
Abstracts

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Abstracts

Szymon Makuch **What Popular Culture Has Done With the Wandering Jew? Contemporary Renarrations of the Lehenf of Ahasverus**

The main purpose of the article is an analysis of the ways of existence of the Wandering Jew character in contemporary culture. Considerations include literary texts, movies, comic books and computer games. In the 20th and 21st century this motif is still present in pop culture, and the apocrypha is very interesting material for many reinterpretations and renarrations. The analysis is based on two types of narration – “biblical” and “non-biblical.” The first group includes works where the Wandering Jew participates in the suffering of Jesus and has a possible impact on the course of events. The second group includes works where the Wandering Jew does not participate in life and death of Jesus; however, characters have his name or there are references to the legend.

Jagoda Budzik **Pop culture Towards the Israeli Patterns of Holocaust Memory**

After the long period of intentional silence surrounding the subject of the Holocaust survivors in the official discourse of Israel, more and more often the Holocaust served as a justification for the Israeli military activity as well as it became a central element shaping the national identity of the Israeli Jews. This situation is directly reflected in the texts of Israeli mass culture but also has been widely criticized with the use of tools it offers.

The main objective of the article is to give a brief overview of the history of this dual relationship between Israeli pop culture and the Holocaust memory, as well as to explain the special status it has in Israel from the first decades of the state's existence until the period of an extensive presence of the topic of Holocaust memory in various kinds of popular media.

Robert Więkowski
**The inquiry into the
stereotype, legend
and concealment.
Jewish threads in
contemporary Polish
crime stories**

The authors of contemporary Polish crime stories frequently use the threads connected with the history of Polish-Jewish relationships, which are full of stereotypes, legends and concealments. This arouses the authors' interest and makes them write the most intriguing novels. In my article I analyze such solutions used by three Polish crime story authors in some of their novels. The critical assessment concerns both the ways of coping with the stereotypes and the significance, which, in social perception, may be attributed to the fact of working out in crime stories the legends and concealments from Polish-Jewish history.

Diana Karwowska
**Jewish Topics in
Polish Cabaret at the
Beginning of the XXI
Century**

The paper deals with the image of Jews in contemporary Polish cabaret. Increasingly, homegrown artists take up the subject of anti-Semitism and intolerance although sometimes they include stereotypical figures, clever Jews. Sometimes you can still find very nostalgic references to the lost past. Generally, this subject does not enjoy the popularity of cabaret performers; their focus on describing the present Polish society rarely takes into account any representatives of other nationalities. The analysis of these representations is supplemented by the reflection on the vitality of prejudices against the Jewish community and the place of their Polish heritage in popular culture.

Łukasz Stoński
**Will Eisner – comic in the
shadows of stereo-
types**

This paper is an attempt to analyze the threads associated with anti-Semitism in Will Eisner comics books and his struggle against stereotypical treatment of the Jews. The work is divided into two parts. In the first part graphics novels based on the biography of the artist (*To the Heart of the Storm* and *The Name of the Game*) are described. The second part is devoted to comics in which he refers to Charles Dickens *Oliver Twist* (*Fagin the Jew*) and *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (*The Plot*).

Garwet Janik Jewish Warsaw in Comic Strips. Comic anthology *Złote pszczoły* as an example of historical culture

Marta Tomczok Jewish Heritage – Notes on the Contemporary Sagas

The following article aims to show places where pop culture merges with Jewish tradition on the example of comic books. The author tries not only to reconstruct the evolution of the genre and its changing reception but also to show the history of comic books which introduce Jews as their main characters. The emphasis is put on comics about the Holocaust and superheroes which have actually become a separate category of graphic stories. The author uses as an example the Polish comic anthology - *Złote pszczoły*, which is one of the rare examples concerning the comic art about Jews and which has been incorporated into the cultural heritage and rescue history. The article draws attention to the fact that this is an institutional comic in which animal symbols have an important meaning and the Holocaust is not mentioned by its name at all, which seems to be done on purpose.

In the article I pay attention to the contemporarily increasing importance of the family saga in the Polish *Jewish studies*. I propose the reading of the prose of Bronisław Wildstein (*Czas niedokonany*), Albena Grabowska (*Stulecie Winnych*), Ben Elton (*Two Brothers*) and Karina Schaapman (*The Mouse Mansion. Sam and Julia*). The 20th c. history of the European Jews present in these books usually focuses on several key pictures/moments/situations, that is: pre-war pogroms, the Shoah, and – only in the Polish version – *żydokomuna* [“Judeo-Communism”] and March 1968. I demonstrate their influence on pop-cultural narration through the analysis of *Czas niedokonany* in particular. In this story the inheritance of trauma, significant for the narration of the Second Generation, gains a supplement in the form of the inheritance of the Jewish capital, post-war Jewish careers and professional advancement. The article is an introduction to the profound study on the newest pop-cultural story tackling the subject of Jewishness; it also indicates the necessity of extracting from a large group of Polish, noble and post-noble family sagas the storylines centered on Jewish culture, based on a different ideology and distinct myths.

**Mariusz Czubaj,
Michał Wandzilak
John Zorn: how to
be a Jewish post-
modernist (or post-
modern Jew)**

Being one of the most prominent figures of the New York avant-garde scene since the early 1980s of the 20th century – John Zorn is almost non-existent in the Polish musical studies. Moreover, even though his art is densely packed with the dilemmas of the contemporary culture, Zorn's music seems to be unnoticed neither by the anthropology nor by the cultural studies.

Style-wise, due to the theory of the Jonathan Kramer and other notable music theorists, John Zorn's music should be classified as connected to the postmodern movement. In his early works Zorn explores different musical contexts: the concept of "high" and "low" styles, structural unity, eclecticism, popular culture, etc. But dated from the release of the album, titled *Kristallnacht*, the next period of Zorn's musical activity is deeply involved in search for the Jewish identity in music and therefore rerouted to the new political religious social and traditional context. In short, John Zorn through his music is questioning the fundamental issues of contemporary culture: its identity, existence and tradition.

**Agnieszka
Kamińska Seven
dwarfs from Ausch-
witz who "had Doc-
tor Death to thank for
their lives" – on the
subjects of The
Seven Dwarfs of
Auschwitz, a non-
fiction book by Yehu-
da Koren and Eliat
Negev**

A man mistreated day after day – experiencing his own death every day for years, denigrated, beaten, threatened, with no perspectives for the future – should hate his oppressor. The story of a Jewish Hungarian family of dwarfs shows that this is not always the case. In this sketch, the author analyzes the biographical narrations of the characters of the book, who are clearly ambivalent towards doctor Mengele. It appears that the key to the interpretation of their behavior lies in deep psychological mechanisms.

The analysis of the subjects' narrations shows that Holocaust survivors suffered until the end of their days from, what psychologists and psychiatrists have named, *the posttraumatic stress disorder*. As the author is not a psychiatrist, she does not discuss PTSD symptoms from a medical perspective. The aim of the study is to look at the memories presented in the book with an approach informed by the humanities and embedded in the context of psychiatric terminology. The main analytical method is hermeneutics (Prot 2009).

Martyna Steckiewicz ***Why couldn't Superman be Jewish? Jewish identity in American and Francophone comic books***

Beginning with Superman and the Golden Age of American Comic Books, by Will Eisner's graphic novels and Art Spiegelman's underground stories, till the most recent examples of artists from both American and Francophone comic schools – there is a long history of Jewish motives in the comic stories.

The article presents an analysis of the relations between the identity of the authors and their comic books. Among them are i.a. Art Spiegelman, Michel Kichka and Jérémie Dres who represent both different artistic generations and cultural backgrounds; yet, they all explore the issue of Jewishness and express their thoughts by using the language of comic books.