

La Colère de Maigret

G.Simenon

August 18 - September 4, 2018

As so often this Maigret is set in the vibrant nightlife of Parisian with its clubs and naked ladies as suitable titillation for the reader. A milieu which Simenon knew well, or at least was very attracted to. This story concerns Emile Boulay who runs four night clubs in Paris, three of them close to each other allowing a recycling of performers. The notable thing about him is that he is a family man, living with his Italian family, consisting of his second wife (the first having died early on), her vibrant younger sister, and their mother and brother. The latter notifies the police of his disappearance, and then a few days later his dead body, strangled, is found on the sidewalk close to the cemetery Père-Lachaise, a few days after the kill. This provides a puzzle for Maigret and the usual sequence of interrogations follows accompanied by the patient systematic researchers conducted by his underlings.

The novel was written in 1962 and hence one expects it to show Paris of the early sixties. There are of course Maigret novels from the thirties and a natural question is to what extent it differs from them? Maybe for certain milieus in Paris it was not that much a difference in the intervening thirty years, including the war. In this novel at least there are no modern gadgets that date it to the sixties. Maybe the author was not so much aware of those things, but even if not paid full attention, such things may slip in unnoticed anyway.

It is a custom when reviewing detective novels not to disclose the murderer, so let me be content with noting that once apprehended, Maigret shows him unprecedented contempt. Also, this might be too much to reveal, but anyway, the main obstacle for Maigret is to contradict a certain axiom as to who kills whom?

As a Maigret it is middling. There are no particular noteworthy passages that stick in memory, but vintage Maigret without standing out in any way. The reading of the story took an unprecedented long time, not because of the book itself, but because I had many other things on my mind and could not give it my undivided attention.

September 4, 2018 **Ulf Persson:** *Prof.em, Chalmers U.of Tech., Göteborg Sweden ulfp@chalmers.se*