 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 149; Évrard, 10, 18. It has been suggested that the fait divers is aimed at a specifically lower-class audience. Évrard, 23, 30.
66 Graña, 34.
67 Successful romans feuilletons could boost the sales figures of a newspaper by several thousand. Schwartz, 34.
68 Dubois, 7, 16, 18-19; Évrard, 37-38. Some authors also underscore the fact that Poe was first known in France through adaptations of his works published in newspapers, a fact which seems to further strengthen the relationship between the two forms. Dubois, 15.
no detective novels without detectives; crime and the detection thereof are cultural phenomena, and have not always existed in the same way. The timing between the emergence of these two developments is even closer than that of detective fiction and modernity as a whole – the word ‘detective’ was coined in English merely two years after the first appearance of Poe’s ‘reasoning machine’ Dupin, when Scotland Yard established its detective force. By the end of the century this branch of the police force had formed a new type of urban mythology throughout Europe. Police forces had, however, been around in some form for many years before they ever became the focus of a genre of literature. In France, for example, the first police force is often said to have been established in 1667 when the position of lieutenant de police was created.

Importantly, the work of historians such as Alan Williams shows that the difference between these early police forces and what we understand by this term today is as vast as that between the story of Oedipus and the modern detective novel. For many years, the French police force saw its main function as being one of deterrence through surveillance and repression. The majority of those working under the lieutenant de police were involved in physically patrolling the streets in order to prevent criminal activity. The next largest group was involved in spying and the gathering of information. It was not until shortly before the first detective tales were written that

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69 Porter, 120. The issue is also discussed by Richard Alewyn. Julian Symons argues that this is not necessarily true, as Poe wrote his stories before any detective force emerged. I disagree with Symons based on research that indicates that the police force, while it had not yet fully developed, was taking on its modern aspect even as Poe was writing. Alewyn, 66; Symons, 33.
70 Porter, 153; Symons, 33.
71 Porter, 153.
72 Williams, 5, 7, 13, 19, 25, 62.
73 Ibid., 5-6, 10-11, 15, 164.
74 The idea that function of the French police was primarily one of repression continued to have currency for some time, and coloured its depiction in works of fiction. To this day, there are numerous ways in which members of the police can show themselves in fiction and beyond to be less than honourable, although this is not necessarily limited to the French context. Porter, 204; Symons, 54; Dubois, 112; Harvey, 147; Lacassin, 1:17-18, 61; Stéphane, 86.
75 Williams, 67, 221.
76 Ibid., 100, 104-107, 111, 230. In the popular imagination, this group was by far the largest. The idea that the spying functions of the police made up the majority of their duties was a result of rampant rumours, undeterred by the police lieutenant himself who found it useful to augment rather than diminish the fear of spies. Ibid., 55, 109, 217.
European police forces began to take on (in a useful sense) what was to become one of their major roles – the detection of criminal parties and the solution of crimes after the fact.\textsuperscript{77} Around this function sprang up increasingly elaborate and scientific methods from the nineteenth century to the present day, often involving the latest technologies, from fingerprinting or the photographing of crime scenes to the more recent advent of computerised information databases.\textsuperscript{78} Without the advent of a group within the police force devoted to the detection of criminals and the solution of crimes, there could have been no literary equivalents to dazzle the public with their abilities. (It could also be argued that without increasingly complex method of detecting said crimes, the genre would have failed to hold the interest of its audience.) The embracing of modernity by early police forces, caused in great part by the rise of the human sciences and thus of the ‘disciplinary society’ of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was thus a necessary step in the development of detective fiction.\textsuperscript{79}

It can be seen, therefore, that the detective fiction genre is very much a product of both Enlightenment ideas on reason and of the concrete changes of modernity. The notion of reason, so important to modern thought, is the basic premise of the genre, without which there would be no sense of certainty that the detective’s methods will in fact lead to the correct solution. It is evident, furthermore, that the detective’s approach (at least in early examples of the genre) is very closely modelled on the inductive reasoning method of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Reason alone, however, was not enough to ensure that works of this type would be written. For the genre to develop certain fundamental changes associated with modernity were necessary, including new ways of producing and approaching books, and the advent of an group within the police whose role it was to detect criminals and

\textsuperscript{77} An early form of detective created in the early eighteenth century did nothing like the duties of his modern counterpart. Ibid., 94-95, 228.

\textsuperscript{78} Porter, 124. It has been suggested that scientific methods took some time to make the transition from being talked about in general in detective works to actually being described in any detail, but the key point is that they made this transition, and can be seen to have done so, if not by the time of Leblanc, then by the time of Simenon. Symons, 86.

\textsuperscript{79} Porter, 124. Porter’s work here is largely based on that of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault.
solve mysteries. An argument which sees the genre as a manifestation of Enlightenment thought and modernity can thus be sustained. In what ways these hypotheses are reflected within particular works remains to be seen.
3. Leblanc, Simenon and Vargas

« On vous a répété, et on a eu tort, que je suis un homme intelligent qui, au cours de sa carrière, a résolu un certain nombre de problèmes criminels. Mon ami O’Brien, qui cultive volontiers l’ironie, a dû exagérer quelque peu. Or, primo, je ne suis pas intelligent.

C’était drôle de voir le policier vexé comme si on lui avait mis des bêbêtes en l’air, alors que Maigret n’avait jamais été aussi sincère.

- Secundo, je n’essaie jamais de me faire une idée sur une affaire avant qu’elle soit terminée. »

(From Maigret à New York)\(^1\)

As has been established in an earlier chapter, there is a complex relationship evident between detective fiction and modernity, with reason as a driving force behind both. By examining examples of works in the genre, it is possible to examine this relationship in greater detail. This can be done in two ways. Firstly, the detective, as the figure of reason within the works, is one of the important elements through which the genre asserts its modernity. By investigating the role of individual detectives within texts, it is possible to both theorise on the genre as a whole, and to place specific authors within wider trends.\(^2\) The second way in which the relationship of detective fiction to modernity can be assessed is through an investigation of the way in which the novels depict historical modernity, from the modern city to new technologies and means of transport or communication.

As indicated above, therefore, it is the Arsène Lupin works of Maurice Leblanc which have the clearest example of the detective as the

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\(^1\) Simenon, Maigret à New York, 656.

\(^2\) Jacques Dubois discusses the fact that the detective appears to have distanced himself from this clue-based inductive approach as the genre has evolved. Dubois, 119, 129.
figure of reason in the text.\(^3\) Lupin’s ratiocinative powers are comparable to other early detectives, such as Holmes or Dupin. The best example of clear, inductive reasoning abilities within the chosen collections of stories is the aforementioned *L’Echarpe de soie rouge*. In this story, Lupin hands over to his rival Ganimard a collection of material evidence relating to a crime, along with an explanation as to the nature of the crime, criminal and victim. From the presence of a crystal inkstand with a string attached to its lid, a piece of glass, some cardboard and a torn silk scarf, the whole wrapped in a piece of newspaper, Lupin is able to ascertain that during the preceding evening, a female entertainer was killed by a man of a higher social class. Not satisfied with such mundane inferences, Lupin is able to inform Ganimard that the left-handed guilty party probably lives around the Pont-Neuf.\(^4\) Dismissed at first by Ganimard as nonsense, it soon seems not only that the *gentleman-cambrioleur* was correct on a number of points, but also that it is impossible to put the evidence together in any other way.\(^5\) In the end it becomes apparent that Lupin was right on all counts, including the fact that the killer was left-handed.\(^6\) The inference is that with the proper application of reason, it is possible to attain far-reaching conclusions on the basis of small amounts of objective evidence. Lupin has taken Cartesian methods and has applied them to the double end of bringing a criminal to justice and gaining personally.\(^7\) Lupin is, furthermore, aware of his highly developed reasoning abilities, and waxes lyrical regarding them:


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\(^3\) The importance of reason to the Arsène Lupin stories is discussed by the critic Nelly Wolf. Wolf, 21. Jean-Claude Vareille’s argument that the surreal or fantastic elements in the stories along with the almost magical abilities of science is evidence of irrationality in the texts provides a contrasting viewpoint. Vareille, “Modernité et tradition,” *Europe: revue mensuelle littéraire* 604-605 (August-September 1979), 50-51, 55.


\(^5\) Ibid., 126-7, 130-132.

\(^6\) Ibid., 134.

\(^7\) Ibid., 140.
quel chef-d’œuvre d’intelligence! Quelle reconstitution, Ganimard!”

It is not only in this tale, however, but in countless stories involving Lupin that the reader is able to bear witness to the results of which an extremely rational mind is capable.

The Arsène Lupin stories can be divided into two major categories – those in which Lupin is faced with dangerous or unpleasant circumstances and must use reason to extricate himself, and those in which Lupin arrives (like almost any classic detective) to solve a mystery which interests him. Le Mystérieux voyageur falls into the former category. In this tale, Lupin, whose arrest seems imminent when it is known that he is on a particular train, manages to avoid the clutches of the police by the fortuitous presence of a fellow law-breaker in the same carriage. Lupin then succeeds in taking back the twelve thousand francs which had been stolen from him by the less able thief by aiding the police. By thinking on his feet, Lupin is able to arrive at the only set of actions by which he can both escape and take back what is his. Lupin’s escape from prison in L’Évasion d’Arsène Lupin likewise shows that he is able to rationalise the outcome of a given set of actions and thus act in his own best interest.

The stories in which Lupin introduces himself into the plot in order to solve a mystery which has little to do with him (other than the odd financial incentive now and then) are manifold. Sometimes, as in

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8 Ibid., 138. An even more worthy rival, Herlock Sholmès, confirms Lupin’s opinion of himself. Leblanc, Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès, 207.
9 Lupin’s rational mind is in fact an important part of his notoriety. A disguised Lupin, for example, almost reveals himself to a suspicious policeman when he reasons his way to a solution of which nobody else present was capable. Leblanc, Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur, 100.
10 Lacassin, I: 132.
11 Leblanc, Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur, 86-107.
12 Ibid., 101.
13 In this instance, the word ‘evasion’ is something of a misnomer – Lupin does not so much escape from prison as walk out the front door, after accurately predicting that the public expectation of his immanent escape would help him to do so. Ibid., 58-85.
14 Examples of financially motivated solutions to mysteries abound. See, for example, Leblanc, Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin, 140-141, 222-223. Whether or not
Le Fétu de paille, Lupin contrives some sort of trickery in order to place himself in a position to solve the mystery.\textsuperscript{15} For other cases, a previously created disguise affords an entry into a social network, while occasionally Lupin merely introduces himself (under a pseudonym) and gets to work.\textsuperscript{16} Lupin appears to see his role as that of a fulfiller of destiny, solving crimes in order to bring criminals to justice, as well as taking a certain amount of pleasure in the act of solving the mystery itself.\textsuperscript{17} In all stories in which Lupin’s function is one of detection, however, his approach is much the same. Beginning with unquestionable physical evidence (only Lupin seems to be capable of falsifying clues),\textsuperscript{18} he develops hypotheses which are tested until the correct one is found. According to Lupin himself, “...une hypothèse qui répond à toutes les questions, n’est pas loin d’être une vérité.”\textsuperscript{19} His method for gathering evidence correlates well with those of the police of his day – he finds footprints, interrogates witnesses to reduce their testimony to a core of objective facts and places important locations under surveillance.\textsuperscript{20} His feats of reasoning occasionally rely on mathematical principles, providing another favourable comparison with the reasoning methods of Descartes.\textsuperscript{21} No matter the particular approach taken by Lupin, however, in every case it is clear that the world in which he lives is one which is founded on reason. No mystery, however illogical it may seem, remains unsolved for long.

Lupin’s rivals, the policeman Ganimard and the humorously named Herlock Sholmès, are also figures of reason in the chosen texts,
albeit to a lesser extent than is Lupin himself. The status of Sholmès, as a character specifically designed to fulfil the role of detective and as a clear homage to Conan Doyle’s character, is particularly important. 22 The methods of Sholmès, the “célebre détective anglais”, are similar to those of Lupin. 23 He seeks out physical evidence and questions witnesses, thus building up incontestable truths upon which reasoned conclusions can be based. 24 He is logical at every turn, rejecting (for the most part) assertions which others assume to be true, and refusing to underestimate his rival. 25 His methodical approach puts him far above the ranks of ordinary police detectives (“[c]omme policier, je ne crois pas qu’il ait existé ou qu’il existe jamais son pareil.”)26 Even Lupin admits Sholmès’ ability to see through everyday appearances to the truth of things.27 The fact remains, however, that Sholmès, while able to dazzle any audience with the powers of his mind, is incapable of feats of reason on the scale of those of Lupin, and for this reason almost always fails to get the upper hand in their rivalry. This failure is due, not to faulty reason per se, but to the fact that Lupin, as the central character, always triumphs, as well as being due to the nature of the rivalry between the two characters. As the Lupin Sholmès relationship is a stand-in for the rivalry of England and France, Lupin, as a national hero, cannot be seen to be outsmarted.

22 The extraordinariness of his abilities and his debt he owed to literary predecessors was openly acknowledged by Leblanc, as in the following extract, which merits quoting at length: “...Herlock Sholmès, c’est-à-dire une sorte de phénomène d’intuition, d’observation, de clairvoyance et d’ingéniosité. On croirait que la nature s’est amusée à prendre les deux types de policier les plus extraordinaires que l’imagination ait produits, le Dupin d’Edgar Poe, et le Lecoq de Gaboriau, pour en construire un à sa manière, plus extraordinaire encore et plus irrationnel... on se demande si lui-même, ce Herlock Sholmès, c’est pas un personnage légendaire, un héros sorti vivant du cerveau d’un grand romancier, d’un Conan Doyle, par exemple.” Leblanc, Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès, 98.

23 Ibid., 86.


25 Leblanc, Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès, 101-103. One exception is seen in the story Un Enlèvement, when Sholmès fails to realise that ‘la Dame Blonde’ may not necessarily always have blonde hair. Ibid., 161.

26 Ibid., 93-94

27 Ibid., 95; Lacassin, I:129.
The ordinary police of Leblanc's novels apply reason of a less insightful nature than that of Lupin or Sholmès. In *Le Mystérieux voyageur*, Rouen's commissaire of police meets the train as it arrives, interrogates passengers, and has the relevant wagon detached from the train supposed to contain Lupin because, presumably, of the possibility of evidence within. His only failure is his assumption that the person who overpowered two passengers and stole their valuables must have been Lupin.28 This example stands in many ways for the treatment of the police force and its reasoning abilities in the texts. Ganimard, 'policier national' and Lupin's rival in the absence of Sholmès, is the prime example of this treatment.29 He is methodical in his approach, gathering information in much the same way as Lupin and Sholmès, but failing to apply inductive reason in its entirety, and thus unable to come to the appropriate conclusions.30 The police force in general can be seen to operate in much the same way.31 The recurrent theme is that of proximity to the truth yet almost inevitable failure.32 In fact, the most efficient member of France's police force appears to be Lupin in disguise!33 Lupin remains, therefore, the ultimate representative of clear, conscious Enlightenment reason.

The relationship of Maigret to reason is somewhat different to that seen in the works involving Lupin. Maigret's 'approach' to the solution of mysteries or crimes appears at first sight to be one based much more on intuition than on overt reasoning, a fact which makes it difficult to ascertain the degree of reason which indeed underlies his thought.

29 Leblanc, Les Confidences d'Arsène Lupin, 13.
30 Leblanc, Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès, 60-61, 64; Les Confidences d'Arsène Lupin, 118-119, 187, 189-193. It appears that Lupin has a certain measure of respect for Ganimard and his methods, despite his own superiority. Ibid., 175-176.
31 Leblanc, Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur, 93, 98-99, 111-112, 141; Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès, 33, 60, 72-73; Les Confidences d'Arsène Lupin, 21, 128-129, 131-133, 183, 186, 211-212.
33 Lacassin, I:133. See, for example, Lupin operating as a former police official turned private detective in *La Perle noire*. Leblanc, Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur, 205-207.
processes.\textsuperscript{34} Intuition is, in fact, one of the key concepts associated with the character.\textsuperscript{35} Maigret’s way of approaching a crime is generally that of absorbing an atmosphere.\textsuperscript{36} Difficult cases are solved by a sense of empathy combined with moments of ‘instinctive understanding’.\textsuperscript{37} In order to understand elements of the background to the case which would be overlooked by other investigators, Maigret seeks out witnesses personally – being able to assess people on their own territory is vital to his crime-solving process.\textsuperscript{38} Such techniques often infuriate Maigret’s superiors, who would prefer him to delegate more tasks and remain more often at the police headquarters at the Quai des Orfèvres, but Maigret’s need to employ his intuition prevents him from fulfilling such expectations.\textsuperscript{39} At first glance, therefore, there appears to be little to suggest that Maigret is a detective whose approach relies on the Enlightenment concept of reason.

It is clear upon further inspection, however, that for a detective who has been seen to scorn material clues in favour of atmospheres and people, Maigret’s methods are indeed slightly more logical than they appear to be.\textsuperscript{40} Although his intuition may be the first factor alerting him to a problem with a particular case, he still gathers all the necessary evidence and exhausts every line of enquiry. This is best exemplified among the chosen works in \textit{Monsieur Gallet, décédé}. In this investigation Maigret, while first digging deeper because his intuition led him to believe there was something not right about the salesman’s death, proceeds in a logical manner.\textsuperscript{41} His initial reconstruction of the crime depends on physical evidence supported by the autopsy report.\textsuperscript{42} He later uses the

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\textsuperscript{34} Maigret himself prefers this word to ‘method’. Lacassin, II:7-8. Julian Symons denies the existence of any great feats of ratiocination in the works. Symons, 147.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.; Alewyn, 89-90; Cobb, 179; Lacassin, II:7; Dubois, 181; Henry, 73, 114, 118-119.

\textsuperscript{36} Lacassin, II:9-10; Henry, 36, 97-98, 119-120.

\textsuperscript{37} Symons, 147.

\textsuperscript{38} Henry, 97. See, for example, Simenon, \textit{Maigret à New York}, 636.

\textsuperscript{39} Lacassin, II:11.

\textsuperscript{40} Dubois, 128.

\textsuperscript{41} Simenon, \textit{Monsieur Gallet}, 22-24.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 25.
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victim's clothing to recreate the crime scene and test hypotheses.\textsuperscript{43} He pays witnesses to come forward in order to have at his disposal all available evidence.\textsuperscript{44} When the case hinges on what the remains of burnt documents might reveal, he calls in an expert whose painstaking scientific methods reveal a new lead.\textsuperscript{45} Throughout the work, Maigret can be seen to be collecting physical evidence, questioning those involved, applying logic to this information and testing hypotheses until the correct one is found.\textsuperscript{46} At the same time, he continues to rely on intuition, using a photograph as a starting point and on numerous occasions following where his intuition or empathy take him.\textsuperscript{47} He admits throughout the novel that it is a feeling for a case and for a murderer which are crucial to solving mysteries, and a sense that "tout sonn[e] faux" that inevitably leads him in the right direction.\textsuperscript{48}

This approach is seen in other Maigret works. In \textit{Maigret à New York}, it is a sense that something is not right with a series of letters between a father and son that prompts his interest in the case. Atmosphere remains important to the investigation.\textsuperscript{49} Yet, in a manner comparable to the Gallet case, he collects evidence and seeks out witnesses, all the while applying both intuition and logic to the information gathered.\textsuperscript{50} The uncertainty caused by the unfamiliar environment of New York as well as his difficulty with English cause him to engage a private investigator to collect information on his behalf.\textsuperscript{51} He
also remains in contact with, and uses the resources of the French police.\textsuperscript{52} Although a certain amount of intuition is needed, especially because of the unfamiliarity of the territory, there is still a clearly logical method underlying Maigret’s approach.\textsuperscript{53} In every chosen case, these mixed methods lead to the correct, rational, solution. Contrary to the opinion of a large number of critics and fans of the works, therefore, it is possible to see a certain amount of reason in Simenon’s character. Certain elements of the conscious inductive method Descartes are now absent, but the genre’s rational world requires that the steps necessary for the correct solution are taken.

One major difference between Lupin and Maigret is the fact that Maigret, far from being a \textit{gentleman-cambrioleur}, is an official representative of the law. As such, he is able to rely on all the resources associated with the police force to aid him in the solution of the crimes which it is his duty to solve. Much of the task of initially investigating the crime, gathering the most obvious physical evidence and drawing up reports based on the results is left to subordinates and experts.\textsuperscript{54} Maigret’s function in the texts is not to follow a mystery through from start to finish, but to question the evidence and use his special brand of insight to bring the correct perpetrator to justice. It could be argued that this support is one of the reasons why Maigret is not seen to achieve the heights of reason which are the domain of Lupin – his access to all the facts relating to the crime as well as vast amounts of background information in the form of police files and archives means that he does not need to draw impressive conclusions from the slenderest of evidence.\textsuperscript{55} Maigret’s official function also means that he never involves himself in a case

\textsuperscript{52}Ibid., 667. This is despite the fact that he is retired at the time of the investigation.
\textsuperscript{55}Simenon, \textit{Maigret à New York}, 667.
simply for the love of solving mysteries and astounding his public.\textsuperscript{56} Instead, for Maigret, crime solving is a job much like any other.\textsuperscript{57} Any results garnered are thus more likely to be the result of solid police work than feats of ratiocination as if from thin air. It then becomes evident that, if reason is not as evident in the Maigret novels, it is perhaps that it did not need to be.

Whether or not the detective himself recognises it as such, therefore, his approach always lead to the rational solution of the crime at hand, despite the absence of real inductive methods or a dramatic denouement and explanation in the style of Arsène Lupin or Sherlock Holmes. While Maigret’s thought processes and methods of reasoning are neither as straight-forward nor as impressive as those of his predecessor, he can still be seen to inhabit a world based on reason, in which, sooner or later, the application of logic will result in the only correct solution. This unfailing belief that the correct method will result in the correct solution can be seen in pronouncements such as “Nous poursuivons l’enquête, quitte à changer cent fois d’hypothèse s’il le faut...” or the following extract from \textit{Maigret à New York}:

\begin{quote}
J’aurais trouvé quand même, en fin de compte, peut-être beaucoup plus tard, car je savais que vous connaissiez Mac Gill et que, d’autre part, vous fréquentiez les gens qui ont tué Angelino.\textsuperscript{58}
\end{quote}

In both of the extracts given above, it is clear that while progress may be slow and plodding, the solution will come, sooner or later.

If reason has lost some of its potency in the character of Maigret, it has been hidden to such a degree in Jean-Baptiste Adamsberg as to be invisible at first glance. Adamsberg, to a greater extent than even Maigret, suffers from a lack of clear thought processes, a fact which the character

\textsuperscript{56} There is the arguable exception of \textit{Maigret à New York}, in which, while he was originally engaged by a client, his presence is neither required nor desired for much of the novel’s duration. Ibid., 580-582, 619. This is apparently the case in other of Simenon’s works as well. Dubois, 179.

\textsuperscript{57} Henry, 87.

\textsuperscript{58} Simenon, \textit{Monsieur Gallet}, 156; \textit{Maigret à New York}, 678.
himself would be among the first to admit. His attempts at thinking logically about a case end almost invariably in only vague, embryonic ponderings, and his incessant drawing and movement (he is constantly escaping the confinement of his office to walk the streets of Paris) appear to be his way of attempting to force rational thought processes, with the character himself admitting that “Je ne peut pas penser sans marcher”.\(^5\) This rationality, however, does not come easily. In the majority of cases in which Adamsberg and his unusual approach appear, he seems to have no inkling as to the solution of the case until the very end of the story, at which point the pieces of the puzzle suddenly fall into place, seemingly without Adamsberg himself even knowing how it happened.\(^6\) It is largely for this reason that the majority of critics tend to see the character as having nothing to do with reason, and much to do with instinct and intuition.\(^6\) Adamsberg is often the first to admit that he has a certain amount of difficulty with logical thought: “« Je ne sais pas » était une des réponses les plus usuelles d’Adamsberg.”\(^6\) He talks slowly (to the point of putting those who listen to him to sleep), goes about police work slowly and is wary of computers and cellular phones.\(^6\) At every turn, therefore, he seems to be the opposite of his predecessor Lupin.

There is, in fact, a character in Vargas’ work whose function is to highlight Adamsberg’s difficulty with rational thought. Adamsberg and his colleague Adrien Danglard are worlds apart both physically (Danglard is large, blond and ugly while Adamsberg is small, dark haired and possessed of a certain charm)\(^6\) and intellectually.\(^6\) Danglard has great

\(^5\) Vargas, *Coule la Seine*, 112. See also Vargas, *Coule la Seine*, 18, 29, 34, 55, 58, 64, 69, 89-90; *L’Homme à l’envers*, 199, 261, 291, 294, 297; *Pars vite et reviens tard*, 33, 54-55, 104, 118, 139, 192, 230, 267, 301, 346. 
\(^6\) An example of this is his realisation regarding the diamond ring which the semeur of the plague is wearing in *Pars vite et reviens tard*. It is the key to breaking the case, but takes some time to actually enter into Adamsberg’s conscious thoughts. Ibid., 231, 253-254. 
\(^6\) See, for example, Poole, 96.
\(^6\) Vargas, *L’Homme à l’envers*, 86.
\(^6\) Vargas, *Coule la Seine*, 10, 49-50, 55, 106; *L’Homme à l’envers*, 11, 201, 284, 292; *Pars vite et reviens tard*, 34, 55-56, 97, 105-106, 147, 159, 173, 219, 304-305.
\(^6\) Vargas, *Coule la Seine*, 9, 33; *Pars vite et reviens tard*, 82, 239-242.
\(^6\) Adamsberg on one occasion reveals an “ambition secrète de parvenir un jour à réfléchir à la manière dont Danglard le faisait...” Vargas, *L’Homme à l’envers*, 263.
difficulty reconciling himself with Adamsberg’s world, in which nothing is as it seems. The following quote from the novel *L’Homme à l’envers* sums up this dichotomy:

“Danglard n’avait jamais pu saisir la logique singulière qui guidait les choix d’Adamsberg. Pour lui d’ailleurs, il ne s’agissait en aucun cas de logique, mais d’une anarchie perpétuelle tissée de songes et d’instincts, et qui menait, par des voies inexpliquées, à des réussites indéniables.”

The last phrase is key to this quote. While Adamsberg’s method of crime solving may appear to lack logic and methodical approach, especially when compared to Danglard’s, it is Adamsberg, not Danglard, who manages the ‘réussites indéniables’. This is the ultimate evidence for the idea that, despite appearances, there is some form of reason remaining in the world of detective fiction, and that the detective retains the important role of seeking it out. It is because of his ultimate successes that Danglard bears with Adamsberg, despite the extreme frustration which he often seems to feel with the *commissaire*’s methods.

It appears, therefore, that Adamsberg’s thinking, while chaotic on the surface, may hide a kernel of reason and logic. There is evidence of a logical approach to the gathering of evidence in the works, although much of this appears to be a matter of routine for Adamsberg, who uses his subordinates to gather this evidence while he himself follows the leads which his intuition has suggested are the important ones. Adamsberg seems, in fact, to rely on intuition to a greater extent than even Maigret did, often voicing hypotheses which appear to be far from rational, and which can result in his ridicule by his colleagues, by his friends or by the press. The methods used are no longer truly inductive or Cartesian, but the world in which the fiction is based remains an ultimately rational one.

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66 Ibid., 100.

67 Vargas, *Coule la Seine*, 13, 21, 89, 96; *Pars vite et reviens tard*, 55, 83-84, 105, 246.


A statement to this effect at the end of *L’Homme à l’envers* recalls the world of Maigret:

"-Mais, dit Soliman avec une pointe d’anxiété, sans sa ressemblance avec son père, tu n’aurais jamais mis la main sur le Canadien. Jamais.

-Bien sûr que si. Ça aurait pris plus de temps, c’est tout."\(^{70}\)

In some cases it even seems as if Adamsberg’s solutions are based on reason, applied to evidence which has been overlooked. For example, when a woman’s body is found in the Seine in the short story *La Nuit des brutes*, Adamsberg alone believes that she did not commit suicide, based on the logical assumption that a person wishing to commit suicide in this way would take care to enter the water between two bridge supports, rather than risking pain before death. The evidence of the injuries on the woman’s body thus led to Adamsberg’s intuition that the case was in fact one of murder.\(^{71}\) It is therefore possible to argue that Adamsberg is a figure of reason, even if he does not consistently employ inductive methods to come up with his solutions. A “logique à lui”, perhaps, as Danglard concedes, but logic nonetheless.\(^{72}\)

Despite appearances, therefore, and despite many trends within critical opinion, it seems that the world of detective fiction is one which has maintained some link to reason throughout the course of the twentieth century. While the works of Maurice Leblanc provide the clearest link between the genre and reason, it can be argued, upon a close reading of all of the texts, that there is a certain amount of reason involved in the detective work of both Maigret and Adamsberg. The former appears to rely on the careful collection of evidence and the application of logic to the clues just as much as he relies on intuition, while the latter hides something of a methodical approach under thought processes which at

\(^{70}\) Ibid., 305.

\(^{71}\) Vargas, *Coule la Seine*, 89.

first glance appear to be anything but reasoned. While the relationship between the detective and Cartesian methods may have become strained, the idea that the world of the detective fiction genre is one based on a logical solution to every problem through the application of reason remains, and, having done so thus far, will presumably continue to do so for as long as novels are written in this vein.

A contrasting way in which the centrality of modernity to detective fiction can be gauged is through an investigation of the way in which physical aspects of modernity are treated in various works. It has been established that the emergence of detective fiction was dependent on certain historical changes associated with modernity, which were in turn reliant on the idea of reason becoming the driving force behind progress. Little wonder, therefore, that a genre so inextricably linked with modernity in all its aspects should reflect this in its settings, themes and preoccupations. For the present study, three elements of modernity will be traced in the works. The first is the treatment of the modern city, in this case Paris. The rise of the modern metropolis was an important development which made possible other aspects of modernity, through its accumulation of people, expertise and capital. The way in which Paris is treated in the chosen works is therefore an important gauge of the way in which modernity is viewed by each author. The second way in which the attitude of the chosen detective authors to modernity will be ascertained is through a brief investigation of their use of fait divers, a technique both of modern journalism and of fiction. The final method for investigating the view of modernity of the chosen authors is a more general one, which looks at the reaction of characters to new technologies. Whether or not characters appreciate or even manage to master technology is helpful in understanding the way in which the relationship between the genre and modernity may have changed over time.

One way in which all of the authors in question can be seen to engage with modernity is through their respective depictions of the city of Paris. The modern city is almost a necessity in detective fiction, as a
place where anonymity and alienation are not unknown and the threat of crime is made tangible. In the works of Leblanc, Simenon and Vargas, the city of Paris can be seen to function almost as a character in its own right, a peculiarity which has often been cited as a feature of literature in the modern period. The highly centralised nature of France means that Paris is truly the heart of the country – the place where public opinion is formed and information concentrated. The very idea of the metropolis as the location of widespread crime, anonymity, social structures vastly different to those of traditional villages and the omnipresent urban crowd is a modern one. It is clearly reflected in the chosen works, as it was in the works of many other authors, from those who structured their writing around the city to the multitude of authors who have used the setting of Paris in a less deliberate fashion.

It is important to note that the image of Paris does not remain static throughout the period surveyed in this work. The Paris portrayed in Leblanc is very much an aristocratic city. This particularly noble Parisian atmosphere was often established at the outset of a story, such as Le Collier de la reine, which begins with:

"Deux ou trois fois par an, à l'occasion de solennités importantes, comme les bals de l'ambassade d'Autriche ou les

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73 Porter, 190; Lacassin, I:15-16; Sharpe and Wallock, “From “Great Town” to “Nonplace Urban Realm,”” 3.
74 See Chapter 1 of the present work.
75 See, for example, Poole, 106.
76 Harvey, 29, 93. The centralised nature of France has also led some scholars to suggest that, in terms of modernity, Paris represented the state of modernisation of France as a whole. Schwartz, 6; Grafia, 21-22. If one is to take into account the theories of Jürgen Habermas, the presence of a public sphere centred on Paris reveals the modern nature of the city, the public sphere being a necessary part of the move towards modernisation. Habermas' theories also have some bearing on the issue of detective fiction in other ways. For example, the detective can be seen as a figure with the ability to enter the private sphere unbidden and threaten it with his ability to uncover hidden secrets. The private sphere is often represented in such works by the 'closed room'. Dubois, 20.
77 Examples of the former include Léo Malet's exclusively Parisian Nestor Burma novels, each of which was set in a different arrondissement. Smith, 126-127; Neale, 5.
soirées de Lady Billingstone, le comtesse de Dreux-Soubise mettait sur ses blanches épaules le « Collier de la Reine ».

Detective fiction may have typically been classed as populaire, therefore, but this did not necessarily mean an emphasis on average characters.

Despite Lupin’s inauspicious beginnings, the Paris he moves in appears to be populated mainly by the rich or important, for whom contact with the working classes is openly distasteful (“Elle avait vu sur sa main la main sale de l’ouvrier, et ce contact odieux la révoltait”).

It is also a city in which modern and novel technologies abound, from transport facilities to new means of communication. ‘[L]a capitale du monde’ is in and of itself important as a setting of many stories; its crowds, size and complexity adding interest to chase scenes and its police representing the best investigative force available.

Lupin in fact seems to see his identity as synonymous with this modern Paris, his mail needing no other address than “Lupin, Paris...” to reach him. The city for Leblanc was thus an almost wholly positive force.

The Paris of Simenon in the mid-twentieth century is already a vastly altered place. The end of the aristocratic era is noted by Maigret as he walks through the streets of the city, pondering the change from large manors to smaller private homes. While the nobility is still present, and capable of making the commissaire feel highly uncomfortable...
whenever a case forces him to come into contact with his social betters, the Paris of the Maigret stories is also populated by ordinary people. This includes a much higher proportion of immigrants than was ever seen in Leblanc’s works. Simenon explores issues such as the isolation and alienation that the urban environment can mask. Furthermore, Maigret in many ways represents a traditional Paris, in which the inhabitants are not natural urbanites, but have their roots firmly in the countryside. It has been noted by many critics, after all, that Maigret is essentially a paysan, a man of the countryside, a man who prefers the sound of chickens to that of people and who is perhaps little suited to the large modern city. Paris is thus not as urban in Simenon’s depiction as it had been in Leblanc’s, and it is perhaps for this reason that the depiction of the city has a slightly pejorative connotation when discussed by characters living elsewhere.

Another way in which the ambiguous attitude of Simenon towards the modern city can be ascertained is through a comparison between Paris and New York. In *Maigret à New York*, the depiction of this second modern metropolis shows it to be a city both dangerous and somewhat unpleasant. Paris’ famous detective is out of his element in this new city.

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85 Lacassin, II:13; Henry, 115. Of the chosen works, *Maigret voyage* is the best example of social tensions in the work of Simenon. One of the predominant underlying themes of the work is that of class, with Maigret attempting to feel at home in any social environment in order to fulfill his duties, but finding himself unable to do so. Simenon, *Maigret voyage*, 8, 24, 30, 32, 35, 40, 46-47, 53, 60, 70, 73, 80, 101-103, 109, 125, 147, 149, 152-155, 157.

86 The majority of foreigners encountered by Lupin appear to belong to the noble or aristocratic classes, and are very unlike Simenon’s often lower-class, alienated newcomers. Porter, 212-213; Cobb, 180, 182. Jacques Dubois discusses the importance of class to the works. Dubois, 174, 186.

87 Cobb, 183.

88 Porter, 210; Alewyn, 89; Dubois, 104; Cobb, 180, 183, 186. These origins created problems for and were thus denied by many Parisians. Harvey, 30, 32; Cobb, 183.

89 Simenon, *Monsieur Gallet*, 9, 104-105, 120, Simenon, *Maigret à New York*, 683; Porter, 210; Cobb, 182. Adamsberg’s firm attachment to his native Pyrenees is a later example of the same phenomenon. It has not escaped notice that his name approaches a meaning of ‘man of the mountain’ in German. Aziza and Rey, 183.


91 Richard Cobb believes that the different sense of the city in *Maigret à New York* is a result of Simenon’s limited ability to evoke atmosphere when it is not one of nostalgia and familiarity. It was thus a mistake on Simenon’s part, in Cobb’s opinion, to send Maigret across the Atlantic. Cobb, 188, 199.

and it is, for the most part, the same aspects which make up New York’s modernity that form his negative opinion of it. New York, for Maigret, in comparison with Paris, is a place in which the urban poor and recently arrived immigrants are liable to slip through the cracks because of the anonymity of the big city:93

"Il était difficile de concentrer plus de vies humaines dans aussi peu d’espace et pourtant on ne sentait aucune chaleur, on éprouvait plus que nulle part ailleurs un sentiment d’irrémissible isolement …

-Vous savez qui habite là ?
L’homme haussa les épaules sans répondre, comme pour dire que cela ne le regardait pas.

-Vous ignorez s’il y a quelqu’un dans le logement ?
-Comment voulez-vous que je le sache ?

-C’est un homme, une femme ?
-Un homme, je crois."94

New York is, furthermore, crime-ridden and protective of personal liberty to the point of being indifferent towards its citizens.95 In fact, the only places seen in a positive light are those which resemble slices of France transplanted in the middle of America or which, to Maigret’s mind, resemble villages within the city.96 Maigret’s New York adventure can thus be used to suggest that, for Simenon and possibly for the readers who made his works so popular, the modern city was not necessarily a positive place. Far from being the centre of wealth and adventure that it was for Lupin, it is a site of inequality and indifference. It is not only the relationship between detective fiction and reason that changed in the decades between the two authors’ works, therefore, but also the relationship between the genre and modernity in general. As in the case

93 Ibid., 579, 599, 610, 624-625, 681.
94 Ibid., 625.
95 Ibid., 590, 597-598, 606, 616, 628, 643, 646.
96 Ibid., 580, 588, 591, 595, 606, 635, 642. This strengthens the assertion which can be made that Paris is manageable for Maigret in that he sees it like a series of smaller towns of a more human size. Porter, 211; Cobb, 180.
of earlier strands of the argument, the works of Vargas do not serve to negate the trend, but to extend it.

Paris in the works of Vargas is a vastly altered place since the time of Leblanc and Lupin. Vargas, showing her place within the *néo-polar* tradition, shows a certain 'tendresse' towards those whom society has overlooked. From Lawrence in *L'Homme à l'envers* and Joss, Danglard and Decambrais in *Pars vite et reviens tard* who have been failed by their families or by the justice system, to the indigent Toussaint Pi in the short story *Cinq francs pièce* who is ignored by countless people as he attempts to sell his sponges around the city, Vargas' works are peopled with characters who would not have been given so much as the time of day by Lupin. As the focus on the marginalised and voiceless would suggest, the depiction of Paris by Vargas is not necessarily a positive one, as it was almost a century earlier. Her 'Paris-by-Night' is a primitive and untamed place in the formulation of Sara Poole. The city is seen as a predominantly negative entity by those living outside it. Life in a modern city seems to entail a certain amount of chaos, vulnerability and isolation, which in turn bring about a longing for the past. A manifestation of this longing can be seen in the character of Joss Le Guem in *Pars vite et reviens tard*, who takes up his ancestral trade of town crier, and thus turns a small corner of Paris into a remnant of days gone by. Nostalgia for the past is also seen in Vasco de Gama in *Salut et liberté*. A former tailor, Vasco (whose very name implies the omnipresence of the past in the works of Vargas) is no longer able to follow his profession. His presence outside Adamsberg's *commissariat* with abandoned treasures can be seen as a sort of imposition on the city of his longing for

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97 Aziza and Rey, 183.
99 Poole, 105-106. Poole uses the term in order to highlight the fact that most of the crimes in Vargas' works are nocturnal.
100 Vargas, *L'Homme à l'envers*, 13, 15, 21; *Pars vite et reviens tard*, 228.
101 This is despite the fact that Vargas' Paris does not protect its criminals, who are inevitably caught in the end. Poole, 106. The argument regarding the role of the past in these works will be developed in greater depth at the end of this chapter.
the past.\textsuperscript{103} Paris as a presence in French detective fiction has thus come full circle with Vargas since the days of Lupin’s aristocratic triumphs.

There are other literary features by which the works of all three authors in question show themselves to be modern. One such feature is the inclusion of \textit{fait divers} or similar techniques within the works.\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Fait divers}, as described in an earlier chapter, are a feature of modern French journalism. First appearing in the 1860s, they are a brief news item designed to entertain the reader by relating a strange story or chain of events.\textsuperscript{105} They are used by many authors as a way of condensing plot developments into a few lines of text, especially as, by definition, they include all the information necessary for their comprehension and thus need no further explanation.\textsuperscript{106} They are also used as a way of setting the mood of a story, as they establish a link between a particular set of circumstances and familiar moral or social norms which are being transgressed.\textsuperscript{107} In \textit{néo-polar} works, they can help authors to develop their insight into society and its problems.\textsuperscript{108} The scholar Sophie Beaulé sees \textit{fait divers} in literary works as fulfilling one of two functions - either that of condensing a narrative sequence in order to project a different light on events, or that of reproducing the main story in miniature or exemplifying a theme of the work.\textsuperscript{109} Both \textit{fait divers} and detective novels deal with the interruption of daily life by an unusual event, and when the former is found in the latter, it is often to heighten the suspense which it is the detective’s task to resolve.\textsuperscript{110}

As the inclusion of \textit{fait divers} within works of detective fiction has seen little metamorphosis over the twentieth century, a brief outline of the

\textsuperscript{103} Vargas, \textit{Coule la Seine}, 9-11, 15, 22, 25, 46.
\textsuperscript{104} A relationship between fiction and \textit{fait divers} has been found to be common to detective novels since the time of Poe and Gaboriau, but is also seen in works of other literary genres. Beaulé, 149; Évrard, 35, 37, 39; Lacassin, I:34; Dubois, 205.
\textsuperscript{105} Beaulé, 149-150.
\textsuperscript{106} Évrard, 14-15, 39-40, 62.
\textsuperscript{107} Beaulé, 150; Évrard, 23-24, 65.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 91.
\textsuperscript{109} Beaulé, 152.
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 157.
ways in which they have been used by the chosen authors will suffice. Arsène Lupin displayed a particular adeptness at using the press for his own ends, and the tales of his exploits often begin or end with a newspaper extract. He is, at every stage, a character who realises the importance of journalism in public opinion and “utilise tous les moyens publicitaires pour [s]e faire connaître”\(^\text{111}\). He even has an ‘official newspaper’, which describes his criminal exploits while displaying a certain amount of admiration and favourable public opinion\(^\text{112}\). The press is used by all of the authors as a way of condensing plots and highlighting important themes\(^\text{113}\). Telegrams, letters and notes perform a similar function to that described by theorists of the \textit{fait divers} in many of the chosen works\(^\text{114}\). Newspaper extracts can also be seen as a way of including humour\(^\text{115}\), and keeping an eye on the press furthermore allows Madame Maigret to track what her husband is doing\(^\text{116}\).

Sophie Beaulé has suggested that the \textit{fait divers} is particularly close to the \textit{néo-polar} as in both anxiety and disorder are cultivated while happy endings are refused\(^\text{117}\). This can be upheld by the ambiguous endings in many of Vargas’ works, but the fact remains that the treatment of newspaper extracts within works of detective fiction appears to be more of less standard throughout the twentieth century. The only major difference that can be seen between the treatment of the press in the works

\(^{111}\) Lacassin, I:127, 132; Wolf, 19; Évrard, 45; Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès}, 91-92, 190; \textit{Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur}, 107, 130, 176, 190, 200-201; \textit{Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès}, 22; \textit{Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin}, 227.

\(^{112}\) Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès}, 21-24, 28, 38, 91-92, 235, 293; \textit{Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur}, 13, 35-36, 45-46, 49, 58-59, 67, 69, 84, 89, 118, 211; \textit{Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin}, 93, 185, 228, 231-232, 234, 238, 243. The turning of public opinion in \textit{Édith au cou de cygne} underscores the good favour Lupin enjoys the rest of the time. Ibid., 185.

\(^{113}\) See, for example, Simenon, \textit{Maigret voyage}, 8; \textit{Monsieur Gallet}, 141-142; Vargas, \textit{L’Homme à l’envers}, 11, 39, 87, 170-171.

\(^{114}\) Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès}, 21, 26-27, 71, 74, 168, 268; \textit{Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur}, 12-13, 116-117, 133, 155, 158-159; \textit{Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin}, 91, 177, 184, 247-248, 277.

\(^{115}\) Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès}, 122; \textit{Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur}, 22, 58-59, 107; \textit{Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin}, 230; Vargas, \textit{Coule la Seine}, 16.

\(^{116}\) Simenon, \textit{Maigret voyage}, 127.

\(^{117}\) Beaulé, 158.
of Leblanc and that seen in the works of Simenon and Vargas is that, in the later works, the press is capable of doing more harm than good. Both the police and the upper-class characters of *Maigret voyage* wish to avoid the intrusion of the press (in the work, newspaper photographers are compared to machine gunners).\(^{118}\) Investigations are likewise complicated for Maigret because individuals fear the press more than the police.\(^ {119}\) In *L'Homme à l'envers* it is the press which alerts a dangerous would-be killer to Adamsberg's whereabouts, leading him to be shot at.\(^ {120}\) While the reflection of newspapers and *fait divers* changes somewhat over the period in question, therefore, it is an element of modernity which is far from being as complex as some of the other topics discussed in this chapter.

Technological modernity thus appears as the final way of ascertaining what the relationship of the various authors to modernity may be. To return to the example of Maurice Leblanc and Arsène Lupin, first of all, it soon becomes apparent upon an inspection of the works that the relationship between this particular author and modernity is an inherently positive one.\(^ {121}\) Lupin's superiority is reflected, among other manifestations, in his mastery of modern technology.\(^ {122}\) He owns at least one car and motorbike and employs a mechanic for their maintenance, avails himself of modern public transport facilities and means of communications, is often seen to employ electricity and electrical appliances, and invents a multitude of ingenious gadgets.\(^ {123}\) In the estimation of one critic, the use of up-to-date technical and scientific vocabulary in Leblanc's stories is surprising, and was not seen in many

\(^{118}\) Simenon, *Maigret voyage*, 53, 107, 126.
\(^ {119}\) Ibid., 94.
\(^ {120}\) Vargas, *L'Homme à l'envers*, 81, 219, 265, 273.
\(^ {121}\) Vareille, "Modernité et tradition," 50. Jean-Paul Colin also discusses the elements of Leblanc's style which contribute to the modern atmosphere of the works. Colin, 57-59.
\(^ {122}\) Wolf, 21; Olivier-Martin, 8; Colin, 59.
contemporary works.\textsuperscript{124} Even his interest in new ideas on health and fitness locates him as a modern character.\textsuperscript{125}

As if these examples were not sufficient, Leblanc also has his character openly ally himself with the spirit of progress in a scene from \textit{La Seconde arrestation d'Arsène Lupin}: “Jusqu'où va le progrès? Notre siècle fourmille de petites inventions qui rendent vraiment la vie charmante et pittoresque. Et si amusante!...”\textsuperscript{126} The presence of automobiles is a particularly important reflection of a positive view of modernity.\textsuperscript{127} On more than one occasion, the narrator or Lupin himself wax lyrical on the incredible speed and efficiency of the automobile in terms which could hardly be more positive. The following example is taken from a story discussed earlier in which Lupin, disguised, sets out in search of the thief who has been taken for himself:

“Jamais ma fidèle Moreau-Lepton ne répondit à mon impatience avec plus d’ardeur et de régularité. Il me semblait que je lui communiquais ma volonté directement, sans l’intermédiaire des leviers et des manettes. Elle partageait mes désirs. Elle approuvait mon obstination. Elle comprenait mon obstination contre ce gredin d’Arsène Lupin ... Les bornes avaient l’air de petites bêtes peureuses qui s’évanouissaient à notre approche.”\textsuperscript{128}

Man and machine have thus become as one, with the important distinction that the machine’s will is completely subordinated to that of the man.\textsuperscript{129}

An even more exaggerated description of the speed of modern travel is

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{124} Wolf, 21-22. For other critics, however, Lupin’s love of the material aspects of modernity is not enough to prevent him from being the last of an earlier model of literary heroes. Vareille, \textit{L’Homme masqué}, 148.
\textsuperscript{125} Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès}, 89-90; \textit{Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur}, 80, 105-106.
\textsuperscript{126} Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès}, 193.
\textsuperscript{127} It should be noted that the less than reliable technology of the period was accurately reflected, and could result in humorous failures. Ibid., 36, 40.
\textsuperscript{128} Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur}, 103.
\textsuperscript{129} Leblanc’s sense of humour is also evident in this passage, as Lupin rails against Lupin.
\end{footnotesize}
seen in the story *Un Enlèvement*.\(^{130}\) It thus becomes evident that modernity, for Leblanc and Lupin, was an unequivocally positive force.\(^{131}\) The great popularity of the works along with the inclusion of passages praising the modern era while having little to do with the advancement of the plot could be seen to suggest that this point of view was shared by their vast and varied audience.

Maigret, like Lupin, is seen to use all available technologies to solve the puzzles presented to him. His method when working involves innumerable phone calls and telegrams to collect evidence, as well as employing modern means of transportation.\(^{132}\) More scientific methods are sometimes needed in order to reconstitute evidence, such as the piecing together of burnt letters in *Monsieur Gallet, décédé*, which involves maintaining the atmospheric conditions of the room in which the ashes are found, using a special glue, and adhering the fragments of paper to sheets of glass.\(^{133}\) While the detective himself does not undertake this task, he is more than happy to call in the appropriate person to do so. Maigret may display a certain amount of nostalgia for the simpler technologies of the past on a handful of occasions, therefore, yet his policing methods are far from being a rejection of modernity.\(^{134}\)

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\(^{130}\) “Lupin n’avait pas exagéré en disant qu’on irait « assez vite ». Dès le début ce fut une allure vertigineuse. L’horizon venait à leur rencontre, comme attiré par une force mystérieuse, et il disparaissait à l’instant comme absorbé par une abîme vers lequel d’autres choses aussitôt, arbres, maisons, plaines et forêts se précipitaient avec la hâte tumultueuse d’un torrent qui sent l’approche du gouffre.” Leblanc, *Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès*, 184.

\(^{131}\) Olivier-Martin, 8; Dubourg, 16, 18. The fact that the works have dated somewhat does not detract from their modernity relative to the period in which they were written. Elements such as horse-drawn transport, dirigibles, *pneumatiques* as a means of communication and even the presence of hysterical women add to the datedness of some of the stories while being perfectly reasonable for the time. Duffy, 155; Leblanc, *Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès*, 129, 132, 149-150, 168, 218, 267-268; *Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur*, 64, 91; *Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin*, 39.


\(^{133}\) Ibid., 91-94.

\(^{134}\) Simenon, *Maigret voyage*, 66, 102.
The modernity reflected in the Maigret stories, however, belongs to a very specific period of time.\textsuperscript{135} Although the Maigret works were written over a period of decades, the world reflected in them was very little changed from that of the first works in the 1930s.\textsuperscript{136} The major political events which rocked the nation and the world as Simenon was writing do not cause more than a ripple in Maigret’s world.\textsuperscript{137} Instead, Simenon appears to have preferred to stick with what was reassuring and familiar, even as it became increasingly out-moded. For many readers, moreover, the reassuring, unchanging, “cosy, slippered world” of the Maigret stories was one of the great sources of their attractiveness.\textsuperscript{138} This may be taken as evidence to suggest that, for many readers, the world of the immediate past was both more familiar and more attractive than the present. Whether one chooses to see the Maigret works as favourable towards modernity, because of the attitude of the detective to new developments and technologies, or as a rejection of modernity because they failed to modernise with the world around them, it is apparent that the relationship between modernity and detective fiction appears to have changed greatly between the time of Lupin and that of Maigret.

It appears at first glance that the works of Vargas reject a positive relationship with modernity even more firmly than did Simenon. While Danglard avails himself of modern techniques when attempting to solve a crime, Adamsberg himself is loathe to use computers and other new technologies, preferring instead to walk the streets contemplating, in his own fashion, the facts of the case. Adamsberg’s anguish over his destroyed mobile phone at the end of \textit{Pars vite et reviens tard} can be seen as the author’s way of noting that technology can sometimes do more

\textsuperscript{135} Cobb, 183-184.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 182, 196. Michel Lemoine has suggested that this was a result of Simenon’s method of writing, in which he drew on impressions and information gathered during his time in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s rather than inventing an imaginary updated Paris for his novels. Lemoine, 9-10; Henry, 37-38.
\textsuperscript{137} Porter, 213; Cobb, 189, 191. As one scholar has written, although Simenon was aware of developments such as the large modern business district of la Défense on the outskirts of central Paris, he sheltered Maigret from “such impersonal and looming horrors” for as long as possible, refusing to allow them to appear on the horizon of the image of Paris he had created. Ibid., 198-199.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., 182, 196.
harm than good. While Adamsberg is able to use his authority and title to resolve the phone dilemma, the outcome, had he not been able to do so, would have changed the course of his life.\footnote{Vargas, \textit{Pars vite et reviens tard}, 320, 323, 326-327.} In addition, as in the case of Maigret and Simenon, attitudes towards modernity can be surmised, not only from the actions of characters in the works, but also from the approach of the author. While Vargas’ works are clearly modern in setting, and show no signs of becoming trapped in anachronisms imposed by the author, they are often archaic in subject matter. While it would be easy to assign these choices primarily to Vargas’ background as an archaeologist and historian,\footnote{Both, for example, involve the art of retrospective investigation. Aziza and Rey, 183; Colin, 56, Neale, 5. Vargas herself rejects the idea that the importance of the past to her work is simply a result of her training. At the same time, she admits that the subject of the Plague in \textit{Pars vite et reviens tard} came about largely as a result of her studies, and that her two careers are similar in some ways. Ferniot, questions 7, 13; Laura Spinney, \textit{Riddle of the Bones} [interview with Fred Vargas], \textit{New Scientist} 31, July 2004, 46.} it is more interesting to consider the idea that the link between detective fiction and the material aspects of modernity has transformed itself over the decades. As in the case of the Arsène Lupin tales, it is possible to take the popularity of the works (as well as, at least in Vargas’ case, a great deal of critical regard for them) as evidence that they strike a chord in wider society. If this seeming rejection of modernity and return to the past was not seen to reasonable by readers, then surely Vargas and her character Adamsberg would not have enjoyed the success that has so far been theirs.

The evident link between the works of Vargas and an oppressive sense of history is one which bears some development, firstly by comparison with earlier works. History is similarly present in many of the works involving Lupin, but mainly to show his mastery of it.\footnote{The presence of the past in Leblanc’s works is discussed in greater depth by François Raymond. Raymond, 42-44. Stories which involve past deeds returning to haunt people in the present are also present in the Maigret works, but again not in the same oppressive way as in the works of Vargas. Cobb, 181; Simenon, \textit{Maigret à New York}, 674-677; Dubois, 173.} For example in the story \textit{Le signe de l’ombre}, Lupin is able to metaphorically free a group of people from the weight of the past when he deciphers the clues left by their ancestor. Until the arrival of Lupin, they had been...
doomed to repeat annually an inherited ritual which had lost all meaning.\textsuperscript{142} Lupin’s mastery of history even leads him to become in a sense the successor to the kings of France. Like them, he is able to manipulate the information available to him, both to uncover a secret passage in \textit{Herlock Sholmès arrive trop tard}, and to take possession of the hidden treasure of \textit{L’Aiguille creuse}.\textsuperscript{143} Unlike Vargas’ characters, whose present seems to be interwoven with the past in a way which brings about unlikely perils, Lupin uses the past to his advantage, displaying his mastery of it at every turn.\textsuperscript{144} Even the presence of history was thus used by Leblanc to augment the powers of his modern hero.

The same cannot be said for Vargas and Adamsberg. Two of the three works chosen, \textit{L’Homme à l’envers} and \textit{Pars vite et reviens tard}, take as their primary subject matter the return of a menacing evil which would normally be consigned to the past. In \textit{Pars vite et reviens tard}, the threat is that of bubonic plague, which a troubled would-be serial killer attempts to unleash upon the city of Paris.\textsuperscript{145} \textit{L’Homme à l’envers}, on the other hand, deals with the actions of what appears to be a werewolf in the south of France.\textsuperscript{146} Although only well-educated individuals recognize the signs pointing to the arrival of the plague in the former, and although it is the killer himself who spreads the werewolf rumour in the latter, the pertinent point is that in both, the public at large proves that historical fears, far from being exorcised by modern reason, lie dormant below the surface.\textsuperscript{147} The mysterious symbol said to protect one from the plague, first drawn on selected doors by the killer himself, is soon seized upon as

\textsuperscript{142} Leblanc, \textit{Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin}, 65-66, 70-72, 82.
\textsuperscript{143} Lacassin, I: 142, 146; Raymond, 46; Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur}, 219-221.
\textsuperscript{144} Other stories which rely on the influence of the past for their plots can be found throughout the chosen collections. See, for example, Leblanc, \textit{Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès}, 43; \textit{Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur}, 109-110; \textit{Les Confidences d’Arsène Lupin}, 70-73.
\textsuperscript{145} Vargas, \textit{Pars vite et reviens tard}, 5, 24-25, 79, 104.
\textsuperscript{146} Vargas, \textit{L’Homme à l’envers}, 14, 19, 39, 55-57.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., 56-57, 303; \textit{Pars vite et reviens tard}, 104.
a talisman by the public. A surprising number of people are still aware of old folklore regarding the detection of werewolves.

The continued importance of myth and legend to characters in these contemporary novels can be seen, furthermore, in lesser elements such as Soliman’s invention of pseudo-African myths in *L’Homme à l’envers* or Joss le Guern’s heeding of the advice of his ancestor during ghostly visitations in *Pars vite et reviens tard*. Modern efforts to classify information, which hark back to Diderot’s Enlightenment *Encyclopédie*, become figures of derision when in *L’Homme à l’envers* Soliman and le Veilleux pull nonsensical names for their animals from the dictionary, and Camille reads from the *Catalogue d’Outillage Professionelle* (these are done largely as comforting exercises as, after all, “[Il]e Catalogue peut tout”). Even modern technology becomes ridiculous when telephones are used to keep in contact with animals. The omnipresent, oppressive sense of the past can thus be seen as another way in which the works of Fred Vargas undermine modernity, while never completely eliminating it.

Almost all of the points at which detective fiction and modernity overlap can therefore be seen to support the idea of a changing relationship between the two notions over the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. From the idea, discussed at the outset of the chapter, that the detective is a figure of reason, to other manifestations such as the depiction of modern Paris in the works or their relationship to technology,

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148 Ibid., 104, 182, 207.
150 Ibid., 120, 125, 129, 168-169, 180-181, 183, 186-187, 192, 204, 224, 239, 297; *Pars vite et reviens tard*, 10-13, 74.
151 Vargas, *L’Homme à l’envers*, 316. See also Vargas, *L’Homme à l’envers*, 51, 53-54, 116, 130, 141, 144, 154, 215, 225, 267-269, 315-316. Sara Poole cites Soliman’s obsession with the dictionary as an example of Vargas’ interest in wordplay, and both Camille’s and Soliman’s unusual reading matter as pastimes whose intent is to comfort the characters, however little sense they derive from it. Poole, 101-103.
153 The fact that Vargas herself sees the genre as a “grande fable contemporaine”, playing on fears ingrained in childhood, shows that the decision to root the works in a semi-mythical past while ostensibly setting them in the present is a conscious one. Ferniot, questions 6-7; Spinney, 48; Neale, 6, 8; Poole, 97, 105.
the same evolution can be seen. While in the early works of Maurice Leblanc Paris was to be praised for its modernity and Lupin for his mastery of modern technology and even history itself; this attitude had changed by the time of Georges Simenon. Maigret can still be seen to use modern techniques and technologies, but Simenon chose not to modernise the Paris of which Maigret was a part, and instead allowed his character and his writings to become increasingly out-dated. By the time Jean-Baptiste Adamsberg appears on the scene, history has become an omnipresent and oppressive force, over which characters do not have the same mastery as did Lupin almost a century earlier. Adamsberg’s seeming rejection of technology could similarly be used to highlight the changing nature of modernity in relation to the detective fiction genre. Whether these developments mean that the genre has come increasingly to reject the modernity that was so central to its development, or whether, instead, detective fiction can be seen to reflect changing attitudes towards modernity in wider society, is a question which deserves some reflection, and which will be developed in the conclusion of this study.
Conclusion

« Danglard avait une très longue pratique du visage d’Adamsberg qui pouvait passer de l’état quasi terne, éteint comme un feu noyé, à l’état ardent. La lumière parvenait alors à se propager sous la peau brune par un procédé technique resté mystérieux. À ces moments intenses, Danglard savait que toutes les dénégations et les scepticismes, les démonstrations de logique les plus serrées s’évaporaient comme vapeur sur les braises. ...les convictions irrationnelles d’Adamsberg ébranlaient ses ancrages et ce renoncement temporaire au bon sens lui apportait une étrange détente. »

(From Pars vite et reviens tard)\(^1\)

The argument established in the preceding chapters is one from which several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, certain trends are evident which establish the importance of the basis of the detective fiction genre in both the Enlightenment idea of modernity and in reason. An historical argument was adduced to show that certain developments were necessary both in the field of knowledge and in economy and society before fiction of this type could emerge, while the close reading of the texts both proved this link and showed the transition which has taken place over time in the relationship between detective fiction, reason and modernity. The second group of conclusions can be investigated with reference to this latter fact.

The change seen in the chosen works, a sample of twentieth and early twenty-first century detective fiction, is a sweeping one. While Arsène Lupin at the dawn of the twentieth century inhabited a modern city, showed his mastery of the past and displayed his general extraordinariness through his use of technology, this had changed somewhat by mid-century and the work of Simenon. Simenon’s character Maigret, drawing somewhat on the roman noir tradition (though not belonging to this sub-genre) is distinguished by his ordinariness, and is most often seen by critics to follow intuition alone. He is

\(^{1}\) Vargas, Pars vite et reviens tard, 105.
uncomfortable when in the presence of his social betters, does not employ the latest gadgets and tricks, and approaches the city of Paris like a series of villages rather than a bustling metropolis. His inability to do the same in New York leads to a negative impression of the city. This trend has been developed still further by the time of Vargas and her character Jean-Baptiste Adamsberg. Adamsberg, whose thought processes are unclear even to himself, rejects technology outright and comes into contact with a variety of marginalised characters not seen in earlier works, including the homeless Toussaint Pi in *Cinq francs pièce*. Over the same period, a shift from the overt and dazzling ratiocination of Lupin to the laborious mental efforts and occasional flashes of insight of Adamsberg mirrors the treatment of modernity and its paraphernalia. The difference is thus striking.

The trends seen in the chosen works can be approached in two ways, in order to draw meaningful conclusions from them. On the one hand, it could be argued that, as time has passed, the notion of reason, new to the Enlightenment, has been internalised, and has become so natural that, rather than the detective having to declare his intent of reasoning out a solution to a crime then proceeding to do so in a dramatic climax, it has become a faculty which can be employed without one even being conscious of doing so. On the other hand, it could be argued that detective fiction as a genre is subject to the same process of historical development as reason itself. The new scepticism about reason, announced, for example, in theories about the postmodern subject, has, one might argue, also made itself felt in the detective fiction genre, which witnesses an increasing scepticism about the reliability of the sovereign reason of the detective.

The idea that reason has become inbuilt in the later detectives of the genre is not a completely convincing one. It is apparent, upon a close inspection of given works in the genre, that while Arsène Lupin’s method of reasoning was close enough to his Enlightenment forebears to warrant comparisons with Voltaire’s Zadig, this is certainly not the case when it comes to Adamsberg and Maigret. My argument does diverge somewhat from the dominant trends of thought on the two authors, which tend to focus
on the intuitive aspects of the two characters' approaches and deny any form of overt reasoning.\(^2\) The third chapter of this work has perhaps shown that the intuition used by Maigret and Adamsberg is not so divorced from reason as may at first seem to be the case. It is thus clear that reason survives in modern detective fiction novels, but that the way in which it is employed has changed. While the world the genre has created is still a rational one, in which the correct solution is not a matter of time, the seeming absence of the deployment of overt reasoning faculties on the part of the detective highlights the fact that the methods used are no longer essentially Cartesian. The detectives may gather evidence and clues in the same way that they have always done, but they now eschew Descartes' inductive reasoning that would strip this evidence back to its smallest components and rebuild it into logical solutions 'clearly and distinctly' from there. It is perhaps for this reason, therefore, that a close reading of the detective's methods and results is necessary to demonstrate that the proof of a reasoned world of detective fiction is in the proverbial pudding.\(^3\)

The second major conclusion which can be drawn from this study of French detective fiction of the twentieth and early twenty-first century relates to the concept of postmodernism. For some decades now, the idea of a rationally composed modernity has had less general acceptance than was once the case. The rejection of rational modernity has often taken the form of postmodern criticism, of the type put forward by Arnold Toynbee, the scholar who first coined the term in the 1950s, or the sociologist Daniel Bell, whose work in the 1970s was also key to the development of postmodern ideas.\(^4\) The advent of postmodernism has sometimes been linked historically to the atrocities of World War II.\(^5\) According to this view, the atrocities committed

\(^2\) See, for example, Sue Neale's rejection of any logic in Maigret's or Adamsberg's methods. Neale, 4, 6. Even Fred Vargas herself does not contradict the idea that Adamsberg is a creature of intuition rather than reason. Spinney, 48.

\(^3\) This is similar to the approach taken to the Maigret novels by Jacques Dubois, who notes that he always comes to the correct conclusions in the end, while encountering a number of anomalies in his method. Dubois, 177, 180.

\(^4\) Calinescu, 6.

\(^5\) Ibid., 267. Another theory put forward by Calinescu is that postmodernism and its negativity are a result of the juxtaposition of industrial-capitalist modernity with aesthetic modernity. Ibid., 265.
at this time undermined all sense of confidence that rationality was conducive to moral action in the modern world. While the world in which most early stories in the detective fiction genre had been played out had reflected the assumption that crime was no more than a temporary glitch interruption, which could be repaired by the advent of the detective and the discovery of the individual responsible, this depiction of the world became increasingly problematic after 1945. If the ultimate result of the highly rationalised, technological society of modernity was the legitimisation of mass-murder on an unprecedented scale, then it is little wonder that scholarly minds began to reject the foundational beliefs upon which this world had rested. 6 While postmodernism is not discussed at any length in this study, it is argued that detective fiction has continued to debate the centrality of reason to modernity, just as postmodernism is overtly sceptical about reason’s importance to modern life. 7 The insistence that the detective is no longer a figure of reason but thinks and acts according to a range of responses, including intuition, may thus be attributed partly to a certain wariness regarding reason in view of this postmodern scepticism. As society has come to exercise caution about rational modernity it seems that fictional detectives have begun to lose the ability to reason, have fallen away from the idea of rational conduct and have begun, in some cases, to lose the ability to relate the tales of their exploits. 8

6 Symons, 148, 153; Stéphane, 87-88. The idea that the thought of the Enlightenment is the basis of modern thought is strengthened by the fact that both the Enlightenment and modernity have been held accountable for the atrocities of the Holocaust. An over-reliance on reason as an organising principle for knowledge and action is seen to lead to a desire to exert power over nature and the world. This is discussed in light of previous scholarship, for example, in the work of Dorinda Outram. Outram, 6.

7 Parallels can be drawn here with the inclusion of women in detective fiction. While there have long been female detectives in the works of various authors, Leblanc, Simenon and Vargas’ texts, centred as they are on male detectives, give an interesting insight. While women are largely absent from the Lupin novels apart from as conquests, by the time of Maigret they are regularly included, but in the decidedly un-feminist guise of Madame Maigret. Adamsberg, however, encounters numerous strong female figures, not the least of which is his sometimes lover Camille. Relationships in these later novels are more like those between equals, and are often difficult. Vargas herself, however, repeatedly explains in interviews that she finds the character of the female detective unconvincing, and has made a conscious choice to use male central characters. It can therefore be suggested that the treatment of women in the novels is another way in which the genre has continued to develop along the lines of debates in wider society. There is insufficient scope, unfortunately, to develop this idea further in the present study. Ferniot, question 12; Poole, 99; Desnain, 176-177, 180, 182; Henry, 137.

8 Kawakami, 198. Kawakami makes the link between Modiano’s work and postmodernism explicit, stating that the author’s attitude towards the quest for self-knowledge
In sum, rather than seeing detective fiction as a genre developing in a vacuum, uninfluenced by trends seen within the society of which it is a product, it is worthwhile to note how the genre has been shaped by historical changes in its referencing of reason and modernity. While detective fiction may have emerged at a time when rational methods were still relatively new, and had to be consciously employed, the trends seen within the chosen examples indicate that, as time has passed, fictional detectives have ceased to use purely Cartesian or Baconian inductive methods and have, instead, drawn on a wider range of concepts and experiences. The trend towards postmodern understanding, for example, sees reason as a complicating factor for modern awareness rather than the key to a release from intellectual oppression. It is thus evident that a small sample of French detective fiction yields results which are fascinating and far-reaching. Given the rich tradition of detective fiction in the French context, there is no reason to believe that the genre will not continue to grow and develop, keeping pace all the while with the notions of reason and modernity which have traditionally been, and remain, albeit in an altered form, at its core.

evident in his works is ambivalent because of the problematic nature of this quest given the uncertainties of the postmodern age. Ibid., 203.
Bibliography

Primary Sources

*Key Texts*


Additional Primary Sources


Secondary Sources


The main use of Alewyn’s chapter to my research was in allowing me to see the type of scholarship against which I am arguing. Alewyn’s main hypothesis is that the world of detective fiction is not as rational as it appears to be, and thus that the tradition of mystery fiction from the gothic novel to the present day is more of a reaction against Enlightenment thought than a manifestation of it. That being said, the chapter also had references to the Maigret novels and the development of a modern police force which were useful.


Allen’s work on the changing reading practices of France was both fascinating and highly relevant to my argument. He discusses the way in which new printing technologies and the spread of literacy fed off each other in order to create a new reading public with new demands and expectations by the twentieth century, and also attempts to examine the way in which printed matter was received by the public, a difficult task at best. Any work on such a topic would have been useful for my research, but the fact that Allen focuses on France ensured its usefulness for my purposes.


The work of Frederick Artz on the Enlightenment in many ways belongs to earlier schools of thought on the topic, and for this reason was employed primarily as a way of understanding what I was distancing myself from. The section on the corrupting influence of the salons was particularly indicative of the outdated nature of the work as a whole.

This *guide pocket* to detective fiction was a good entry point into the study of detective fiction with a French focus. It both traced the history of the genre and gave brief snippets of information on a range of authors and their works, including Leblanc, Simenon and Vargas (it was, in fact, one of the few available works which was up to date enough to include the latter). Its brevity was thus made up for by its usefulness in this regard.


Beaulé’s investigation of *faits divers* found in detective fiction was useful for my research in two ways. Firstly, it shed light on the idea of the *fait divers* as a product of modernity, and secondly, it highlighted another way in which the modernity of detective novels can be tested. While this was a somewhat tangential element of my research, this article proved to be an interesting aid to my studies.


Despite the fact that this work focuses on the press rather than on the production of fiction, it provides a detailed discussion of how new technologies facilitated the production and distribution of printed materials. It also touches on the spread of literacy in France in general versus in Paris in particular.


This work describes the path to modernity taken in Paris over the chosen period, and the profound effects which this had on the working population. Berlanstein describes the way in which industry in Paris changed from the finishing of luxury goods to large-scale industry concentrated in the peripheries of the city, and also discusses the effects which this modernity had on everyday people, from increased public health measures to a stalled or even falling standard of living. While there was no focus on the underlying reasons behind these sweeping changes, this work, in describing the historical changes that took place, was still a helpful one for my research.

Bouquet's *guide pocket* introduction to the Enlightenment is a comprehensive and straightforward way of gaining an overview of the topic. With the help of this work, I was able to trace the development of thought on reason through various Enlightenment thinkers, as well as better understanding their own beliefs on who their predecessors were, and the divergence between their theories on various topics.


Although this book is somewhat dated, it belongs within the modern tradition of Enlightenment scholarship which has moved away from seeing a unified body of doctrine and has made some effort to reconsider national and social contexts. The discussion of the importance of Descartes to the idea of rational knowledge and the legacy of the Enlightenment for modern thought were particularly pertinent.


Călinescu's *Five Faces of Modernity* is a challenging work which was nevertheless helpful in allowing me to situate myself in the scholarly discussion of modernity and postmodernism. Although Călinescu focuses primarily on the 'Quarrel' between the 'Ancients' and the 'Moderns' as the point of emergence of the idea of modernity, he also discusses more mainstream views of the issue, and makes mention of modernity as a new relationship to time, aesthetic modernity and the emergence of postmodern scholarship. For this reason the work was drawn upon throughout my argument.


*See entries for individual chapters.*

This volume is a collection of essays, some of which deal with Simenon’s Maigret novels. As Cobb was more or less a contemporary of Simenon, his work allowed me to gain insight into the reception of the works at the time of their writing. Cobb also displays an understanding of Maigret’s function in the texts as well as the techniques Simenon used to create the character.


Colin’s article provides a fresh insight into the issue of modernity in Leblanc’s works by discussing elements of the author’s style, including his brevity of description and use of terms which had recently entered the French language, which aided the depiction of Lupin as a modern character. This work was thus a useful support to my own argument.


This chapter enters into a scholarly debate on the topic of industrialisation in France in comparison with England. Despite the time which has elapsed since it was written, therefore, it avoids many of the errors of outdated scholarship (which often assumed that France’s failure to have an Industrial Revolution on the scale of Britain’s was because it was not modern enough to do so), and thus allowed me to do the same. With reference to this work I was also able to develop an idea of when industrial modernity can be said to have come to France.


This work provided an interesting background to my studies as it traced the interactions between modernisation, industrialisation and literature. Daly discusses railway rescue scenes in ‘sensation’ drama and fiction as a manifestation of anxieties regarding the emerging machine age, and comes to the conclusion that literature and film are not just products of modernisation, but are involved in the process itself. Had he touched on detective fiction, the work would have been invaluable, but as it was I did not draw on it directly during my argument.

Darnton’s approach to the writing of history means, not only that often-overlooked areas of France’s history are investigated, but also that his style is direct and easy to follow. In this work he discusses early police work and literary censorship in Paris, and the development of both printing and reading practices and attitudes towards the Enlightenment. The other chapters, while fascinating, could not be related to the present study. Another strength of Darnton’s work is that he clearly places himself within existing scholarship, allowing me to attempt to do the same.


The work of Deleuse is interesting in that it was the prime example among the works uncovered during my research of a relatively up to date work which still saw the origins of the detective fiction genre in Oedipus. Deleuse also argued against the other current trends, with, for example, his belief that Poe cannot be seen as the founder of the genre. Having opposing viewpoints was a vital part of placing myself within wider trends in scholarship.


*See entries for individual chapters.*


While there was, unfortunately, insufficient space within this study to cover the issue of the changing depiction of women within detective fiction (apart from a brief outline in the concluding section), this was an extremely interesting article, and helped to place the works of Fred Vargas within a wider context.


*See entries for individual chapters.*

Dubois’ work is a highly scholarly and theoretical survey of the relationship between the topics of detective fiction and modernity. He investigates in detail in the first part of the work the emergence and development of the genre, its relationship to ‘mainstream’ fiction and the ways in which the genre sets itself apart from other types of fiction. The second section, which dealt with the construction of the detective novel and the role of different characters and aspects of the plot, was rather beyond the boundaries of my work. In the third section, the chapters on Maigret and Oedipus were highly useful, while those on Rouletabille and Japrisot were less so. While the nature of the work made it a difficult read at times, it was central to my understanding of the link between the two subjects which it takes as its title, and in particular French currents of thought on the matter.


This article takes as its subject, as is suggested in the title, the character of Arsène Lupin. In it, Dubourg examines elements relevant to my own research, such as the importance of Paris as a setting for the Lupin works, and the association of the character with a period-specific modernity. It was thus of some use in my work, in that it allowed me to find support for my own conclusions.


*Le Grand Transit Moderne* focuses on authors who are outside the scope of my work, but at the same time touches on many interesting points. For example, Duffy discusses the positive and negative reactions to modernity seen in nineteenth-century fiction and the modernisation of Paris by Haussmann. The actual argument of the book was, however, not of great use to my research.


*See entries for individual chapters.*

Although the volume to which this introduction belongs was not of great value to my studies because of the fact that most of the writings contained within were translated from English and could be sourced elsewhere, Eisenzweig’s own thinking on the subject of detective fiction was both interesting and relevant. It contained an argument which I did not come across in any of my other readings, namely that the idea of a detective fiction genre was constructed by literary critics in the 1890s as a type of shorthand for everything that was bad in literature. The literary merits of the genre were not the main focus of my work, but I found this survey thought provoking nonetheless.


Évrard’s work is one which, while ostensibly covering an area which is only secondary to my research, gave insights into many important themes of my research. The way in which this book discusses the development of the modern press, the *fait divers* as an important component of this and the various uses which fiction, including detective fiction, has found for these journalistic extracts made in an invaluable and interesting resource.


The argument constructed by Goodman on the Enlightenment was important to my research as an example of the type of modern scholarship which does not see reason as being the emanation of a disembodied group of male Enlightenment scholars, but which instead sees social factors and national differences as being all important. The detailed discussion of previous scholarship, much like that seen in the work of Dorinda Outram, allowed me to place myself within the range of scholarship on the topic.

Having used a work by Robert Darnton in the course of my argument, as well as mentioning his criticism of Peter Gay’s scholarship on the Enlightenment, this essay provided a useful contrast. Drawn from a volume which takes as its subject matter the limitations of Darnton’s research, Gordon’s chapter both discussed the work which I used and outlined some of the flaws with Darton’s approach in general. I was thus able to avoid relying too heavily on scholarship which has become somewhat outdated.


The main flaw of this work for the present purposes was the reliance on Freudian scholarship which the title implies. Graña was concerned primarily with the anguished modernist reaction to the changes of the modern era, and did not dwell upon more positive reactions to modernity, such as that seen in some detective fiction. Despite these issues, however, there was discussion of the reflection of historical changes in literature, the rise of mass literacy and the press and the legacy of Enlightenment rationalism which was of some use.


This survey, as the title suggests, gives an account of the development of noir fiction in France. It was beneficial in enabling me to develop my history of the detective fiction genre in that country. Its discussion of modernity in relation to romans noirs was also of use.


Hancock’s chapter looks at the nineteenth-century transformation of Paris under Haussmann. As it looks at this period as a modernisation of the city, it was applicable to my work. However, it was not overly helpful for my research, with other texts providing a better idea of the changes wrought and their implications.
In this chapter, Hannoosh gives a summary of the emergence of ideas of aesthetic modernity, and their link to the modern urban environment. This work was used predominantly as a reference source to a different definition of modernity than that seen in my argument, and as a background source for my work in general.


The work done by Harvey on the modernisation of Paris is very much a historian’s view of the transformations which took place in the city under Haussmann. Harvey discusses the extent to which Haussmann’s changes to the city can be seen in the preceding decades, and then discusses physical and psychological aspects of the transformation and the city’s journey to modernity. Although modernity’s debt to the Enlightenment ideal of reason is only mentioned in passing, the French focus and wide scope of the work made it a valuable resource.


Henderson’s work, though somewhat dated, was useful in that it tracked when and where the developments associated with industrialisation and modernity took place in France. It was thus used as a support to my discussion of industrial modernity in the French context. The comparative approach of the work was also beneficial, in that it attempted to answer the question of why France was slower to become modern than some other countries, namely England.


This volume provides interesting insights into almost all aspects relating to the character of Jules Maigret, from his drinking and smoking habits to his childhood and home life. The sections relating to his investigative methods and attitude to police work were evidently of the most importance to my study, but the work as a whole was entertaining and fascinating to read.

The primary use of this chapter for my research was the fact that it supported my argument that the detective fiction genre is one whose very basis is the idea of reason inherited from the Enlightenment. It thus helped me to explore some of the issues and areas of evidence surrounding the topic.


Hufton’s work on the Enlightenment was of great use as it is up-to-date and provides a point of view which is overlooked in many other works on the period. It is her argument that the secularising effects of the Enlightenment are often overstated, as the transition, even in France, was not a smooth one, and furthermore took a significant amount of time to trickle down to the ordinary people. By drawing on this argument I was thus able to avoid another potential pitfall in Enlightenment scholarship.


This chapter was only useful for my research in that it supported the theory that the detective fiction genre is inextricably linked to the development of modern capitalism, based on the timing of its emergence in modernising countries. Apart from the mention of this theory it was not used.


Although Kawakami’s focus on an author other than my chosen three limited its applicability to my research, this study provided a useful discussion of Modiano’s works in relation to postmodernism. This helped me to reach conclusions regarding the relationship of detective fiction to changing ideas of modernity.

The main use of this work in my research was its detailed investigation of the Arsenne Lupin works, the function of the character and the literary precedents of the series. The discussion of literary precedents of the genre in general was also informative and helpful. The chapter on Maigret in the second volume was of less use, as it focused predominantly on the emerging Maigret character of early works, rather than the fully-formed character of my chosen novels.


Lampard’s chapter, while largely too theoretical for my purposes, provided an interesting look at the urbanisation process, which allowed me to draw conclusions regarding where France fitted in to the European process of modernisation and urbanisation.


While some of the concepts within Lardreau’s essay were both irrelevant and made reading difficult, his discussion of the extent to which the genre of detective fiction is a presentation of theories on knowledge and reason was of great use in my own research. The chapter was thus able to be used in various strands of my argument.


The work of Laurent was useful in constructing my theory on the idea of reason in the Enlightenment, as well as helping me to trace the effect of seventeenth-century thought on the thought of the Enlightenment, and the transmission in turn of these ideas to the present day. The idea of the *Encyclopédie* as the manifestation of the new methods of arriving at knowledge developed in the Enlightenment was another aspect seen in Laurent’s work and reflected in my own.

Leigh’s study of the Enlightenment was an aid to my research in that it is firmly within the modern trend of thought on this complicated topic, and thus sees the Enlightenment as a variety of ideas by a variety of thinkers. The discussion of the divergence of opinion on the topic of reason was particularly relevant.


As the majority of this work was simply a listing of different places in Paris by arrondissement and the works in which they appear, the body of Lemoine’s book was of only limited use. However, the introduction, which discussed the place of Paris within the works as well as issues such as the datedness of the later novels, was used within my own argument.


The main feature of this book which made it highly useful for my research was its discussion of previous Enlightenment scholarship. This made it much easier to understand the development of ideas on the topic, and thus to situate myself within these trends. The comparison of the national contexts of Germany and France and the idea of France’s linguistic superiority in terms of reason were also helpful.


*See entries for individual chapters.*


This chapter, taking as its hypothesis that the detective is not as much a figure of reason or logic as may seem to be the case, was, for obvious reasons, a valuable counterpoint to my own argument. Although Mellier’s viewpoint was vastly different than my own, the consideration of contradicting arguments is always a valuable exercise, and, in this case, allowed me to test and moderate my conclusions.

*See entries for individual chapters.*


While this chapter was limited in its usefulness by the focus on le Carré, who is well outside the scope of my research, Most did explore questions of the detective as the figure of reason in the text, and was thus used to explore my argument on this point.


*See entries for individual chapters.*


*See entries for individual chapters.*


The introduction to this work pointed out to me one of the pitfalls of a study such as the one currently undertaken – namely that by looking at detective fiction as a mirror for society, the literary achievements of authors of the genre are overlooked.

Neale’s article was relevant to my argument for two main reasons, namely its tracing of the history of detective fiction with special reference to the French context and the fact that it was one of the few pieces of scholarly work available which dealt directly with Fred Vargas. Although the idea of the hidden was not one which I developed in my own work, therefore, this article was useful for the insight it provided into Vargas’ work.


This article, while short, provides a useful introduction to the Arsène Lupin character. Olivier-Martin touches on the reasons for Lupin’s somewhat expected popularity (at least for Leblanc), as well as aspects of his modernity.


Outram’s book was constructive in formulating an argument regarding issues central to the Enlightenment. Her scholarship is up-to-date and also contains a helpful discussion of previous works on the subject along with problems which have arisen through the approach taken in such works. Of particular use for my survey was her tracing of the rise of science, as well as a brief discussion of the idea of a revolution in reading as printing technologies developed.


Scholarly works which are specifically on Fred Vargas are few and far between. As such, this article was invaluable for my study, as it gave helpful insights into a number of techniques employed by Vargas, from her characters and settings to the metaphorical language she uses and her interest in wordplay. Although I did not agree with Poole’s views on the solely intuitive nature of Adamsberg’s methods, I relied to a significant extent on this work when creating arguments centred on this author.

This book was of great relevance to my research. It deals with a great many topics pertaining to the genre of detective fiction, from critical reactions to the development of different sub-genres or literary features in the works of different authors. The works of Leblanc and Simenon are also discussed in relation to a variety of themes, which heightened its importance for the present study. Porter’s work is a synthesis of many trends of scholarship, and is thus a good introduction to traditional scholarship, Barthes’ reading of the genre as ‘textes du désir’ and the work of Gramsci and Foucault on the policing of the modern state in relation to detective fiction.


Raymond’s article deals with the presence of the past in the adventures of Lupin. It is the author’s belief that history is an important presence in the works, with Lupin often showing himself to be the only one capable of uncovering hidden meanings and liberating those doomed to repeat actions interminably. This provided a contrast with my argument regarding the oppressive sense of history in the works of Vargas.


The primary use of this chapter within my own work was its discussion of the changes involved in Napoleon III and Haussmann’s plans for the city and their ramifications. The central topic of discussion, that of Baudelaire’s ideas on aesthetic modernity and the work of Manet, was not relevant to the topic chosen for this study.


*See entries for individual chapters.*

This book discusses the ways in which the spectacle of modern life developed in Paris and transformed the city into a centre of modernity (an argument which complements that of Jürgen Habermas). Some of the chapters were not relevant to my discussion, but Schwartz's discussion of 'Haussmannization' as a modernising force in the city was particularly helpful, and the discussion of public visits to the city's morgue allowed for conjecture on the exposure of the average person to violence, and hence to the ramifications for detective fiction.


Sharpe and Wallock's chapter in their edited volume gives a detailed introduction of the different frameworks in which the modern city has been seen since theories surrounding it were first developed. Their work was largely too theoretical and broad in its chronological sweep to be of much use for my own research, but it nevertheless aided me in situating my own ideas regarding the modern city (and in particular Paris) as reflected in detective fiction.


*See entries for individual chapters.*


Smith's discussion of Malet as one of the original authors of *romans noirs* was useful despite its limitations for the present purpose (namely its focus on an author not chosen for my research) in that it discussed the rise of *noir* fiction in general as well as providing a possible comparison with other authors.

This chapter was of limited applicability for my research because of its focus on Robbe-Grillet and other authors of nouveaux romans. However, it did touch on the issue of the acceptability of detective fiction for critics, as well as elements of néo-polar fiction, and was thus used in these contexts.


The importance of this article was surprisingly not so much in its discussion of Lupin as in the wider issues which it mentioned, such as the role of the detective in terms of modernity and the whether or not one can continue to see modernity in a positive light in the post-war age. It was in supporting my arguments on these topics that the article’s primary applicability was to be found.


Stowe’s contribution to the volume he helped edit was highly relevant to the topic I investigated. Although somewhat limited in its usefulness by its reference to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Raymond Chandler, Stowe compared the methods of fictional detectives to the theories on reason developed in the Enlightenment, with favourable results for my argument. The chapter was, for this reason, of great help when developing my ideas on the implications of reason for modern fiction.


Despite the fact that this work is somewhat dated (for example in the depiction of the detective fiction genre as less than literary and the discussion of the lack of novels from the Soviet Union), it provides a good overview of the development of the genre in question. It also discussed the works of Leblanc and Simenon in some detail, including their placement within the genre, critical and public reception and an evaluation of the techniques used by the authors. It was, overall, a very useful book, when used with its limitations kept in mind.

Although I did not agree with all aspects of Vareille’s argument, his tracing of the development of detective fiction in works before Poe was useful in the construction of my own argument. He also discusses the depiction of crime in fiction and the works of Leblanc and Simenon in particular. While his focus on forms of literature other than detective fiction was outside the focus of my survey, therefore, this book was still of great relevance to my own work.


This article focuses on the Lupin series, and examines the ways in which it reflects both modern and more traditional elements. It is Vareille’s claim that, while modernity is certainly reflected in the settings of the stories and the characters’ use of modern technologies, there are also irrational elements to be seen. Examples given include the way in which science appears in some stories to be almost magical. Although this added an interesting strand to my research, Vareille’s assertion was not upheld in my own work.


Williams’ work on the Parisian police was an informed and interesting history of the topic, tracing the different forms that the policing of the city took over the chosen period and noting the traps into which historians have fallen, including the assumption that the creation of a lieutenancy of police meant a modern police force, and the belief that the main task of the Parisian police was to spy on fellow citizens. I found this work to be extremely helpful when researching the advent of a modern police force and censorship practices in France and Paris.

While this collection was not drawn upon directly in my work, it provided interesting background material for my topic. The essays included were, in many cases, from the early days of detective fiction, and included contributions from such authors as W.H. Auden and Dorothy Sayers. They were thus informative as to the dismissal and defence of detective fiction during its early days (Edmund Wilson's "Who Cares Who Killed Roger Ackroyd?" being a particularly good example), but were of more use as background reading than as a support to my argument. The editor's introduction was an interesting overview of the genre.


Wolf's survey of crime in fiction centres on the character Arsène Lupin, and was thus helpful for my research. Wolf investigates in this chapter the relationship between crime in reality and crime in fiction, and was mostly useful for the present topic in highlighting the importance of modernity and technology to the Lupin character.