

Abstract

This master's thesis aims to answer the question of how "Japanese superheroes" in manga differ from their western superhero counterparts in terms of storytelling, design, or motifs. The hypothesis works with the assumption that although Japanese manga follows the superhero genre's basic rules, many differences can be traced between these two comics worlds. These differences stem from the cultural environment in which analyzed comics originated.

The theoretical part is divided into several chapters, which deal mainly with the basic definitions and history of researched areas. It begins with the definition of comics as a medium and focused on its technical characteristics and modern predecessors. The next chapter focuses on the essential aspects of the superhero genre, its conventions, and its typology. This thesis wouldn't be complete without defining the term "manga", the history of Japanese comics, and its specific genres and subgenres. Finally, it is also necessary to explain terms such as culture, cultural values , and cultural environment.

The work then uses narrative, semiotic, and comparative analysis to examine the properties of six comic titles – three from American and three from Japanese production. Subjects of the research are narrative structures, appearance, and motives of superheroes or the setting of the story in the context of the superheroic genre and the behavior of the main characters in the context of the cultural environment. The analytical part results demonstrate key similarities and differences between Japanese manga and American comics in the field of the superhero genre and suggest other areas of future research.