

Summary

The work is devoted to a Polish comic book about World War II. Comic books on this subject appeared after the war but some traces of similar creations can be found in works made in concentration camps. Post-war comics were usually connected to the press and therefore did not have full creative freedom. The author presents Polish comic books published in the Polish People's Republic and after the transformation. The latter group is much bigger and varied.

The first three chapters are theoretical in nature, presenting comics theories and historiography. The author analyses comics theories (Theodor Adorno, Umberto Eco and Scott McCloud) and Polish research in the area (Krzysztof Teodor Toeplitz, Jerzy Szyłak and Wojciech Birek). Historical comics have a unique characteristic which is not internally unified. As they represent history, they need to make a choice with regard to narrative elements. The next part presents research concepts which make it possible to place comics within historiographic discourse (Hayden White, Marianne Hirsch and Georges Didi-Huberman).

To present how World War II is depicted in Polish comic books, works devoted to the following subjects have been discussed: battles, ghettos, concentration and extermination camps, uprisings and post-war period.

The author analysed war comics and their relations to literature. He was interested in various genres such as chronicles, biography, autobiography and memory adaptations. On one hand the aim was to show the consequences of choosing a given genre, on the other, to present how these genres, which originated in literature, function in comics. Another issue related to interactions between comics and media was confronting comics with other visual arts. The focus was on photography and film and – using different criteria – the internet. Polish authors of comic books about World War II are well versed in other types of media and often refer different sources.

It is important to note that Polish comic books about World War II is that many of them are published by institutions devoted to historical education. This work presents three most important ones, namely: Institute of National Remembrance, Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum and Warsaw Rising Museum, but many other entities have also published comic books on the subject.

Polish comics about World War II are very varied, especially in terms of their subject matter, chosen techniques, genre, narration style etc. However, one can identify stereotypes and simplifications in said comics, it is therefore possible to name some tendencies in these representations.

Most Polish comics are educational, rarely polemical in their nature due to the fact that they are financed by the aforementioned institutions. Yet, there are a number of comic books analysing a given historical period or characters and their stories. Comics in Poland is becoming more and more popular and it can be assumed that the topics it presents will attract wider interest. Hence the need to analyse these publications.