

A. Tytiuk,  
postgraduate student,  
Oles Honchar  
Dnipropetrovsk National University

## WOMEN DETECTIVE WRITERS AND THEIR FEMALE CHARACTERS

It should be noted that a large number of female names among the founders of the detectives cannot but attract attention of the readers. Kathleen Gregory Klein writes about the importance and popularity of women's detective novels and believes that "as any writer, reader, publisher, editor, agent, seller, reviewer, or scholar of mystery fiction in the last quarter of the twentieth century can attest, one of the hallmarks of the contemporary novel is the woman-authored, women-centered text". Detective writers introduced in their works a new character, not typical for a classic detective novel – a female investigator. As it was noted by Dorothy Sayers female detectives are "irritatingly intuitive, active and courageous, hampering the men engaged on the job", and they, finally, are the first who to find the criminal. The uncommonness of this method was also in the fact that no lady detectives existed in nature until 1920, when the first woman was hired to work at Scotland Yard.

As it is well known, the term "detective novel" was firstly used by Anna Katharine Green, compatriot of Edgar Allan Poe, and she defined in such a way the genre of her work "The Leavenworth Case" (1878).

It is A. K. Green who introduced the first female investigator in the detective genre. Among her characters was a spinster Amelia Butterworth, who first appeared in the work "Affair Next Door" (1897) and became the prototype for Miss Marple. Despite the presence of Detective Gryce, she makes the key observations for the investigation: an elderly, unmarried woman of high society with a sharp mind and attentive to the various details. Another American, who has put woman in her detective novels, was Mary Roberts Rinehart. Her first novel, "The Circular Staircase" (1908), brought her fame and was sold with the total circulation of one million 250 thousand copies. She was one of the first authors who introduced the humor into the genre. Her novels preceded the appearance of "ironic detective", and namely this kind of genre is developed by modern writers.

The period of the development of the detective genre in 1920–1949, which is named "Golden Age of Detective", deserves special attention.

Patricia Wentworth is a British mid-twentieth century writer, the author of the classic detective novels, in which the main character is a woman – the elderly Miss Maud Silver, a retired nurse with stern sense of morality and a gift of clairvoyance. The purpose of the writer was to depict the ordinary characters in extraordinary situations. The writer follows the detective tradition of English writer Mary Elizabeth Bradden and American Anna Katharine Green, and as a detective she introduces also a woman (Miss Jane Marple). The two decades between the years 1970–1989 are considered to be the second wave of the golden era of the detective genre. Women detective writers created their own community called "Sisters in Crime", a group designed to "increase the visibility and status of women writing in the mystery field with reviewers, readers, and publishers". In these years, the serial novels with female investigators again stirred up the interest and gained immense popularity among readers.

Thus, at the beginning of the twentieth century the type of detective novel, which is now called the "women", has developed. It has its own special themes and plot twists, unusual for a

male detective story, the introduction of women characters and love story that is contrary to the rules of the classical detective story. Under the pen of British and American writers of the twentieth-century the genre, created by American writer E. Poe has become more malleable, having incorporated features of the psychological and social novel and changing its original genre shape.