

[E-BOOK] An Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900

An Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900

Franco Moretti

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Franco Moretti : An Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised An Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900:

15 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Steps towards a literary geographyBy John AbbottAlthough I enjoyed it immensely, this book somewhat disappoints in that its themes aren't taken far enough. As Terry Eagleton said in the TLS "the way is paved for a 'literary geography'. But such a geography is not established here. Chapter one concentrates on the social issues implied by location, movements and class in Austen, Scott, and in Spanish and French 19th century works. In the second chapter, Moretti looks at what we can imply about London and Paris from

Dickens and Balzac. Finally, Moretti looks at how different geographical markets have different tastes by charting the publishing history of classic texts, how quickly they were translated into other languages, and by examining the catalogs of the big circulation libraries. Along with the classics, Moretti uses some very obscure texts for his examples, which can be frustrating. Still, the ninety or so maps are fascinating, as is the methodology they use, which opens up the possibilities of new methods of analysis for the future. Umberto Eco's *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods* does some similar things with diagrammatic analysis, and John Sutherland's series of literary puzzles essay (starting with 'Is Heathcliff a Murder') show up some similarly unexpected sidelights on 19thc texts. For a coffee table, but still interesting and useful guide to the locations used by authors in their works, Malcolm Bradbury's *Atlas of Literature* is recommended. 10 of 28 people found the following review helpful. Map of More Than You Think By D. Joseph Lane Charting the ebb and flow of intellectual life is a fun pastime, if one has the inclination. Franco Moretti's new book, *Atlas of the Historical Novel*, is interesting because it is another example of the current ebb. In 1998 W. J. T. Mitchell published *The Last Dinosaur Book*, which contained a plea for a "synthesis of Darwin and those other two great early modern thinkers ... Marx and Freud." Such a statement of need is astonishing to hear from a professor of the humanities, that sector of the university that has always prided itself on its refusal to hear Darwin's case, for that case has been dismissed as an improper importation of economics into other fields-and, not so veiledly, as a cover for a particular political agenda. Now, however, the tide has turned, and apparently biology and science are making headway in the humanities. Moretti's book, with its talk of London as a "self-organizing system" and its other metaphors drawn from chaos theory and such, is a good example. There is, also, the use of statistics, as in the charts of the amounts of foreign novels in British libraries. It is also interesting that Moretti's book is written in a very clear prose, quite the opposite of the sort of jargon-filled texts we have come to expect from our "Critical Theory" professors. Something, it seems, is in the air. In any case, a student of the novel should find this work a kind of updating or commentary upon Ian Watt's justly famous *Rise of the Novel*-and for those with more sophisticated tastes, I think this book supplies a great lesson about the movements of a culture. For it shows, I think, how the revolutionary insights of a previous generation must be absorbed by the culture before they may become a part of its mental furniture, as this book attempts to do. This book understands that a far better model for the revolutionary intellectual is the sapper, and not the bomb-thrower.

A groundbreaking study in literary geography. *An Atlas of the European Novel 1800-1900* explores the fascinating connections between literature and space. In this pioneering study, Franco Moretti presents a fresh and exciting perspective on the European novel. In a series of one hundred maps, Moretti illuminates the geographical assumptions of nineteenth-century novels and the geographical reach of particular authors and genres across the continent. A good map, he discovers, can be worth a thousand words in posing new questions and allowing us to see connections that have so far escaped us. Reading his *Atlas*, we become aware of the secret structure of Dickens and Conan Doyle's London, and see how the fictional settings of Austen's Britain, or picaresque Spain, or the France of the *Comedie humaine* imagine national identity in different ways. In a final chapter on narrative markets, Moretti tells us which books were most popular in the provincial libraries of Victorian Britain, and charts the European diffusion of *Don Quixote*, *Buddenbrooks*, and the great nineteenth-century bestsellers. In Franco Moretti's *Atlas*, maps are not ornaments, but analytical tools which, in making connections explicit and visible, allow us to see literature in a completely new way. This path-breaking study suggests that space may well be the secret protagonist of cultural history.

With intellectual elegance, Moretti invites us to use maps not as all-encompassing solutions, but as generations of ideas. -- Umberto Eco, author of *The Name of the Rose* [A] real breakthrough in making us see the role of place as a subject of 19th century fiction...Every page, which is to say every one of Moretti's lovely maps, every chart and flow plan and graph, brings home with singular and original vividness aspects of the materiality of the fictional condition and of the condition of fiction that one would not have thought of. -- Los Angeles Times Book Review, Valentine Cunningham, 17 January 1999
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About the Author
Franco Moretti teaches English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. He is the author of *Signs Taken for Wonders*, *The Way of the World* and *Modern Epic*, all from Verso.