

## *Persuasion or Story? Historical Spots Bridging Film and Advertising*

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Historical spots published on YouTube accompany upcoming historical anniversaries. They are a transmedia genre, possessing the features of advertising, while at the same time adapting the experience of historical film in the process of discussion about a specific "product", namely, a historical anniversary. Combining the techniques of two different genres, advertising and film, strengthens the basic function of the spot, which is to attract viewers' attention through the formula of a film narrative, engaging in the story and encouraging discussion. The aim of this article is to recognize how advertising and film techniques, used in parallel, increase the chance of constructing an engaging message in the difficult area of historical memory.

**KEYWORDS:** advertising, history, film, media, social media, anniversary

Historical advertising spots emerged in the media with the rise of the Internet and social media. They have become a popular motif, frequently initiating historical discussions related to important celebrations or upcoming anniversaries. This tool is related to the discourse of "public history", which views history as an engaging field[1] with significant role of multimedia in historical education.[2] The key word is "reviving' history", which Wiktor Werner, Dawid Gralik and Adrian Trzoss understand as "the need for emotional involvement in experiencing human dramas present in history, detachment from everyday reality, a sense of something special." [3] This definition is very comprehensive because it goes beyond the concepts of "afforda-

[1] Ada Krawczak, Mateusz Drozdowski, *Najpopularniejsze polskie portale historyczne – próba analizy pod względem merytorycznym oraz user experience (doświadczeń użytkownika)*, "AUPC Studia ad Bibliothecarum Scientiam Pertinentia" 2021, no. 19, p. 538; Anita Zakrzewska, *Kanał "Historia Bez Cenzury", a wykorzystanie go na lekcjach historii*, [in:] *Historia a media: Studium selektywne*, vol. 3, eds. Dominika Gołaszewska, Tomasz Sińczak, Mateusz Zmudziński, Instytut Promocji Historii Sp. z o.o., Toruń 2017, p. 106.

[2] Chareen Snelson, Ross A. Perkins, *From Silent Film to YouTube: Tracing the Historical Roots of MotionPicture Technologies in Education*, "Journal of Visual Literacy" 2009, no. 28(15), p. 6; Andreas Fickers, *Towards a New Digital Historicism? Doing History in the Age of Abundance*, "Journal of European Television History and Culture" 2012, no. 1, pp. 19–26; Jonathan Rees, *Teaching History with YouTube*, "Perspectives on History" 2008, no. 46(5), p. 18.

[3] Wiktor Werner, Dawid Gralik, Adrian Trzoss, *Media społecznościowe a funkcjonowanie wiedzy historycznej w Polsce: Raport z badań*, "Przegląd Archiwalno-Historyczny" 2019, vol. 6, p. 232.

bility” and “attractiveness” that characterize in social media content. In the era of convergence and hypertextuality, it is unsurprising that images and films have become information carriers as significant as text. However, the use of illustration in stories still does not automatically provide emotional involvement and “unique experience”. If we assumed that an appropriate compilation of visual and media means is enough to trigger the above-mentioned “unique experience”, then each audiovisual message would be unique and successful. Since we know that this is not the case, we face a more interesting, more important (also in the context of the topic of the article) challenge regarding the effectiveness of the messages and techniques used. At this point, we should consider the possibilities offered by combining various visual techniques, such as film (film narrative) and advertising (persuasive means).

The study aims to analyse selected historical spots available on YouTube in terms of the engaging means used and, consequently, to describe the actual functions of the historical spot. The author attempted to typologize functions by identifying the means employed, assuming that the spots combine the tradition of various audiovisual messages, i.e. advertising (informative, educational and persuasive techniques) and historical film functions, evoking interest by appealing not only to collective memory but also the individual, personal experience of the viewers.

#### Advertising – Persuasive Means as Engaging Means

Advertising traditionally performs an information, educational, and persuasive function. The information function is usually mentioned first. It refers to the basic purpose of informing about the existence of a product on the market and its functionality.[4] A key issue is the separation of the concepts of “information” and “education”. Katarzyna Starzyńska lists these as two different functions because education is not only a matter of presenting the product but also about teaching the recipients new practices.[5] The persuasive function is used to convince, persuade, build trust, and ultimately achieve social change by taking or refraining from specific actions.[6] Some authors emphasize more strongly the specific reason for which advertising should ultimately (permanently) convince the recipient. The reason behind this is the

[4] Katarzyna Starzyńska, *Funkcje i cele reklamy*, “Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczo-Humanistycznego w Siedlcach. Seria: Administracja i Zarządzanie” 2015, no. 34, p. 262; Anna Wójciuk, *Reklama komercyjna i reklama społeczna: różnice i podobieństwa*, “Zeszyty Naukowe Towarzystwa Doktorantów Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Nauki Społeczne” 2017, no. 16(1), pp. 29 and 34–36; Ivan A. Guitart, Stefan Stremersch, *The Impact of Informational and Emotional Television Ad Content on Online Search and Sales*, “Journal of Marketing Research” 2021, no. 58(2), p. 300.

[5] Katarzyna Starzyńska, op. cit., p. 263.

[6] Magdalena Hensoldt-Fyda, *Zdrowy rozsądek czy bezkrytyczny optymizm? Wokół perswazji w przekazie reklamy społecznej* “Kopiuł-wklej. Pokaż mi ten lepszy świat”, “Studia Socialia Cracoviensia” 2018, vol. 10, no. 1(18), p. 231; Anna Kozłowska, *Bohater reklamowy, czyli jak budować wiarygodność w reklamie*, “Studia i Prace. Kwartalnik Kolegium Ekonomiczno-Społecznego” 2013, no. 1(13), pp. 122–124.

cultural 'rooting' of advertising, meaning its connection to important values in a given cultural circle.[7] Storytelling techniques work well in persuasive activities because they enable the recipient to identify with the message and the character's fate. An example would be the series of Christmas advertisements by the retail portal Allegro, presenting the fates of various people. The purchase via Allegro not only fulfilled their dreams, but also allowed them to share them, get closer to their family and give gifts to those in need.[8] Magdalena Hensoldt-Fyda points out that persuasive social messaging interferes in the sphere of shared norms and values, but requires respect for certain boundaries of this sphere. It is particularly important in constructing messages for non-commercial, social preventive advertising. Such messages (e.g. campaign against domestic violence, pro-health campaigns) are typically directed towards environments where entrenched beliefs (in areas such as health, family, and social situations) necessitate a special sensitivity. In both cases (commercial and non-commercial advertising), however, values are important and constitute a reference point in the process of development and change.[9]

In the case of a historical narrative in a spot, it seems relatively easy to use information and educational techniques (informing about an anniversary or presenting a historical facts). The use of persuasive elements appears to be particularly challenging because if improperly selected, they can distort the image of the past, potentially leaning towards manipulation or even propaganda. Advertising persuasion, in technical terms, relies on creating emotionally charged images, a complex area when dealing with historical topics. It requires evoking and reconstructing emotions around events that viewers did not personally experience, and hence lack clearly defined reference points. Moreover, addressing historical subjects delves into the realm of values, a sensitive area of social advertising, as noted by Hensoldt-Fyda. Given these challenges, the advertising methods are not always sufficient. Experience from historical film productions is valuable as a source of knowledge "about bringing history to life," which often sparks discussions about values.

Analysts of historical films often explore the factors contributing to their success. A historical film is not merely a documentary but a narrative about the past, blending scientific accuracy with artistic interpretation. A critical challenge lies in conveying historical content in a way that resonates as relevant to authentic needs of viewers. In

**Depicting the Past,  
Discussing the  
Present. Historical  
Film as an Engaging  
Narrative**

[7] Kathleen Mortimer, Samantha Grierson, *The Relationship Between Culture and Advertising Appeals for Services*, "Journal of Marketing Communications" 2010, no. 16(3), pp. 149–162; Gary D. Gregory, James M. Munch, *Cultural Values in International Advertising: An Examination of Familial Norms and Roles in Mexico*, "Psychology & Marketing" 1997, no. 14(2), pp. 99–119.

[8] Anna Kalinowska-Żeleźnik, Sylwia Kuczamer-Kłopotowska, *Storytelling w przekazie reklamowym marki Allegro*, "Zarządzanie Mediami = Media Management" 2020, no. 8(3), pp. 210–214.

[9] Magdalena Hensoldt-Fyda, op. cit., pp. 230–231.

this context, the film *Miasto 44* stands out as successful, supported by research confirming its emotional impact. The director's intensive psychological work with young actors on set, coupled with significant audience reactions (based on social media data), appear to validate the film's authenticity.<sup>[10]</sup> The film was accompanied by an educational campaign, yet opinions on the educational role of films, in general, remain divided. Witold Jakubowski argues against viewing films purely as a "didactic medium", advocating instead for preparing viewers for a "dialogic reception" – a special encounter between viewer and content. In this approach, the viewer becomes an active participant in the message, engaging it with their own experiences, dilemmas, questions, and needs for guidance. This "dialogic reception" should therefore be understood as the relationship between the message and the viewer, who is equipped with individual resources (experiences, personality). The individualism of experience makes the viewer an 'active author of meanings', that is, an individual interpreter. This explains why sometimes the director's intentions and the recipient's reactions diverge.<sup>[11]</sup>

Researchers into historical film messages often explore the concept of collective memory. Maciej Białous draws on definitions formulated by Maurice Halbwachs and Barbara Szacka. Halbwachs argues that "the image of the past recognized and disseminated by a given social group is always created through the prism of the present and the current needs of this group. Thus, as needs change, the image of what used to be in the eyes of its members may change." Szacka defines collective memory as a "set of ideas held by members of a community about its past, including the figures who populated it, past events that occurred within it and the ways of commemorating and transmitting knowledge about them, considered essential for members of this 'community'."<sup>[12]</sup> In both definitions, the present time emerges as a crucial point of convergence. "Collective memory" is not merely a 'set of ideas about the past', but also reflects how the present influences perceptions of the past. This once again underscores the challenge facing creators of historical films – to engage present-day viewers in a dialogue about past issues in a way that ensures effective communication.

Piotr Witek suggests that a filmmaker's interpretation may achieve social consensus depending on its grounding in social experience. In some instances, it may be regarded as 'true' (aligned with cultural norms) or 'creative' (innovative, less conventional).<sup>[13]</sup> Piotr Skrzypczak assesses the director's position similarly. Drawing on William Guynn, Skrzypczak outlines three perspectives for directors:

[10] Maciej Białous, Piotr Gliński, *Internet jako medium pamięci zbiorowej młodych ludzi: Przykład sieciowej aktywności wokół filmu Miasto 44*, "Studia Podlaskie" 2016, vol. 24, p. 324.

[11] Witold Jakubowski, *Film jako medium edukacyjne*, "Studia Edukacyjne" 2018, no. 47, pp. 107–111.

[12] Maciej Białous, *Spółeczna konstrukcja filmów historycznych: Pamięć zbiorowa i polityka pamięci w kinematografii polskiej lat 1920–2010*, PhD thesis University of Białystok, Białystok 2015, pp. 28 and 32.

[13] Piotr Witek, *Metafora źródła – czyli film w funkcji poznawczej*, "Przegląd Humanistyczny" 2002, no. 1, p. 64.

depicting what is identical, exploring what diverges, and drawing analogies. Directors can either translate historical events into contemporary contexts (which Skrzypczak views as a precarious boundary prone to manipulation and propaganda) or create narratives “based on...” or seek parallels between historical events and their own interpretations.[14] American experience indicates that the problem of the interpenetration of past and present in historical films is more complex. Kyle A. Jenkins mentions, for example, that historical costume is sometimes used to work through the political problems of the present (the example of the film *Spartacus* as a voice in the debate on McCarthyism) or as an attempt to project the emotions of contemporary viewers onto history (the example of *Pocahontas* as a voice on ecology and intercultural relations). Kyle assesses that deviation from historical accuracy negatively, although he seems to understand where this phenomenon may stem from.[15] However, regardless of the differences in numerous positions towards the interpretation of history, the importance of the present is always visible. Researchers defining collective memory agree that it is a constantly evolving process influenced by factors such as the passage of time, the fading of memories, changes in the life situations of individuals, their needs, and the influence of other cultural texts.[16]

There is evidence that certain themes persistently reappear in new iterations of collective memory and resonate in the works of subsequent generations. An example of this is the paradigm of romanticism, evident in the films of Andrzej Wajda and Ryszard Bugajski,[17] but also on YouTube, where Elżbieta Szyngiel notes a surprisingly large number of videos about Juliusz Słowacki and other Romantics.[18] However, it appears that film producers do not always find it easy to identify recurring themes that evoke strong reactions. Maciej Białous lists several films that did not achieve significant box office success. The reasons for their failure include not only low budgets, unappealing scripts, and anachronistic narration, but also erroneous assumptions about the appeal of nostalgia (e.g. *Hans Kloss. Stawka większa niż śmierć*).[19] On the other hand, Wiktoria Czarnecka observes a positive response to the inclusion of historical themes in an advertisement by PKO Bank Polski commemorating the 100th anniversary of Poland's independence and in the spots by Comedy Central Polska, encouraging voters to participate in elections. Both films unexpectedly featured historical figures such as

[14] Piotr Skrzypczak, *Nowe źródło historii? Redefinicja gatunku filmu historycznego w dzisiejszym kinie polskim*, “Media-Culture-Social Communication” 2017, no. 3(13), pp. 44–46.

[15] Kyle A. Jenkins, *The Reel Truth: The Importance of Historical Accuracy in Film*, master thesis Eastern Washington University Cheney, Washington, Washington 2020. Available at: <https://dc.ewu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1653&context=theses>.

[16] Piotr Witek, op. cit., p. 62; Maciej Białous, Robert Gliński, op. cit., pp. 315–318; Maciej Białous, op. cit., pp. 168–169.

[17] Maciej Białous, op. cit., pp. 24 and 191.

[18] Elżbieta Szyngiel, *Sposób kreowania postaci Juliusza Słowackiego w przestrzeni internetowej: Rekonesans*, “Prace Literackie” 2021, no. 60, p. 28.

[19] Maciej Białous, op. cit., p. 339.

Józef Piłsudski and Maria Curie-Skłodowska. According to Czarnecka, the success was attributed to a correct portrayal of the emotional essence of these characters – courage, patriotism, and dedication to Poland's development – and the effective integration of these qualities with the message of the advertisements.[20] This example best illustrates that great involvement results from a certain coherence between historical memory and the social demand for specific values.

## Method

The study was conducted using a qualitative method with the help of the content analysis technique, which methodologists regard as appropriate for analysing media messages.[21] A significant extension of this method is the analysis of audiovisual messages, assuming that audiovisual text is the most comprehensive type of media communication. This type of text functions by linking various modalities (modes, communication channels such as picture, music, sound effect, etc.) and submodalities (i.e. parameters of modalities that determine their diversity).[22] The author proposes a multimodal analysis, using five modalities. Making certain assumptions about the standard production of a promotional film, she identified layers potentially valuable for analysing the message, such as the image (a single frame or a sequence of images) with its visual characteristics (the content of individual frames or sequences, containing objects, characters, scenography, costumes, characteristic colouring or lighting), music, sound (sound effects), text (subtitles or text boards, containing fragments of the script) and other characteristics, such as the use of infographics or special effects. Multimodal analysis of individual elements of the historical spot allows the research questions to be answered:

1. Can the elements used be considered components of typical advertising functions (informational, educational, persuasive)?
2. How do elements of historical and contemporary film used in the spot interdepend to create engagement?

All elements were evaluated and categorised, drawing from both advertising and film domains. In the field of advertising, the techniques included:

[20] Wiktoria Czarnecka, *Marketing historyczny: Czy umiemy mądrze korzystać z historii?*, CeDeWu sp. z o.o., Warszawa 2023, pp. 30–32.

[21] Mirosław Krajewski, *O metodologii nauk i zasadach pisarstwa naukowego*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Szkoły Wyższej im. Pawła Włodkowica WN Novum Sp. z o.o., Płock 2020.

[22] Kay L. O'Halloran, Bradley A. Smith, *Multimodal Text Analysis*, [in:] *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, ed. Carol A. Chapelle, 2012, pp. 1–5; Jeff Bezemer, Jewitt Carey, *Multimodal Analysis: Key Issues*, "Research Methods in Linguistics", [in:]

*Research Methods in Linguistics*, ed. Lia Litosseliti, Continuum, London 2010, pp. 180–197; Monika Bednarek, *Corpus-Assisted Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Television and Film Narratives*, [in:] *Corpora and Discourse Studies: Integrating Discourse and Corpora*, eds. Paul Baker, Tony McEnery, Palgrave Macmillan UK, London 2015, pp. 63–87; Signe Kjær Jensen, Niklas Salmose, *Media and Modalities: Film*, [in:] *Intermedial Studies: An Introduction to Meaning Across Media*, eds. Jørgen Bruhn, Beate Schirrmacher, Routledge, London 2022, pp. 28–41.

- information techniques – the presence of factual information confirming the existence of a fact, specifying the creators, source and circumstances of producing a spot with specific content;

- education techniques – the presence of content that deepens knowledge;

- persuasive techniques – the presence of emotionally impactful images and motivational elements that draw attention to specific values.

In the field of film, categories were developed with regard to the theory of “dialogic reception”, emphasizing the participation of present experience and historical memory as functioning in parallel. It was assumed that in a spot, whose task is to bind the viewer strongly to the story and message, that this dialogue can be realized by interweaving contemporary images with historical ones. Thus, there can be two narratives:

- narratives about the past – stories reflecting the past (historical figures, scenography, props and historical costumes);

- narratives about the present – stories reflecting contemporary life (images of everyday life).

The category common to both groups will be a meaningful symbol, used as a means of expression, due to the fact that the tradition of using a symbol as a semantic measure (signifier) is found in both the types of audiovisual genres mentioned here.

The examined sequences were classified multiple times and the presence of specific techniques enabled us to discern differences in the functionality of each spot and propose a typology.

Three spots produced between 2010 and 2017 were analysed in connection with upcoming important anniversaries or events. The first, produced by the National Cultural Centre (NCK), was part of the campaign celebrating the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald. The second, *Animated History of Poland*, by Tomasz Bagiński, was created to accompany Poland’s presence at the Expo 2010 Shanghai China. The third shared the theme of the Warsaw Uprising: *There is a City...* (2012), and was one in the series of Warsaw Uprising spots which aimed at reviving remembrance about the insurrection in view of the forthcoming 70th anniversary (see Tables 1–3).

## The Sample

The first spot *Grunwald 1410–2010: The 600-Year Fight* opens with a historical image – a blacksmith forging a tool, likely a sword – next, a warrior demonstrating sword fighting. These scenes exhibit historical ambiguity – the blacksmith’s attire and the warrior’s costume do not specifically align with the late medieval period, but rather evoke earlier eras or Viking culture. Clarity emerges in the subsequent sequence, when a mysterious warrior, emerging from the fog, turns into a Teutonic knight. Recognisable motifs (meaningful symbols) appear – a Polish shield with a white eagle and a Teutonic white shield with a black cross on. Finally, the warriors approach each other in

## Findings

readiness to fight. Without a doubt, the lighting plays a distinctive role of persuasive importance. The events take place on a cloudy day, but the appearance of the Polish knight is accompanied by a brightening of the sky and flashes of sunshine, while thick, black clouds loom over the Teutonic Knights, filling the frame with darkness. Dynamic film music is used, with choral and rock elements, highly characteristic of films about the Middle Ages, especially for scenes heralding a battle or imminent important events. The spot concludes with the anniversary logo – an inscription of ‘GRUNWALD’ forged from steel, crossed by two swords (a meaningful symbol).

Filed entirely in the style of a historical film, the spot is not strictly educational, as viewers may not fully grasp the historical event being depicted, nor informative, as they do not receive plain informational details about anniversary events. The purely historical elements (white eagle, cross on the shield, medieval helmet) are too limited to give an adequate account of the Battle of Grunwald, but the compilation of historical aesthetic with dramatic music and sudden turns of actions, may be attractive to person, familiarized with such convention (e.g. as gamer, fan of fantasy movie or comic book reader). That leads to the conclusion that the spot is not historical, but “history-inspired”, based on pop culture associations of history as the background for an exciting story. However, it takes on engaging power in the final sequences, where both knights approach each other in preparation for combat. This climactic moment heightens the emotional tension, suggesting a forthcoming dramatic and solemn battle. The use of film techniques is particularly evident in this spot. Despite the viewers’ initial unfamiliarity with the specific historical context, they become engrossed in the hero’s journey as it is portrayed.

The final scene evokes an emotional ‘readiness for battle’, potentially achieving success in capturing viewers’ engagement. The effect of evoking “the readiness for more” allows the spot to be classified as a movie trailer, irrespective of whether its creators intended to popularise a real event (reconstruction of battle) or merely a more general construction of the 600th anniversary. The spot is neither informative nor educational, but strongly persuasive, predicting that soon something exciting will happen, and that the viewer should be alert.

The *Animated History of Poland* spot prepared for the Shanghai Expo was created in a completely different convention. Its creators faced the challenge of summarizing the history of Poland for audiences from all over the world. Animated sequences show scenes from selected historical events, with motifs that act as meaningful symbols (a cross, a torn map of Poland under partitions, a nobleman’s manor, a factory, a newspaper, the first cinema). Individual scenes combine into film sequences on a specific theme: the formation of the Polish state, the Battle of Grunwald, the defensive wars, the partitions of Poland, the national uprisings, the Second World War (with specific themes such as the September Campaign or the Polish struggle against the occupying



forces). The scenes change smoothly, their drama enhanced by the use of dynamic elements (clouds of smoke, dust, flashes of fire, shouts of despair, but also of voices of triumph). Not to be overlooked is the role of the atmospheric soundtrack, into which Chopin's music has been blended (in scenes from the 19th century). Historical scenes are directed with historical accuracy and the proper reconstruction of scenery, infrastructure, building, clothes, weapons, tools. Some sequences start with subtitles, containing historical dates, but without explanations.

This convention recalls a richly illustrative, animated history textbook, which summarises the history of Poland. However, the spot seems to be educationally effective mainly for Poles, who have learnt Polish history before and only need consolidation of their knowledge. They are able to decode the meaningful symbols mentioned (like the "V" gesture, representations of historical heroes, meaningful objects, incorporated fragments of Polish paintings and historical maps). For global audiences (the Expo target audience), the spot plays rather a persuasive role: it encourages us to visit Poland, a country with an impressive history.

The convention is consistently classical. Contemporary tones appear only in the finale. The PPR (Polish People's Republic) apartment blocks are transformed into skyscrapers and a circle of yellow stars appears in the sky. The finale's reference to the European flag is the only abstract motif, which may be classified as having a persuasive meaning. It argues that after its long march to modernity, Poland fully deserves a place in the European Union, and celebrates this success (fireworks – a meaningful symbol). Although this spot is completely different to the *Grunwald* spot described previously, it employs a similar narrative convention with an unexpected ending. Initially presenting a carefully delivered lecture on Polish history (educational function), it transitions unexpectedly into a symbolic story of Poland's success (persuasive function). As a result, viewers who have already emotionally invested in the narrative of significant events find additional fulfilment in the finale, experiencing legitimate joy in their country's developmental achievement. This dual purpose of the spot not only fulfils its persuasive intention, but also exemplifies how film techniques, such as developing the narrative towards an unexpected conclusion, may be adapted in advertising messages.

Over the past decade, the tradition of producing spots to commemorate the anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising has become widespread. One of the first spots examined is the highly popular and still recognizable *There Is a City...* This spot's central motif is anchored in the phrase "there is a city that stops for a minute every year." This phrase dictates the structure of the film, which unfolds in two distinct parts. In the first part, we are introduced to contemporary Warsaw, a city filled with the everyday noise of thousands of lives. Historical landmarks are depicted without apparent symbolic significance, merely serving as spaces where daily life unfolds. However, the mood shifts

dramatically when the second part of the phrase is revealed. As the air raid siren sounds, traffic halts and urban spaces transform. Flags and banners emerge, redirecting attention to the historical and emotional significance of these locations. *There Is a City...* attempts a “dialogic reception” without the need for elaborate sets or historical aesthetics. By transforming the everyday experiences of the urban community (walking the streets, shopping, business, entertainment) into the collective form of commemoration, the creator succeeds in redefining the idea of the city (very modern, but remembering the past, dynamic, but capable of symbolic silencing). It also allows the idea of the freedom to be redefined (as the effect of heroism and extreme dedication, but also a chance for rejoicing in independence and self-determination). By remaining firmly rooted in the present, the spot stresses the success of ‘W’ Hour project. However, text interjections in English, which, combined with the background music (*Infinite Horizons* by the Irish band God is an Astronaut), indicates that the spot is aimed more at an international audience, which may be unfamiliar with the ‘W’ Hour tradition, but might wish to understand it. The spot concludes with an informative element, namely, a board displaying the slogan ‘Find Out Why We Do It’ and the website address of the Warsaw Uprising Museum.

## Conclusions

This study reveals that historical spots exist in various forms, each employing different techniques to achieve their objectives. Based on the intensity of these techniques, they can be typologised as follows:

- a) Trailers: announcements of upcoming anniversaries presented in a format similar to movie trailers.
- b) Educational spots: providing historical knowledge in connection with upcoming events.
- c) Persuasive and identity spots: aimed at fostering or deepening the audience’s connection with a historical event.

The combination of advertising and film techniques in historical spots seems to enhance their effectiveness in stimulating discussions about history. Film narration immerses viewers in the story while softening the persuasive nature typical for advertising. Viewers are engaged as participants in a dialogue about history, rather than mere consumers targeted to generate demand for specific content. The authors respect their contemporary perspective, the everyday life of the world, in which there is little time left to reflect on history. The viewer must be invited into it with an empathetic approach, and persuasion must be non-intrusive, encouraging sentiments like “You don’t have to attend the Grunwald reconstruction, but you can take pride in our history,” “You don’t have to be present during ‘W’ Hour, but understand why we commemorate it.” The use of the symbol is in accordance with cultural codes; what is perceptible, however, is the role of the director, an artist who does not hesitate to look for new interpretations in the world he talks about. Traditionally, Polish national symbols, religious symbols are used and these are based on common associations (fireworks – a sym-

bol of triumph, sword – a symbol of bravery). At some points, there is a visible desire to search for original meaningful images that prompt expressions but also wonder (a blacksmith as good preparation for battle, fire as a symbol of strength, not destruction, 1920s newspapers and cinema as symbols of a reborn culture, skyscrapers as a symbol of the Europeanization of Poland). In parallel, the advertising format allows for multiple functions not typically found in historical films. Their brevity ensures audience attention throughout the entire broadcast, while symbolic elements receive more time compared to conventional feature films. Spots also integrate informational and educational elements seamlessly, without compromising their artistic integrity and without thread of being accused of too didactic intrusiveness.

So what is a YouTube historical spot? It can be called a “social media creation”, not clearly subordinated to one, particular genre. The study demonstrates that the transmediality of contemporary visual forms, through genre blending, has promise for enhancing public engagement (“revival”), not only in historical contexts but potentially across various fields.

Bednarek Monika, *Corpus-Assisted Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Television and Film Narratives*, [in:] *Corpora and Discourse Studies: Integrating Discourse and Corpora*, eds. Paul Baker, Tony McEnery, Palgrave Macmillan UK, London 2015, pp. 63–87.

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Fickers Andreas, *Towards a New Digital Historicism? Doing History in the Age of Abundance*, “Journal of European Television History and Culture” 2012, no. 1, pp. 19–26. <https://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/14043>

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## Appendix

Table 1. *Grunwald 1410 – 2010, 600th Anniversary Battle* (National Cultural Centre)

Image	Image (visual characteristics)	Music	Sound	Text	Other (e.g. special effects, infographic)	Advertising message		Film message		Nar- ration about the present
						Informa- tion	Persua- sion	Educa- tion	Mean- ingful symbol	Nar- ration about the past
Medieval blacksmith forging sword	Dark interior	Dramatic orchestral film music	Metallic crackles		Slow motion Animated flashes of fire smoke				×	×
Sword		Dramatic orchestral film music	Metallic crackles		Slow motion Extreme Close-up				×	×
Warrior (train- ing)	Isolated rural area, cloudy sky	Rock music	Metallic crackles		Slow motion				×	
Throwing spear, shield falls apart into pieces		Rock music			Slow Motion				×	×
Mysterious warrior	Cloudy day	Rock Music	Metallic crackles		Slow Motion, virtual recon- struction of armour, smoke					×
Teutonic	Cloudy sky	Rock Music, choir	Metallic crackles		Gathering black clouds	×		×	×	×
Polish Knight, banner with eagle	Sunny sky	Rock Music, choir	Metallic crackles		Flashes of light	×		×	×	×
Knights (Polish and Teutonic) confront		Rock Music, choir	Metallic crackles			×		×	×	×
Logo of the battle				Logo 'Walka Stulecia'		×			×	×

Table 2. *Animated History of Poland* – Shanghai Expo 2010 (1966–2010) (Polish Agency of Enterprise Development and Ministry of Economy)

Image	Image: (visual characteristics)	Music	Sound	Text	Other (e.g. special effects) infographic	Advertising message			Film message		
						Informa- tion	Persua- sion	Educa- tion	Me- aningful symbol	Nar- ration about the past	Nar- ration about the present
Sticking a spear into the forest ground	Forest, rural village	Choir, ethnic music			Virtual con-structing of the town Map of old Poland Smoke			×	×	×	
Baptism of Poland (1966)	Cross, toppling the statue of a pagan god	Dynamic film music		966		×		×	×	×	
Coronation of Boleslaw Chrobry	Palace scene, the courtiers kneeling	Dynamic		1025				×	×	×	
Events of the Middle Ages (wars)	Battle scenes, knights on horses, archers shooting	Dynamic, mourning cho- ral song	Men screaming, the sound of hooves, horse neighing	1018, 1200, 1300	Close-ups: flags, spears, swords, arrows			×		×	
Grunwald battle	Battle scenes, Teutonic knights in ranks	Dynamic	Metal Crackles (sword effect)	1410	Fire, “burning sky”, close-ups: Polish banner			×	×	×	
Progress of Middle Age/ Renaissance Poland	Trade scenes, boat transport of grain agri- culture, mills, Krakow Aca- demy, Nicolaus Copernicus	Dynamic	Bells, enthusiastic voices	1543				×		×	

Image	Image: (visual characteristics)	Music	Sound	Text	Other (e.g. special effects) infographic	Advertising message			Film message		
						Informa- tion	Persua- sion	Educa- tion	Me- aningful symbol	Nar- ration about the past	Nar- ration about the present
Battle of Vienna (1683)	Battle scenes, hussars	Dynamic	Sound of hooves, horse neighing, enthusiastic voices, cheers of triumph	1683	Smoke, fire			×		×	
A noble manor culture	Manor	Dance music						×	×		×
Proclamation of the Constitution of May 3 (1791)	Presenting the Act to the crowd	Dynamic music	enthusiastic voices, cheers	1791				×	×		×
The third partition of Poland,	Tearing the map of Poland, portraits of emperors	Dramatic, sad music		1795	Civilization falling into the abyss, dust, smoke		×	×	×		×
19th-century conspiracy	Insurgents, Siberian prisoners, conspiratorial meetings, arrests, battle scenes Dark, cloudy days, night	Dramatic, sad music Chopin music	Screams, battle sounds	1800–1900	Dark fog, smoke, fire			×			×
Age of steam and electricity	Train, factory, artists	Chopin music		1800–1900				×		×	
The year 1918, regaining independence	Man hitting the ground with knife	Dramatic piano music	The whistle of the steel	1918			×	×		×	



Polish-Bolshevik war	Józef Piłsudski and Bolshevik soldier confrontation, Battle scene, Soviet symbol "Hammer and Sickle"	Sounds of battle, screams, explosions, gunshots	1920	Map, visualisation of Soviet attack	×	×	×
Interwar Poland:	Factories, Gdynia port, cinema, newspaper,	Dynamic music	1922		×	×	×
September Campaign 1939.	Attack on Westerplatte, tanks, bombers (aircraft), destroyed city	Dramatic, sad music	1939	Flashes of fire, smoke	×		×
Occupation	German and Soviet armies handshake, concentration camps	Dramatic, sad music	1940	Dark, monochromatic filter	×	×	×
Polish Resistance	A battle of Britain in the air, Monte Cassino, Warsaw Uprising	Dramatic, sad music	1940 1944	Close-ups for: Polish banners, dead people on the battlefield	×	×	×
Polish People's Republic	Reconstruction of Warsaw, workers, a girl on a tractor, blocks of flats,	More cheerful music	1945		×		×
Workers' revolts, War State	Demonstrations, "Solidarity" flags, raising fingers in the "V" symbol, confrontation of workers and militia	Dramatic music, mournful vocal music	1978 1981		×	×	×

Image	Image: (visual characteristics)	Music	Sound	Text	Other (e.g. special effects) infographic	Advertising message			Film message		
						Informa- tion	Persua- sion	Educa- tion	Me- aningful symbol	Nar- ration about the past	Nar- ration about the present
Transformation	Round Table, transformation of old blocks of flats into modern buildings, city lights, evening sky	Nostalgic music		1989 1990-2000 2100	Effect of transformation of houses to skyscrapers, fireworks, transformation of fireworks to European flag on the sky		×		×		×
Bows	Theatre stage, bows of animated "actors" in costumes	Solemn music	Claps								×
Logo of the Polish presence at the Shanghai Expo				Logo		×					×

Table 3. *There Is a City...* Warsaw Uprising Museum

Image	Image (visual characteristics)	Music	Sound	Text	Other (e.g. special effects) infographic	Advertising message				Film message		
						Information	Persuasion	Education	Meaningful symbol	Narration about the past	Narration about the present	
Spaces of Warsaw	Aleje Jerozolimskie), art installation ("Greetings from Jerusalem") on the Charles de Gaulle Roundabout, King Sigismund's Column	<i>Infinite Horizons</i> by God is an Astronaut									×	
The sentence	Black board, white letters	Ibidem		There is a city				×			×	
Crowds of people	Sunny day, Warsaw streets, extreme wide shot	Ibidem									×	
The sentence	Black board, white letters	Ibidem	Sirens	... that stops for one minute every year				×			×	
Minute for Warsaw	People sitting and rising of their seats, cars and passers-by stopping, extreme wide shots in different locations, historical buildings, white and red flags, burning flare,	Ibidem	Sirens				×		×	×	×	
The Minute ends up	People start walking, bikes and cars moving	Ibidem									×	
The sentence	Blackboard, white letters	Ibidem	Street sounds, voices, car sound	The Warsaw Uprising		×				×	×	
The sentence	Blackboard, white letters	Ibidem	Street sounds, voices, car sound	Find Out Why We Do It, website address		×	×			×	×	