The Emotions of London

Ryan Heuser
Franco Moretti
Erik Steiner
The Emotions of London

Ryan Heuser
Franco Moretti
Erik Steiner

1. “Ortgebunden”

A few years ago, a group formed by Ben Allen, Cameron Blevins, Ryan Heuser, and Matt Jockers decided to use topic modeling to extract geographical information from nineteenth-century novels. Though the study was eventually abandoned, it had revealed that London-related topics had become significantly more frequent in the course of the century, and when some of us were later asked to design a crowdsourcing experiment, we decided to add a further dimension to those early findings, and see whether London place-names could become the cornerstone for an emotional geography of the city.

In the Atlas of the European Novel, Moretti had already worked on the geography of London, mapping residences in Dickens and crimes in Conan Doyle. But emotions have a more elusive reality than buildings or murders, and only one of the Atlas’ hundred images—a map of foreign ideas in Russian novels—was somewhat comparable to the current project. To further complicate matters, when Moretti had shown that image to Sergei Bonin, the historical geographer who was advising him about the Atlas, Bonin had been extremely critical: ideas like “materialism” or “equality” were not ortgebunden, as German geographers would say: they didn’t have that intrinsic connection to a specific place which is the basis of every real map. And if ideas were not mappable, how could emotions be?

Then, we encountered a passage in Philip Fisher’s Vehement Passions:

Each citizen [...] has a specific cluster of dangers of which she is constantly or intermittently in fear. Each person will localize the general anticipation of fear in a personal geography of fear [...] We now live in a new geography of fear [...] It is the passion of fear, above all, that isolates the element of suddenness and the part it plays within the passions. Even more than the “geography of fear”, it was Fisher’s remark on the “suddenness” of the emotion that found illuminating. What is sudden occurs at a specific moment in time, and hence also at a specific point in space: it is definitely ortgebunden, to return to that notion. And if this is so, then a geography of emotions—their actual distribution over a map—becomes imaginable. A London of fear, joy, anger, hopefulness...

2. Corpus, Units, Programs

In programming the study, Heuser began by identifying all proper names in the corpus via a Named Entity Recognition program, later removing from the list those terms which had nothing to do with London, like foreign toponyms, characters’ names, and the like. The results are shown in Figures 2.1-2.3

The 382 London locations that had received at least 10 mentions formed the basis of our second corpus: about 15,000 passages which—in a version of the keywords-in-context approach—included a specific place-name at the center, plus the hundred words that preceded and followed it, as in the case of “Regent Street” in Figure 2.3.4

Tags were then asked to read the 200-word passage, and identify the emotion that best characterized it.

At first, we were hoping to capture a wide spectrum of emotional attitudes; but the lack of agreement among the taggers—as well as among the English graduate students who offered to act as a control group—convinced us to reduce the options to the opposite extremes of fear and happiness.1 As a further constraint, a passage would count as “frightening” or “happy” only if at least half of the taggers had identified it as such; and Mark Algee-Hewitt re-ran all passages through a “sentiment analysis” program.2 And, eventually, some patterns began to emerge. But before coming to them, we need to sketch out the main material transformations of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century London.


In the period covered by our study, London changed like never before. Its population grew from around 600,000 in 1700 to 1,100,000 in 1800 and then, more dramatically, to 4,500,000 (or 6,500,000, depending on the criteria) in 1900. The nineteenth century, when most of the demographic leap occurred, was also decisive in the re-definition of the space—and in fact of the very shape of the city. Steiner’s sequence of London maps in Figure 3.1 clearly shows how—up to the first quarter of the nineteenth century—the fundamental urban axis ran horizontally from East to West on
Figure 3.1 The growth of London, 1682-1896

1682

1746

1792

1827

1856

1896
the left bank of the Thames, creating a strangely elongated rectangle. It was only in Victorian times that London detached itself from the river, using major roads as so many tendrils to expand towards the North and the South, and eventually transforming its initial shape into the circular pattern so typical of urban geography.

As nineteenth-century London had changed so much, and so quickly, we expected more or less the same from its fictional representation. But here, the only transformation occurred in the second half of the eighteenth century, when the West End became as narratively populated as the City (Figure 3.2); afterwards, hardly anything changed. The number of geographical references kept increasing, yes, but they remained essentially localized in the City and in the West End: the rest of London – where most of the growth was actually taking place – never really mattered. This drastic discrepancy between fact and fiction is synthesized in Figure 3.3, where the horizontal axis represents the population of the various boroughs, and the vertical one their presence in fiction. Along the diagonal line, a borough’s fictional presence corresponds exactly to its real population: it’s the case of the City in the 1800s, Islington in the 1810s, Camden in the 1890s, and Kensington-and-Chelsea for much of the century. But the overall message of the chart lies in the clear, and in fact growing, divarication between fiction and reality: with the dramatic over-representation of Westminster and the City on one side of the diagonal, and under-representation of Tower Hamlets, Southwark, and Hackney on the opposite one. Though we commonly speak of “London novels”, then, this image reveals how partial the representation of the city actually was – and Figure 3.4 further extends this line of inquiry by showing the favorite spaces of a few particularly well-known London novelists.
had its protagonists involved in sub-plots in the West, passages located in the West End acquired in the course of the nineteenth century. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probably, from two different sources. In the case of the City, the stability may be probable, from two different sources.

The City's fictional presence is due to the heterogeneity of its components, that of the West End arises from the opposite. Its being an extremely homogenous space, where "the great Georgian estates remained (with their clones, such as Belgravia and Kensington) the chic places to live, shop, saunter, and dine." Eighteenth-century addresses that are still in fashion at the end of the industrial century: in other Western metropolises, where the new elites created their own enclaves in the Chaussee d'Antin, the Upper East Side, or the Grunewald, this would be unthinkable. In London, though, the West End was never really challenged – only somewhat enlarged (north of Oxford street, west of St. James, south of Hyde Park), to allow for the osmosis of the old and new ruling class. In an instance of what we could call the semantics of space, passages located in the West End acquired in the course of the process an unmistakable class flavour: a lexicon which combines the opulence of "square", "park", and "gardens", the patrician ring of "earl" and "Edward", and the sharp tone of mastery of "servants", "ordered", and "desired"; in a more indirection, we find the rituals of polite sociability ("acquaintance", "conversation", "visit", "meeting", "obliged", "aunt", and the inevitable "marriage"), where even adjectives and adverbs sound prudent and calculating ("hardly", "grave", "usual", "particular", "really"). Final touch, "her": a sign of women's ambiguous centrality within this social space, as once evident ("her", not "him") and dominated: not emerging as a grammatical subject, but as the object of other people's desires, plans, and actions ("proceeded to inform her", "after pacifying her", "freely offered her", "never forgave her"); or else, when "her" functions as a possessive determiner, as someone observed from the outside, with an ever-watchful attention that takes in, at times within a single sentence, material possessions ("her carriage", "her ladyship's dressing-table"), physical appearance ("her silk dress", "her veil"), behavior ("her loveliness of mien", "her

First finding of this research: in the course of the nineteenth century, English novelists used the City and its vicinity for a variety of different purposes, though a clear shift occurred from the earlier sinister world of crime and punishment (Figures 4.3-4), to the more prosaic interactions of the modern professions (Figures 4.4-5).

8 Roy Porter, London: A Social History. Harvard UP 1995, p. 96. 9 These results are based on the most distinctive words' approach described in detail in Sarah Allison, Marissa Gemma, Ryan Heuser, Franco Moretti, Amir Tepel, and Irena Yamboliev, "Style at the Scale of the Sentence." Literary Lab Pamphlet 5, 2013, pp. 10ff. Basically, words are considered distinctive of a given part of a corpus – here, of passages located in the West End – when they occur more frequently than in the corpus as a whole.
The enduring force of attraction of the West End is still visible, at the end of the century, in Gissing’s *New Grub Street* (1891). Focused on the new intellectual middle-classes of North London, the initial geography of the novel stretches from the British Museum to Camden Town (Figure 4.7), thus remaining completely extraneous to the old east-west axis; as the story proceeds, however, this new geography disintegrates, as successful characters systematically relocate to West End addresses, whereas those who “fail” are scattered to the four winds: Biffen takes an interminable walk to commit suicide on Putney Hill; Reardon moves to Islington, works on the City Road, and dies in Brighton; Yule moves to, and then dies in an unspecified “provincial town”, where Marian also ends up (Figure 4.8).

5. The Emotions of London?

London’s historical expansion, and its fictional stability; the social mosaic of the City, and the homogeneity of the West End; *New Grub Street*, and the inflexibility of the old geography. And emotions? Where is the “geography of fear” promised in our opening section?

*Figure 4.7* offers a first answer: the greener the color (Harley Street, St. James Square, Hyde Park, Belgrave Square), the happier the passages occurring near that location; the redder the color – as at Newgate, Bedlam, or the Pool of London – the more fright-
ening the passages; while light green and light orange indicate locations in which neither emotion is truly active.\footnote{11}

We will return to the association of the West End with happiness, and of (parts of) the City with fear. The most striking result of this map, though, was that so many passages turned out to be neither happy nor frightening. Figure 5.2 highlights this fact by reorganizing the data, not in terms of fear versus happiness, but of “emotional neutrality” versus “emotional intensity”. White indicates that emotions are absent; the two shades of light purple, that they are weak; while only in the dark purple areas is an emotional “signature” genuinely present. And the verdict is clear: ours was less a map of the emotions of London than of their absence. This emerged with equal clarity from both crowd-sourcing and sentiment analysis: though human taggers and computer program disagreed about specific emotions – for the taggers, 21% of the passages were happy and 12% frightening, while the program, more intrepid, came up with 21% and 1% – they did agree that the large majority of passages was emotionally neutral: 67% according to crowd-sourcing, and 78% to sentiment analysis (Figure 5.3).

A map dominated by emotional neutrality. Did this mean that London novels avoided emotions? Not quite (though one does wonder what Paris novels would show). Remember: the passages on which our maps were based included the 200 words around a place-name – and place-names, as a rule, are part of the public realm. More than the emotions “of London”, then, we had been measuring the emotions of London’s public spaces: and if so, then the neutrality so conspicuous in Figure 5.2 had perhaps less to do with the absence of emotions from novels, than with their silencing in the public dimension. To test this hypothesis, we took a sample of 200-words passages not including place names, and asked the taggers to evaluate them. The histogram in Figure 5.4 shows the results: if in the presence of place names, as we know from Figure 5.3, fear had emerged in 12% of the cases, and happiness in 21%, in their absence the frequency rose to 25% and 34%. Or in other words: when novels moved away from public geography, their emotional intensity dramatically increased.

Now, the muting of emotions in public had long been known to the sociology of bourgeois existence: from the “neutrality” of nineteenth-century male fashion;\footnote{12} to Simmel’s “blasé type” – who “experiences all things as being of an equally dull and grey hue”\footnote{13} – and the “unfocused interaction” of Goffman’s Behavior in Public Places. Our data clearly corroborated all this. But with a marked temporal discrepancy: Sennett’s “neutrality” – as well as Holst Katsma’s “neutralization” of novelistic loudness – had crystallized around the middle of the nineteenth century; while light green and light orange indicate locations in which neither emotion is truly active.\footnote{11}

67% in the nineteenth, the transformation is much more modest than previous research would suggest. Although this chart shows an increase in neutrality from 60% in the first half of the eighteenth century to 67% in the nineteenth, the transformation is much more modest than previous research would suggest.

We will return to the association of the West End with happiness, and of (parts of) the City with fear. The most striking result of this map, though, was that so many passages turned out to be neither happy nor frightening. Figure 5.2 highlights this fact by reorganizing the data, not in terms of fear versus happiness, but of “emotional neutrality” versus “emotional intensity”. White indicates that emotions are absent; the two shades of light purple, that they are weak; while only in the dark purple areas is an emotional “signature” genuinely present. And the verdict is clear: ours was less a map of the emotions of London than of their absence. This emerged with equal clarity from both crowd-sourcing and sentiment analysis: though human taggers and computer program disagreed about specific emotions – for the taggers, 21% of the passages were happy and 12% frightening, while the program, more intrepid, came up with 21% and 1% – they did agree that the large majority of passages was emotionally neutral: 67% according to crowd-sourcing, and 78% to sentiment analysis (Figure 5.3).

A map dominated by emotional neutrality. Did this mean that London novels avoided emotions? Not quite (though one does wonder what Paris novels would show). Remember: the passages on which our maps were based included the 200 words around a place-name – and place-names, as a rule, are part of the public realm. More than the emotions “of London”, then, we had been measuring the emotions of London’s public spaces: and if so, then the neutrality so conspicuous in Figure 5.2 had perhaps less to do with the absence of emotions from novels, than with their silencing in the public dimension. To test this hypothesis, we took a sample of 200-words passages not including place names, and asked the taggers to evaluate them. The histogram in Figure 5.4 shows the results: if in the presence of place names, as we know from Figure 5.3, fear had emerged in 12% of the cases, and happiness in 21%, in their absence the frequency rose to 25% and 34%. Or in other words: when novels moved away from public geography, their emotional intensity dramatically increased.

Now, the muting of emotions in public had long been known to the sociology of bourgeois existence: from the “neutrality” of nineteenth-century male fashion;\footnote{12} to Simmel’s “blasé type” – who “experiences all things as being of an equally dull and grey hue”\footnote{13} – and the “unfocused interaction” of Goffman’s Behavior in Public Places. Our data clearly corroborated all this. But with a marked temporal discrepancy: Sennett’s “neutrality” – as well as Holst Katsma’s “neutralization” of novelistic loudness – had crystallized around the middle of the nineteenth century; while light green and light orange indicate locations in which neither emotion is truly active.\footnote{11}

11 The results were obtained by asking ten taggers whether a given passage was associated to four or not, and a different group of ten whether it was associated to happiness or not; the passage would count as frightening, or happy, if at least five out of the ten taggers said so; otherwise, the passage would count as “neither”.

12 “As numerous writers comment, the clothing of the 1840s was the beginning of a style of dressing in which neutrality – that is, not standing out from others – was the immediate statement.” Richard Sennett, The Fall of Public Man, revised ed. [1907], Routledge, London-NY 1990, p. 256.


14 See Holst Katsma, “Loudness in the Novel”, Literary Lab Pamphlet 7 2014. In Tempus (1964), Harald Wenrich had already identified the mid-nineteenth-century as the moment when the narrative foreground, with its intense emotions, had started to lose ground vis-à-vis the background, by definition much more sedate. His intuition was fully confirmed by a quantitative investigation conducted a few years ago at the Literary Lab: the past progressive – the typical tense of the background in English, roughly corresponding to the French imparfait – rises from 6 occurrences per 10,000 words early in the nineteenth century, to 11 in mid-century, and 16 at the end.
6. The Emotions of London

Figure 5.1 offered a synthetic overview of London’s emotional temperature between 1700 and 1900; Figure 6.1 breaks the data down into four distinct half centuries.

In the first fifty years, the fear associated with Newgate, Tyburn, Bedlam, the Tower and the Pool of London is clearly the dominant emotion in our corpus. In the following half century, though, as the West End makes its appearance in the narrative geography of London, fear seems to undergo a significant decline (Figure 6.2). “Seems to”; because, if there is no doubt that “the overall reduction of fear”, as Fisher puts it, has been “one of the central accomplishments of modern civilization” (116), the key factors he singles out as causing the transformation — “nighttime electrical lighting, insurance policies, police forces” — date to the middle (the police), or even the end of the nineteenth century (electricity and insurance); that is to say, a full hundred years later than what appears in Figure 6.2.

It’s another discrepancy between quantitative and qualitative research; this time, though, we think we have found the reason. Here is the incipit of a forgotten Victorian novel, William North’s The Impostor (1847):

Midnight was at hand, as in a small ill-furnished room, above a low shop, in one of the dirtiest, narrowest, and most ancient looking lanes in the oriental moiety of the English metropolis, were seated two individuals of the most opposite appearance conceivable. The one, an old man of at least three score, exhibited a set of pinched up, calf-skin colored features in which dotage, stupidity, and cunning seemed to struggle for the ascendancy.

“One of the dirtiest, narrowest, and most ancient looking lanes”... We were measuring emotions in the proximity of London place-names — but as this sentence proves, there can be plenty of alarming scenes which include some form of localization, but without involving any place name at all (not even “London!”). “A single lamp shed a sickly light on the linked and intersecting lanes (though lane is too lofty a word)” (Bulwer-Lytton, Pelham, 1828); “a maze of narrow lanes, choked up

Figure 6.2 The decline of fear, 1700-1900

The main decline of fear, according to our data, occurred between the first and the second half of the eighteenth century, when it dropped from 17.4% to 13%; its nineteenth-century decline (to 12.6% and then 11.8%) seems hardly relevant in comparison. Indications of happiness, for their part, hardly change over the 200-year period.
with dirt, putrescent with nauseous odours, and swarming with a population..." (Reynolds, The Mysteries of London, 1845); "a bleak, dilapidated street" (Dickens, Bleak House, 1853). Lane, maze, street—court, row, alley, conduit, passage, byway... As novelist increasingly turn to London as their fictional setting, geographical reticence emerges as a key ingredient of narrative fear—and one which a Named Entity Recognition program inevitably misses: Dickens’ "bleak and dilapidated street" will not be counted as a street in the same way as Oxford Street, and will therefore not appear in our maps and charts (Figure 6.3). And so, alongside the old threats associated with Saffron Hill, St. Giles, Shoreditch, Smithfield, and Newgate, a new rhetoric of indirectness gives voice to the fact that, to quote Fisher one more time, "after Hume and Adam Smith, the proxy for fear was uncertainty" (112). Newgate and Bedlam are terrifying, but their nature is perfectly well-known; "a maze of narrow lanes" evokes unnameable horrors. "I looked round, but could recognize nothing familiar in the narrow and filthy streets", writes the narrator of Petham, recalling his most frightening adventure: "even the names of them were to me like an unknown language".

If the rhetoric of reticence contributed to the (apparent?) decline of fear, the spatial clustering of happiness in the first half of the nineteenth century is for its part the result of a perfectly explicit social geography. Here, as the histogram in Figure 6.2 shows, quantitative variation plays hardly any role: in absolute terms, "total London happiness" (to use a Benthamite expression) slightly contracts, compared to the previous half century. But it is now so concentrated in the West End, that it almost isolates it from the rest of London. And indeed, these were triumphal decades for the British upper class: victorious on the European battlefield, unique in its world economic power, and implacable with workers at home. The erection of Regent Street (1817-23) was the monumental consecration of this state of affairs; "a boundary and complete separation", wrote its planner and architect, John Nash, "between the Streets and Squares occupied by the Nobility and the Gentry, and the narrow Streets and meaner Houses occupied by mechanics and the trading part of the community."

Perfect. Too perfect, perhaps? Is this convergence of wealth and "happiness" a product of nineteenth-century writers—or of twenty-first-century taggers? A sample of 200 passages tagged as happy—half of them taken from the entire period, and the other half from 1800-1850—suggests that what was routinized as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal) as "happiness" (more often by the "sentiment analysis" program trained on the Street Journal). The first group's most distinctive words had a clear spatial dominant: verbs (e.g., "to walk"), and more specifically, "to walk". As can be seen, the presence of this group of terms increases regularly—from just over 800 to almost 1,200—between the mid-eighteenth and the late nineteenth century. (The list does not include "court", which refers much more often to the British monarchy than to the London equivalents of the Cour des Miracles.)

7. Conclusion. On the Concept of "Narrative Geography"

So far, we have assumed that, when topographical indications appear in a novel, they play always more or less the same role. Our discussion with Wilkens made us reconsider this idea, and we decided to extract a sample of 200 passages to see how exactly place-names functioned within a story. Nearly half of the cases were perfectly straightforward: they indicated the setting of the ongoing action. Here are a few examples:

And as soon as the stage in which he traveled reached "**Westminster Bridge***", he got into an hackney-coach, and ordered it to be driven to the house of Mr. Woodford.

Shortly after they had gone away for the first time, one of the scouts came running in with the news that they had stopped before Lord Mansfield's house in "**Bloomsbury square***".

Past Battersea Park, over Chelsea Bridge, then the weary stretch to Victoria Station, and the upward labor to "**Charing Cross***". Five miles, at least, measured by pavement. But Virginia walked quickly...

He was conducted first before the Privy Council, and afterwards to the Horse Guards, and then was taken by way of "**Westminster Bridge***", and back over London Bridge—for the purpose of avoiding the main streets, to the Tower, under the strongest guard ever known to enter its gates with a single prisoner.

A character "taken by way of Westminster Bridge, and back over London Bridge": exactly the kind of direct information we had half-unconsciously expected to find. But this was not the whole story. In about one-fourth of the cases, place names turned out to indicate, not the setting of the current action, but events that had occurred in the past (as in the first two passages below), or were expected to occur in the near future (third and fourth passage):

They were married at "***the Savoy***", and my grandfather dying very soon, Harry Barry, Esquire, took possession of his paternal property and supported our illustrious name with credit in London.

Whereas a young boy, named Oliver Twist, absconded, or was enlisted, on Thursday evening last, from his home at "**Pentonville***" and has not since been heard of...

Though I should accompany you tomorrow, Madam," said she, "I shall have time sufficient for my walk to "**Norwood***". The preparations for my journey cannot occupy an hour...

The letter of which he had spoken reached Monica's hands next morning. It was a very respectful invitation to accompany the writer on a drive in "**Surrey***".

Around this basic asymmetry—present versus past/future—other differences crystallized. Current action was usually conveyed by an impersonal third-person narrator ("He was conducted first before the Privy Council"); references to past and future were more likely to occur in dialogue ("Though I should accompany you tomorrow"). The first group's most distinctive words had a clear spatial dominant: verbs
of movement ("conducted", "reached", "followed", "entered"), spatial nouns ("walls", "churchyard", "gate", "window"), descriptive adjectives ("narrow", "dark", "melancholy", "strong"), plus indications of social intercourse ("confidence", "respect", "invited", "announced", "attended") In the second group, aside from dialogic markers ("speaking", "replied", "exclaimed") and the contractions typical of colloquial style ("he's", "can't", "wouldn't"), we found a strong hypothetical register ("imagine", "suppose", "think", "somewhere"), plus an odd financial fixation ("notes", "bill/s", "pounds", "capital", "trade", "property"). And as if these differences weren’t enough, a third group of place-names emerged, which had to do neither with the present, nor with the past or future of the story. Here are a few examples:

Look at the list of Directors. We’ve three members of Parliament, a baronet, and one or two City names that are as good, - as good as the ***Bank of England***. If that prospectus won’t make a man confident In the most careless, good-humoured way, he loses a few points; and still feels thirsty, and loses a few more points; and, like a man of spirit, increases his stakes, to be sure, and just by that walk down ***Regent Street*** is ruined for life.

Having concluded his observations upon the soup, Mr. Osborne made a few curt remarks respecting the fish, also of a savage and satirical tendency, and cursed ***Billingsgate*** with an emphasis quite worthy of the place.

Mrs. Honeyman sternly gave warning to these idolaters. She would have no Jesuits in her premises. She showed Hannah the picture in Howell’s Medulla of the martyrs burning at ***Smithfield***: who said, `Lord bless you, mum,’ and hoped it was a long time ago.

If the first two groups of passages had presented London as the space of enigmatic private trajectories – "Whereas a young boy, named Oliver Twist, absconded, or was enticed..." – this third group had a public and almost normative ring: it implied that everyone knows (or should know) what the Bank of England, Billingsgate, and Scotland Yard stand for. Its locations played no role in the narrative proper, but acted as so many signposts in what we could call "the discourse of London": a small ideological compendium of the British capital.

Three literary geographies, then: the sharp, active foreground of current events; the hazier, subjective background of the narrated world; and the impersonal layer of a quasi-normative discourse (Figure 7.1). The data are then rearranged in Figure 7.2, to show the elective affinities between the three geographies and the social configuration of London.

As is often the case with our work at the Lab, the initial idea – quantifying and mapping novelistic emotions – turned out to be neither easy, nor particularly satisfying: in the end, the map of the emotions of London was only partially accomplished. But in pursuing this objective, we found empirical evidence that supported existing theo-