Summary in English

This thesis fits into the dynamically developing and largely centred on historical issues studies of British spy fiction. The intention of this dissertation has been twofold: first, to expand, within a sample of spy works composed of six discussed in detail (as well as various supplementarily referenced ones), on the existing knowledge of the historically variable ties between intratextual and extratextual reality; second, to establish, also within the said sample, how focusing fictional plots on espionage generally affects the hybridity of the spy genre and, by extension, conventions related to that genre. Those last two genre-specific issues receive little to no attention in scholarly studies. The conspicuous academic reluctance to examine them could be attributed to, among others, the existence of multiple conflicting and oftentimes confusingly imprecise crime genre taxonomies, many of which encompass spy fiction. In light of the above, a slightly altered version of Charles Derry's simple yet comprehensive taxonomy has been adopted for this research. Without the said modifications, Derry's suggestion has originally been applied to crime films.

The thesis consists of three chapters. Chapter 1, both theoretical and analytic, aspires towards establishing an understanding of spy fiction and its position among other crime genres, all for the sake of discussing its hybridity and conventions with a high degree of efficiency. Chapter 2 examines four early prototypes/forerunners of British spy novels in terms of their generic hybridity and ties with contemporary extratextual reality. These works are Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1900), Erskine Childers's *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903), William LeQueux's *Behind the Throne* (1905), and Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907). Chapter 3 mainly revolves around selected British Cold War sensational and realist spy thrillers, written respectively by Ian Fleming and John le Carré. The core, albeit not exclusive, juxtaposition is between Fleming's *Casino Royale* (1953) and le Carré's *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1963). This is because the sensational plot of the former contrasts very well with the realistic one of the latter.

Within the sample of spy works, a conspicuous thematic shift from late 19th and early 20th-century matters to Cold War ones has been observed. Furthermore, the working hypothesis that spy fiction is far from being a homogenous genre has been confirmed. Its complex hybridity is intrinsically tied to the central motif of espionage.