Ukrainian Hero and the Habsburg Monarchy: Retro Visions in Contemporary Ukrainian Historical Detective Fiction

Sofiya Filonenko

Abstract. The series by contemporary Ukrainian writer Bogdan Kolomiychuk presents the adventures of police officer Adam Vistovych in Lviv (aka Lemberg). The author’s depiction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the early-twentieth century and its colony—Ukraine—highlights the social, political, national, and historical aspects of the mystery genre.

Ukrainian Detective Fiction: In the Arms of History

Contemporary Ukrainian detective fiction is experiencing a genre renaissance after a long break during the Soviet era. From the dawn of the twentieth century to the 1920s, it successfully developed in the works of Yury Smolych, Yury Shovkoplyas, and Maik Yohansen. However, in the totalitarian state, during the reign of socialist realism, crime fiction was replaced by spy stories about counterintelligence officers (chekists) and professional police stories, analogs of the Western “police procedurals.” With the beginning of the Ukrainian Independence era in 1991, detective fiction became again a relevant and popular

Sofiya Filonenko is professor in the Faculty of Philology and Social Communications as well as Ukrainian, World Literature, and Comparative Literary Studies chair at Berdyansk State Pedagogical University in Ukraine. She also is a literary critic for LitAkcent and Bukvoid. Her research interests lie in contemporary Ukrainian popular fiction and detective fiction.