4. Advertising as Institution: Charles Wilp and German Television, 1950–1970

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Abstract
This chapter proposes a self-reflexive view vis-à-vis the Charles Wilp Collection at Deutsche Kinemathek, a collection dedicated to the work of one of Germany's best-known (and most notorious) advertisers of the 1960s and 1970s. After critically reviewing the notion of institution as it is used in advertising research, the main part of the text provides a historical account of Wilp's work and proposes a definition of screen advertising and an analytical heuristics for describing moving image advertisements.

Keywords: institution, Charles Wilp, archival policies, production studies

Historians tend to see advertising as something more than just a media industry: it is considered an institution of society. Some of them describe advertising as mirroring dominant social values and lifestyles. In their view, an ad is a 'mirror that barely reflects society back on itself'.[1] For others, this mirror is fundamentally broken. Ads are seen to 'obscure and avoid the real issues of society'[2]; they create systems of social differentiation and rework ideologies in order to establish a 'supremacy of commodity relations'.[3] In this latter view, advertising does not respond to social trends; it produces them. Yet whether advertising is seen to mirror or mould society, it is usually

1 Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), 329.
2 Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements* (London: Marion Boyars, 1981), 47.
3 Robert Goldman, *Reading Ads Socially* (London: Routledge, 1992), 2.

Florin, B., P. Vonderau, Y. Zimmermann, *Advertising and the Transformation of Screen Cultures*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021
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endowed with power and omnipresence, and appears collective, univocal, and global in its impact on culture and society.

The institutional view on advertising has a long tradition in political economy, communication, and cultural studies, in which media institutions are attributed a 'pivotal role' in 'organizing the images and discourses through which people make sense of the world'.[4] 'There is no denying that advertising is pervasive as a social institution,' Geoffrey P. Lantos once summarized this position, 'much like the home, church, school [...], and entertainment [...], advertising unintentionally affects our society in both a negative as well as in a positive way'.[5] Concerned with the fading relevance of traditional American institutions, critics see advertising as exercising cultural hegemony over society.[6] 'In the absence of traditional authority, advertising has become a kind of social guide', Richard W. Pollay argues.[7] Others fear power is being granted to an institution that takes 'no social responsibility for what it does with its influence'.[8]

Media historians active in the nascent field of research on sponsored, non-theatrical, or industrial film often take an institutional viewpoint as well. In *Useful Cinema*, for instance, Charles Acland and Haidee Wasson approach sponsored film as an 'institutional tool'. They explain the forms of educational, industrial, or advertising films in regard to the 'cultural and institutional functions' these films performed 'in order to instruct, to sell, and to make or remake citizens'.[9] Other scholars specializing in this field likewise suggest the study of both the 'institutional framework' producing sponsored film and 'the situation or constellation that the film produces', echoing the idea of an institution that both 'mirrors' and 'moulds'.[10]

But the institutional view on advertising is also controversial for a number of reasons. It is often just taken for granted, to the degree that business

4 Graham Murdock and Peter Golding, 'Culture, Communications and Political Economy', *Mass Media and Society*, 4th ed., ed. James Curran and Michael Gurevitch (London: Arnold, 2005), 60; Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (London: Fontana, 1983), 165ff.

5 Geoffrey P. Lantos, 'Advertising: Looking Glass or Mirror of the Masses?', *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing* 6 (1987): 104.

6 Goldman, *Reading Ads Socially*, 2.

7 Richard W. Pollay, 'The Distorted Mirror: Reflections on the Unintended Consequences of Advertising', *Journal of Marketing* 50, no. 2 (1986): 22.

8 David M. Potter, *People of Plenty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 177.

9 Charles R. Acland and Haidee Wasson, 'Introduction', in *Useful Cinema* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2011), 3.

10 Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau, 'Record, Rhetoric, Rationalization: Industrial Organization and Film', in *Films that Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media*, ed. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 11.

scholar Morris B. Holbrook coined an acronym, 'CWOPO, conventional wisdom or prevailing opinion', to mock its undiscussed core beliefs. Holbrook questioned the idea of a 'monolithic institution' that would make ad agencies, marketers, and media 'join in concert to foster certain common ends and objectives':[11]

> Most of the institutions involved in advertising appear on closer examination to be bastions of pluralism, characterized by infighting, checks and balances, and various other contrapuntal tendencies. In particular, one notes the unwritten laws that guide the behavior of most ad agencies and marketing departments: (1) be different, (2) seek a unique niche, (3) avoid head-to-head competition, and (4) protect proprietary secrets. In this climate of jealous competitive secrecy and internecine business strategizing, one sees little of advertising as a monolithic institution in which everybody preaches the party line in perfectly synchronized unison or harmony. Rather, one sees advertisers – that is, media, agencies, and their organizational clients – as a vast particularistic assortment of atomistic elements, each engaged in a sort of communicational random walk that contributes to the informational chaos of the overall cluttered spectacle.[12]

Holbrook correctly observes that we often use the term *institution* as a placeholder to avoid a more detailed historical account of the way advertising practices are organized. Is it possible, for instance, to speak of Europe's advertising practices as an institution on par with the one described for the United States? The institutional view also obscures, rather than explains, the relation of the institution to its 'cultural tools' – that is, of advertising to advertisements – implying that ads are identical to their institutional function(s), or made to maintain and reproduce the institution. Furthermore, it downplays differences between various media or between producers and consumers. Here, the social institution of advertising appears as a mighty apparatus, or *dispositif*, that determines how ads are made and understood.

The institutional view even relates to a common way of viewing screen ads; both advertising and advertisements are perceived 'in the aggregate'.[13] We rarely study individual ads, and almost never study them in their own sake. It is more common to study their reflection of 'widely held ideas,

11 Morris B. Holbrook, 'Mirror, Mirror, On the Wall: What's Unfair in the Reflections on Advertising?', *Journal of Marketing* 51, no. 3 (July 1987): 95.

12 Ibid., 98.

13 Pollay, 'The Distorted Mirror.'

beliefs, notions, myths, values, archetypes', an approach that tends to follow the same checklist:

> What role does the product have in society? Who uses it? Why do they use it? What does it tell us about social, economic, and political matters? For example, does it reflect anomie, alienation, anxiety, stereotyping, generational conflict, or boredom?[14]

As a consequence, we lack analytical approaches and filmographic data. This in turn causes problems for moving image archivists who need analytical criteria to differentiate, select, and categorize advertising materials, and to devise comprehensive collection policies.[15]

In her book *A Word from Our Sponsor: Admen, Advertising, and the Golden Age of Radio*, Cynthia B. Meyers suggests studying advertising not as a mirror of American culture or as a functionalist method of persuasion, but 'as a media industry deeply integrated into other media industries, especially broadcasting'.[16] She abandons the institutional angle in favour of an approach that studies advertising as a form of cultural production, and production as a site of struggle and contestation between various industry stakeholders. Meyers claims that media industries lack any 'shared consciousness'; they are merely made up of 'individual agents negotiating various social, economic, and cultural structures and constraints'.[17] The notion of *institution* indeed often implies a conception of order that sees it as a conscious, purposive, intentional activity.

We do not need to think of institutions as achieving order through conscious control and planning; in many cases, the concept of institution could simply be replaced with another concept, such as organization. At the same time, the notion of institution obviously has been helpful in the past to describe a social dynamic that goes beyond what an industry, a firm, or any individual agent aims to achieve. Institutions, as defined within social theory, are systems of rules and practices that structure social interactions; they enable, rather than constrain, by creating a special kind of power marked by rights,

14 Arthur Asa Berger, *Ads, Fads, and Consumer Culture: Advertising's Impact on American Character and Society* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 184.

15 Catherine Cormon, 'The Challenge of Advertising Commercials', in *Films that Sell: Moving Pictures and Advertising*, ed. Bo Florin, Nico De Klerk, and Patrick Vonderau (London: British Film Institute, 2016), 275–282.

16 Cynthia B. Meyers, *A Word from Our Sponsor: Admen, Advertising, and the Golden Age of Radio* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 19.

17 Ibid.

duties, obligations, expectations, norms, empowerments, or certifications.[18] Many entities now regularly described as institutions, such as advertising or television, often lack a rigorous, directed 'systemness' of power on which the institutional view seems premised. But there certainly is historical evidence that individuals active in advertising related to some notion of collective intentionality and to formal or informal social rules specific to the idea of a professional field, such as law, regulatory standards, production guidelines, notions of 'best practice', expectations, and tacit knowledge.

In other words, while it is unnecessary to adopt a substantialist notion of this or that institution, it is productive to trace how media industries have *institutionalized*, following the process by which they came to devise, negotiate, or adopt strategies and rules and practices meant to be formative for their social fields. This chapter revives an institutional perspective in light of recent work in economic sociology.[19] In doing so, it illustrates what sources are to be used to examine this process, and which actors to consider. The chapter begins by describing the archival and epistemic framework of advertising research, and by introducing the Charles Wilp Collection at the Deutsche Kinemathek as a case study. After briefly reviewing uses of the notion of institution in the context of cinema and television, the main part of the text provides a historical account of Charles Wilp's work in German advertising during the 1960s and 1970s. It then proposes a definition of screen advertising and an analytical heuristics for describing moving image advertisements. Finally, it demonstrates the productivity of an institutional perspective for coming to terms with the aesthetics and production practices of screen advertising.

Archival Frameworks

In 1985, photographer and film-maker Charles Wilp (1932–2005) sold a large portion of his film and photo archive to Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (BPK) in Berlin. Since BPK does not have a separate film department, the film-related material of this collection was deposited at Deutsche Kinemathek, where, after having been provisionally inventoried, it remained untouched until 2004. Starting that year, research archivist Annette Groschke began officially accessioning the material and preparing detailed inspection

18 John Searle, 'What Is an Institution?', *Journal of Institutional Economics* 1, no. 1 (2005): 10. Institutions are more properly defined below. I use the notion of 'system' in a broad and generic sense, in other words, not in intentional accordance with a systems theory approach.

19 Francesco Duina, *Institutions and the Economy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011).

reports. The Charles Wilp Collection consists of several documentaries and short films, and of 489 short commercials made by Wilp during the 1950–1980 period. The ads are stored on aggregate reels, meaning that several spots are spliced together according to brand but otherwise in no apparent order, with several reels in one can to save storage space. In total, the collection database lists 895 entries. This includes all the available negatives, outtakes, and prints, as well as dozens of magnetic tapes. Wilp also sometimes made several versions for the client, and once accepted, a spot was often released in multiple variants over the course of a campaign. In comparison to other archives, the collection is small and homogeneous and therefore somewhat manageable. By contrast, Insel-Film Collection at Deutsches Filminstitut (DFI) Frankfurt holds more than 5000 German screen ads; the collections of Geesink and Toonder studios at Eye Filmmuseum Amsterdam comprise around 4000 titles; Archivio Nazionale Cinema d'Impresa (ANCI) in Turin holds around 65,000; and the recently acquired Clio award collection at Indiana University more than 100,000.[20]

The Wilp Collection also does not aim to be representative in historical terms when it comes to the product categories and brands advertised. By far the largest part of the screen ad corpus relates to alcohol and soft drinks. While there are 27 brands in the collection, 23 spots were made for the Isenbeck beer brewery, 19 for Puschkin Vodka, 18 for a traditional corn schnapps called Schinkenhäger, 23 for soft drink Afri-Cola, and 17 for Bluna, a German competitor of Fanta. Other larger campaigns include Martini & Rossi, Polar Rum, a Skol beer, and Bosco Bitter Tonic, but there are also ads for heat pump manufacturer Stiebel Eltron (20 spots), shoemaker Salamander, shoe polish Erdal, and Fit, a hairstyling gel. While the collection spans almost three decades, most of the spots were made between 1965 and 1975. Wilp thrived on six key accounts: Puschkin (1956–1962), Schinkenhäger (1961–1971), Isenbeck (1967–1974), Afri-Cola (1968–1978), Stiebel Eltron (1970–1974), and Bluna (1970–1977). The collection does not contain the manifold print ads, radio spots, and posters that formed an important part of each of these campaigns, and it lacks any written documentation apart from Groschke's inspection notes of the cans. This lack of written records documenting production and strategy, and the separation of film from other media, are common features of screen ad archiving.

20 Cf. Cormon, 'The Challenge of Advertising Commercials'; Ariana Turci, 'The Archivio Nazionale Cinema d'Impresa Collections: An Overview', in *Films that Sell*, 289–298; Indiana University Bloomington, 'IU Libraries Moving Image Archive is the new home for decades of award-winning commercials', press release, 14 December 2017, https://news.iu.edu/stories/2017/12/iub/releases/14-clio-collection.html (last accessed 5 April 2021).

What sets the Wilp Collection apart from other screen ad collections is Wilp himself. Especially in the public eye, Wilp's name recognition has long outlived the attention created by his spots. Charles Wilp was and is widely known in German-speaking countries for his flamboyant self-promotional stunts, pseudo expertise ('Advertising belongs to a product like electricity to a light bulb'), and talk-show appearances. Dressed in yellow overalls, he appeared in numerous behind-the-scenes clips showing him 'at work' with models before the camera. One of

Figures 4.1–4.4: *Behind the Scenes: Wilp at Work* (Deutsche Kinemathek).

his models, Frank S. Thorn (also known as Hans Meyer), later acted in nouvelle vague films such as Godard's *Pierrot Le Fou* (1965). Wilp experimented with drugs, composed music (*Charles Wilp fotografiert Bunny*, 1965), and published books (*Dazzledorf/Düsseldorf: Vorort der Welt*, 1979) and pin-up calendars (*Wilp-Girl 70*), engaged in other spectacular activities such as space travel. He was said to own a photo studio in London, a TV station licence (Radio TV Sonne + Mond), and a farm in

Kenya.[21] Importantly, he also maintained long-term connections to the art world. After allegedly studying in New York with Man Ray,[22] he befriended Joseph Beuys, Christo, and Yves Klein, had an art gallery in London, and exhibited some of his advertising-related materials in 1972 at Documenta V in Kassel.

Wilp's name is not only publicly established but also closely connected to the form of his ads. Many of the screen ads made during the heyday of Wilp's career gave his production company on-screen credit ('Charles Wilp Film', inserted over the opening shot), a rather unusual practice even today. By foregrounding and repeating a number of formal elements, he created a sense of creative authorship in what we may call his signature campaigns for Puschkin, Isenbeck, Afri-Cola, Bluna, Martini & Rossi, and Bero Center (a shopping mall). Here, an author image is evoked by certain stylistic, aesthetic, and ideological properties repeated among the various spots 'signed' by Wilp, creating the impression of a metadiscursive message traceable across this set of films – a message not fully aligned with the overt commercial function of the spots. On the surface, the excessive style of these productions matched the hyperbole associated with Wilp's public persona, condensing all sorts of visual and acoustic attractions into an ironically self-reflexive commodity spectacle: celebrities, trance-like sensuality, brown bears, nuns, secret agents, helicopters, loud colours, distant atonal orchestra scores, and absurdly 'persuasive' ad copy. Accordingly, film historians have understood Wilp's spots – and especially his most widely known signature campaigns – as documenting the period's *mentalité* or zeitgeist characterized by mass culture critique, sexual liberation, pop art, and psychedelic fantasies.[23]

The Charles Wilp Collection appears to be a privileged epistemic site for a research project on screen advertising. Yet doing research in that collection also means engaging with an implicit framework or order of knowledge. Screen ad archives often establish a disposition that makes it difficult to relate ads to advertising. While this is certainly not intended by the archivists, the collection itself suggests the reading of ads as a trace – of a

21 Anon., 'Poesie mit Amalie', *Der Spiegel*, 31 March 1969; Anon., 'Sehr rauschig', *Der Spiegel*, 1 December 1969.

22 Wilp obviously did not tell the truth about his own biography, claiming that his father, a roofer, had been Germany's first rapeseed oil importer and that his mother, a farmer's daughter, was a pianist accompanying silent films at Studio Babelsberg. See Harald Keller, 'Der große Afri-Cola Rausch', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28 August 2008. His claims that he studied with Man Ray and industrial designer Raymond Loewy in New York could not be verified.

23 Jörg Becker, 'Die Voltstärke eines Emotionskomplexes. Der Werbekünstler Charles Wilp (1932–2005)', *Recherche Film und Fernsehen* 2, no. 3 (2008): 14.

zeitgeist or personality, for example – rather than analysing them as belonging to a larger class of materials designed to promote consumption. Reading traces is different from analysing texts. It means subscribing to what Carlo Ginzburg called the 'evidentiary paradigm' of the modern human sciences, a paradigm built on casuistics, or case-based reasoning, instead of the sciences' abstractions and generalizations.[24] Collections of screen ads tend to de-emphasize commonalities between ads, the complex relations of film production to agencies and commissioning firms, and the way the practice of making screen ads is codified through law and professional standards. They invite us to read films retroactively as traces of something absent, a method of retroactive deciphering that is both indirect and presumptive.

To illustrate, consider how screen ad material is collected, stored, and made accessible. The Wilp Collection resulted from a process that involved archivists and donors in a longer negotiation of the collection's aims and purposes. The first step was to establish Wilp's name as the legal framework for the collection, to categorize its materials, and to infer meaning onto its texts. 'Wilp' describes the intellectual property (who owns it), the content (what is it about), and the epistemic framework (what can be known) of the collection. Given its archival mission, the Kinemathek aimed to preserve these materials as they seemed 'important for future generations; they tell something about the society back then'.[25] Wilp's widow Ingrid Schmidt-Winkeler 'wanted the films to be on the art market', thus preventing a wider distribution via YouTube.[26] The second related and unavoidable step consisted in separating the films from other relevant materials: from Wilp's photographical work – still at BPK – and from any written documentation of production or Wilp's interaction with ad agencies and the commissioning firms (kept private by Schmidt-Winkeler, or discarded earlier). The third step was to store the ads on so-called aggregate reels. The 35mm spots are spliced together in 266 cans, meaning that individual versions or variants are time-consuming to find and usually inaccessible for independent or repeat viewing.[27]

24 Carlo Ginzburg, 'Clues: Roots of A Scientific Paradigm', *Theory & Society* 7, no. 3 (May 1979): 273–288.

25 Taz Morgan, *5th Amsterdam Workshop: The Images that Changed your Life: Advertising Films*, unpublished manuscript (2009).

26 Ibid. – Schmidt-Winkeler does not hold the rights to the material, but clearly advocated an author-oeuvre–oriented view on the advertising productions in which Wilp was involved. Ingrid Schmidt-Winkeler, personal communication with the author, 20 January 2015.

27 Getting access to this material was time-consuming; it took about six months before screenings with selected materials could be arranged, given that these materials were deposited in a remote storage facility and because of work priorities within the archive due to financial constraints.

In sum, the collection approaches screen ads in a way that partly resembles the institutional view described above, while differing in other respects. It invites us to study screen advertising as film, or rather, as an aggregate of films, disaggregated from other media, detached from utility, but consistent in their idiosyncratic artistry. Screen ads become orphan films, as it were, as they have to be separated from both their parents (the sponsors) and their siblings (the other media in the *Medienverbund*). Consequently, they are often read (rather than studied) as clues about something larger than themselves, in this case, as symptoms of a society filtered through Wilp's personality or creative authorship. While authorial and national approaches can be helpful in understanding national ad markets, or the role and function of particular advertising studios within such markets, for instance,[28] the traces leading out of this 'orphanage' lead down no path in particular. Somewhat ironically, we can easily read the ads as representative of an author or of a nation, but not of advertising in the sense of representative product types or brands, organizations, working modes, or period styles. As material artefacts, screen ads are well-defined within the archival world, but as conceptual artefacts they are not.[29] The Wilp Collection thus prompts us, first, to connect the material artefacts in the collection to a proper conceptualization of screen ads, and second, to analytically link screen ads to the larger whole of organizations, practices, strategies, or forms usually associated with the institution of advertising.

The Concept of 'Institution'

How does the institution of cinema relate to the institution of advertising? What do we mean by speaking of institutions to begin with? In what ways does an institution frame or determine the form of, and our experience with, screen ads? And how may the Wilp Collection be unlocked as a resource for studies that seek to analyse screen advertising in more systematic ways?

Within cinema studies, there are at least three different uses of the term, all of which describe a particular historical ensemble of factors that

28 For example, André Amsler, *Wer dem Werbefilm verfällt, ist verloren für die Welt: Das Werk von Julius Pinschewer 1883–1961* (Zurich: Chronos, 1997); Lenke Ripmeester, 'The Geesink Collection: Selection Criteria Reconsidered', in *Films that Sell*, 283–288.

29 Cf. Giovanni Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel: The Archival Life of Film in Transition* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 105.

determines how films are made, distributed, consumed, and understood.[30] First is an idea of *systemness*. The notion of institution is not just an umbrella term for various social or extra-textual factors; it also speaks to the ways those factors are integrated or organized. In this sense, the cinematic institution is 'a real system, capable of integrating different aspects, dictating behavioural rules, and providing precise statutes for its components'.[31] Speaking of cinema as an institution suggests a larger system that developed within particular historical circumstances, such as the studio system or classical Hollywood cinema, a system that is complex, stable, and central for the ordering of the social, a well-planned system that extends its powers over time and space to govern what film was in a particular territory and period.

The second facet emphasizes *governance*. Christian Metz famously described cinema as a set of several interlocked 'machines', employed to guide and govern film experience.[32] The cinematic institution, in this view, is both outside and inside of us, indistinctly collective and intimate, sociological and psychoanalytic, a 'mental machinery' that spectators 'accustomed to the cinema' have internalized historically and that has adapted them to the consumption of films. Seeing the cinema industry and spectator psychology as part of the same institution allowed Metz to identify a key 'mechanism' that determined the way films – and more specifically, Hollywood productions – could achieve their singular status in popular culture and even beyond.[33] Others, such as Janet Staiger, similarly used the term

30 The notion of institution was introduced to disciplines such as psychology and sociology to explain how individual behaviour links to forms of social organization (Michel Foucault, 'La psychologie de 1850 à 1950', in *Histoire de la philosophie européenne*, vol. 2, ed. D. Huisman and A. Weber [Paris: Klincksiek, 1957], 591–606). In this context, it connoted a social structure infused with the capacity to endure. In the 1940s, the concept travelled from social psychology to communication studies, in which it came to frame functional analyses of media organizations, among others (Paul DiMaggio and Paul M. Hirsch 'Production Organization in the Arts', *American Behavioral Scientist* 19, no. 6 [July–August 1976]: 735–754; Paul DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, 'The Iron Cage Revisited', *American Sociological Review* 48, no. 2 [April 1983]: 147–160). Media institutions such as television were studied as performing functions essential to the maintenance of society, a capacity they were thought to hold by embodying role structures, norms, values, or conventions. In the late 1940s, the term was also taken up by the French filmologists in Durkheim's sense of a *fait social*, or social fact that conditions human action (Gilbert Cohen-Séat, *Essai sur les principes d'une philosophie du cinéma* [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1946], 56f).

31 Francesco Casetti, *Theories of Cinema, 1945–1995* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 109.

32 Christian Metz, 'The Imaginary Signifier', *Screen*, 16, no. 2 (July 1975): 14–76.

33 A few years later, Stephen Neale adopted the terminology for a more 'systematic analysis' of cinema's 'texts, its sources of finance, its modes and circuits of production, distribution and exhibition, its relationship to the state, the nature of the discourses used to support and

to invoke the workings of an abstract 'mechanism' governing a dominant mode of film production practice, in this case of classical Hollywood's mode of production.[34] What made this practice such a uniform and pervasive one, according to Staiger, were specific discourses established through institutions, such as production manuals, promotional materials, or film reviews, discourses that worked 'to formalize and disperse descriptive and prescriptive analyses of the most efficient production practices, the newest technologies, and the best look and sound for the films'.[35] In her account, institutions materialize (only) in their discourses, and discourses again inform practices that harden into modes of production.

The third path of inquiry has taken a different theoretical turn. While keeping the focus on film as text, it has emphasized the pragmatics of film viewing and the alleged *contractuality* of this arrangement. Here, the institution becomes a key frame of reference for the viewer, so that one and the same text seen within different exhibition contexts can take on very different meanings: a fiction film can be used as a work of art given that the institutional framing is that of art, for instance, or as a document, when shown in school. It is thus the major social institutions of art, education, the family, and the like that frame how texts are construed in spaces of production and consumption.[36] The institution appears to be a structure

promote it, the institutional basis of these discourses, the relations within and across each of these elements and the structure of the international film industry' (Stephen Neale, 'Art Cinema as Institution', *Screen* 22, no. 1 [1981]: 11–40). The notion of institution here is again invoked as a broad umbrella term, before then being employed to develop a historical method that allows us to distinguish systems from subsystems, or cinema from art cinema. Neale used the term to pinpoint how 'a configuration of forces inside and outside the cinematic institution began to fracture that unity into a set of distinct spheres of practice, circulation, discussion and activity' (30). Describing art cinema as a 'distinct sector' within the cinematic institution, he underlined that various 'spheres of circulation' may develop within one institutional space. Similar conceptions also resonate in John Ellis's *Visible Fictions*, among others. Ellis described 'classic cinema' as an 'institution that includes both films and the ways in which those films are made available and govern the ways they are watched', and used the term to distinguish the particular 'regime' of classic cinema from television (John Ellis, *Visible Fictions: Cinema, Television, Video* [London: Routledge, 1982], 90, 184).

34 Janet Staiger, 'The Hollywood Mode of Production to 1930', in *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*, ed. David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson (New York: Routledge, 1985), 89 and passim; cf. Noel Burch, 'Porter, or Ambivalence', *Screen* 19, no. 4 (1978–1979): 91–105.

35 Staiger, 'Hollywood Mode', ibid.

36 Roger Odin, 'Pour une sémio-pragmatique du cinéma', *Iris* 1 (1983): 1–12; Roger Odin, 'Le film de famille dans l'institution familiale', in *Le film de famille, usage privé, usage public*, ed. Roger Odin (Paris: Méridiens-Klincksieck, 1995), 27–42.

that regulates how viewers relate to this or that contract of communication.[37] The term also serves as a heuristic tool for the study of how the function of media undergoes historical changes.[38] Adopting a sociological perspective, other pragmatists even use the notion to relate a given film to its various milieus, again with an eye on informal and formal rules of production.[39] In this latter view, the film is always 'an image or paraphrase of its institution'.[40]

Systemness, governance, and contractuality certainly have proven productive as facets of the institutional analysis of cinema. They are of limited use when it comes to screen advertising, however. In the view of these concepts, institutions have a certain size and stability, they centralize power and agency, and they store and distribute knowledge in an explicit and somewhat unique way. This is not to be taken for granted here, since the 'screen' is not an institution on par with advertising or media but only one of many arenas where market activities take place. One may even ask whether cinema itself qualifies as a social institution; it is quite possible to imagine a state without cinema, but difficult to imagine a cinema without state.[41] The term *institution* also suggests stasis and unity where we may discover internal contradictions, tensions, and constant change.

Finally, how to deal with the undifferentiated flood of 'discourses' that offer themselves to be read as traces (or 'paraphrases') of the 'institution' of (screen) advertising? To use trade papers or films as institutional discourses to reconstruct the Hollywood studio system may be an obvious methodical choice, but using ads to reconstruct advertising is not. As an object, the screen ad is much less specific than a Hollywood feature. Ads have multiple points of origin and address. There is no quasi-oligopolistic 'machine' that churns out one type of content according to preconceived market patterns, but rather – as Holbrook suggests – 'a vast particularistic assortment of atomistic elements, each engaged in a sort of communicational random walk that contributes to the informational chaos of the overall cluttered spectacle'.[42]

No single screen ad studio, or ad agency, or commissioning client ever gained the monolithic market power now associated with Hollywood: it

37 Francesco Casetti and Roger Odin 'De la paléo- à la néo-télévision', *Communications* 51, no. 1 (1990): 9; Barrette 1997.

38 Frank Kessler, 'Notes on Dispositif', unpublished working paper (2002).

39 Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, 'Éléments de sociologie du film', *Cinémas* 17, no. 2/3 (2007): 117; cf. Georges Friedmann and Edgar Morin 'Sociologie du cinéma', *Revue Internationale de Filmologie* 3 (1952): 10–24.

40 Ibid., 141.

41 Media, on the other hand, may well be thought of as both indispensable to and going beyond any state.

42 Holbrook, 'Mirror, Mirror', 98.

is safe to say that all of them have to constantly network competitively. There is also little indication that ads are 'tools' that function according to some preconceived master plan: some ads succeed, others fail, and none of them works without proper embedding in other markets that in turn are regulated through state policies and powers, such as markets for goods and services. Even if advertising indeed is an institution, its permanent struggle to establish 'good object relations' between us and the ads is well-known, for we usually neither pay for screen ads nor find it desirable to watch them, already knowing that most of them displease rather than please.[43] Ads are a form of content that brands push onto audiences, not content audiences pull themselves into.[44]

The concept of advertising as institution thus needs to be reassessed through a confrontation with the empirical object of screen ads. If advertising consisted of competitive small-scale organizations rather than monopoly actors that are able to establish a global system of control, the concept needs to be historically specified. In what ways can German advertising of the 1960s and 1970s be described as an institution? In addition to situating the concept historically, we may also use it to describe a process. Institutions are beyond direct observation,[45] but the efforts that go into establishing them are well-documented. How did advertisers attempt to institutionalize? Was this process marked by any internal contradictions, crises, or tensions? Furthermore, instead of taking the significance of screens for granted when it comes to advertising, it seems more productive to see film as part of a much larger toolkit, or *Medienverbund*.[46] What role did screens play for advertising's institutionalization in the 1960s and 1970s, as compared to other promotional tools?

Institutionalizing Screen Advertising: The Case of Wilp

These and other questions allow the development of a framework to explain the particular form of film found in the Wilp Collection. To study Wilp's films as a 'paraphrase' or image of their institutional context obviously

43 Cf. Metz, 'The Imaginary Signifier', 19.

44 Thanks to Cynthia Meyers for this observation.

45 Markus Stauff, 'Zur Sichtbarkeit von Gesellschaft. Institution in den Filmen von Frederick Wiseman und in US-amerikanischen Fernsehserien', in *Frederick Wiseman: Kino des Sozialen*, ed. Eva Hohenberger (Berlin: Vorwerk 8, 2009), 85–104.

46 Thomas Elsaesser, 'Archives and Archaeologies: The Place of Non-Fiction in Contemporary Media', in *Films that Work*, 22.

assumes that an institution existed, and that the films' production and consumption were institutionally framed in explicit and formal ways (and not just informally or tacitly), so that all involved parties could agree on these films indeed *being* ads. Yet we cannot take it as a given that contemporaries agreed that the films were working as ads, given the fact that Wilp had crossed over to the art world since the 1950s, as well as the widely noted self-reflexive character of these works. It may indeed appear as if his works merely promoted his reputation, allowing brands to trade on it by associating themselves with Wilp. We also cannot assume that German advertising, or that screen advertising in general, had become a formalized system of organizations by the 1970s, given that even in the United States institutionalization remained a conflicted and non-linear process.[47]

I define advertising as a process associated with a set of codified practices and a host of content types or cultural forms designed for promoting consumption.[48] This process is institutionalized to the degree that a 'system of interrelated informal and formal elements – customs, conventions, norms, beliefs, and rules' can be established.[49] The function of this system is to govern social relationships within which actors pursue and fix the limits of legitimate interests. The ability to establish such a system is open-ended and historically contingent: sometimes it works, sometimes it does not, and no system persists without ongoing efforts to keep itself alive. An indicator that advertising has matured into a system is the degree to which professional groups and practices integrate to form a division of labour – a division of labour then subsequently understood to be indispensable for the functioning of the system as a whole. In the case of advertising, this included, for instance, the integration of creation, strategy, and market research into the services offered by ad agencies. Clients judged the professionalism of agencies in regard to how they integrated these practices into their service. Agencies that offered creation but no market research, for instance, would fail this test.[50]

Screen ads are one of many content types or cultural forms used in the process of advertising. Their use varies greatly depending on how

47 Jeremy W. Groskopf, *Profit Margins: The American Silent Cinema and the Marginalization of Advertising* (Georgia State University: unpublished manuscript, 2013).

48 Patrick Vonderau, 'On Advertising's Relation to Moving Pictures', in *Films that Sell*, 5.

49 Victor Nee and Sonja Opper, 'Economic Institutions from Networks', in *Re-Imagining Sociology*, ed. Patrik Aspers and Nigel Dodd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 149.

50 Cf. Thomas Schierl, *Werbung im Fernsehen. Eine medienökonomische Untersuchung zur Effektivität und Effizienz werblicher TV-Kommunikation* (Cologne: Halem-Verlag, 2003), 89–98.

institutionalized this process turned out to be. As Yvonne Zimmermann shows in her first chapter in this section, European avant-garde filmmakers of the 1930s and 1940s did commissioned work whose results have been labelled as advertising, although neither the films' form nor the context of their making qualifies as advertising in a strictly institutional sense. Established institutional rules and codified practices also had to be overthrown periodically, given the constant drive for innovation within capitalist systems. We therefore need to historicize even the definition of screen ads, acknowledging the diversity of ad-making practices. One way to do so is to think of these practices as spread out across a spectrum of more or less direct, theatrical, and institutional modes.[51] Screen ads include a commercial's direct product advertisement as much as the indirect promotion of a feature film 'tie-in', or product placement. They include ads shown in cinema and outside of cinema: in schools, waiting rooms, businesses, clubs, and other venues, and ads made by prominent agencies as much as by complete outsiders.[52] The notion of the screen ad also includes slides, a dominating promotional format for much of cinema's history.[53]

The Wilp Collection consists of moving picture screen ads that have one obvious feature in common: their length. Of the about 120 ads that were accessible for this research, formats varied between 20, 30, and 60 seconds; only one single ad had a three-minute runtime. Length is a key indicator to understand how the films were meant to be programmed, and by extension, how institutionalized the process of screen advertising was.[54] In Germany in the 1960s and 1970s, screen advertisers had no choice but to fit the length of their ads to the programming grids made available by cinema or television. Advertisers did not control the distribution of their ads. They did not have the power and cultural cachet they have today, where screen ads permeate (and define) a multitude of moving image media. Ads had also only recently begun to make an impact on television.

51 Vonderau, 'On Advertising's Relation to Moving Pictures', 7.

52 For some, lumping commissioned films, product placements, merchandising, and spot commercials all together into a broad category of screen advertising may appear unacceptable, given significant differences in the way these practices were organized. In Wilp's case – and in regard to German advertising practices at that time – however, such an inclusive definition acknowledges the fluidity of institutional boundaries and rules described in this chapter.

53 Groskopf, *Profit Margins*; Ralf Forster, *Ufa und Nordmark: Zwei Firmengeschichten und der deutsche Werbefilm 1919–1945* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2005).

54 Cf. Corinna Müller, *Frühe deutsche Kinematographie. Formale, wirtschaftliche und kulturelle Entwicklungen 1907–1912* (Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 1994).

Public service broadcasting started in Germany in 1956 with one channel and six minutes of daily advertising; by the end of the 1960s, 73 per cent of all German households received two channels and a daily dose of 20 minutes of advertising. As a consequence of the limited screen time available for advertising, ad slots had to be bought well in advance and were constantly overbooked.[55] The average length of TV spots remained constant at 27 seconds during the entire 1960–1970 period, with a minimum of seven and a maximum of 60 seconds of screen time.[56] Cinema had no length restrictions for ad-makers,[57] although 30 seconds was considered a minimum and three minutes was common for 'Werbefilme', as opposed to 'Filmlets', a 20-second 'moving slide' format resembling today's vertical digital screens.[58] Many cinemas confined spot programming to a maximum of three minutes in total per show, given the prevalence of slides, so that a show's promotional slot often remained reserved for a single three-minute ad.[59] Overall, cinema remained a marginal ad medium compared to television. In 1968 alone, the production of 250 short theatrical spots was weak in comparison to the more than 4000 television spots made that same year, as trade journal *Filmtechnikum* noted.[60] While there were around 100 film production companies engaged in screen advertising, over 90 per cent of all ads were made by just 20 of these companies; advertising was a marginal sector even within film. In 1970, television's ad revenue was at 525 million DM, while cinema's ad revenue amounted to eleven per cent of that sum, or 57 million DM, a proportional distribution that remained constant during the 1980s.[61]

55 Günther Sawatzki, *Die verwirtschaftete Freiheit: Ein Beitrag zum Verhältnis zwischen Presse und Fernsehen* (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1964), 69.

56 Helmut Demme, *Die Rechtsnatur des Werbefernsehens und die Rechtmäßigkeit des von den Werbegesellschaften geübten Verteilungsmaßstabes bei der Vergabe von Sendezeiten zum Zwecke der Werbung* (Göttingen: Schwartz & Co., 1968), 10; Jürgen Pfifferling, *Wirkungschancen der Werbung in den Massenmedien* (Frankfurt: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Rundfunkwerbung, 1975), 14; Christoph Fechler, 'Die Gestaltung und die Produktion der Fernsehwerbung', in *Die Werbung. Handbuch der Kommunikations- und Werbewirtschaft*, vol. 2: *Die Werbebotschaften, die Werbemittel und die Werbeträger*, ed. Bruno Tietz (Landsberg: Verlag Moderne Industrie, 1982), 1315.

57 Melinde Dierks, 'Die wirtschaftliche Bedeutung der Werbung in Filmtheatern', in *Die Werbung*, vol. 2, 1584.

58 Friedrich-Georg Amberg, *Werbung im Filmtheater* (Berlin: Kulturbuch-Verlag, 1956), 56.

59 Matthias Steinmann, *Das Werbefernsehen im Konkurrenzkampf der Werbemittel und Werbeträger* (Zurich: Polygraphischer Verlag, 1967), 46.

60 Anon., '4. Deutsches Werbefilm-Forum', *Filmtechnikum* 21, no. 5 (May 1970): 171.

61 Wolfgang Seubert, *Struktur und Entwicklung des Rundfunk-Werbemarktes. Band II* (Düsseldorf: Landesregierung NRW, 1988), 35.

The short running time underlines that Wilp's ads were largely made for television; the lack of colour,[62] the 4:3 aspect ratio, and the small promotional stories narrated in some of these 20- to 30-second ads all also indicate that these ads were meant for television. For instance, a series of five 26-second spots made in 1968 for Skol,[63] an international beer-brewing franchise entering the German market in 1967, shows couples at a party while a sports broadcast is on in the background, with the models turning to their TV and a female model suggestively stating: 'This is where we belong, what we are part of, sports is our world' ('Wir gehören dazu, wir sind dabei, Sport ist unsere Welt'). Consider, on the other hand, Wilp's three-minute spot for the newly opened Bero shopping mall in Oberhausen,[64] shot in 1971 in colour Cinemascope – it even featured *Tarzan*'s Johnny Weissmueller, in ironic reference to the cinematic experience the spot was supposed to evoke. This long ad tells a story about what cinema was supposedly like in the late 1960s, by being arty and formally disorganized: there is no proper ad copy and the spot is a disjunctive montage that includes a Wilp cameo, blaring atonal music, and various half-naked female models lingering around on a tiger skin, among other elements. It is thus safe to say that most of the Wilp spots were not only made for television, but were even *institutionally formatted* according to the rules defined by television: they related to prevalent ideas of television's medium specificity, dayparting, target groups, and aesthetic or ethical codes.[65]

Is Cynthia B. Meyers right then in claiming that advertising is a 'media industry deeply integrated into other media industries, especially broadcasting'?[66] This of course depends on how 'the media industry' is defined. Economic sociologists understand an industry as 'a set of markets, one of which is the core or leading market, and to which other markets are auxiliary'.[67] There is little doubt that television was the leading market when it came to German screen advertising in the 1960s and 1970s. Advertising film had 'growth difficulties',[68] while television turned into a 527 million

62 Colour television was only introduced in 1967 and was regarded as a specific feature of theatrical screen ads (Demme, *Die Rechtsnatur des Werbefernsehens*, 46).

63 Sammlung Charles Wilp, Kinemathek Berlin, SDK6909-K-6913-K, 35mm, 1968, black and white.

64 Sammlung Charles Wilp, Kinemathek Berlin, SDK6838-K, 35mm, 1971.

65 Cf. Yvonne Zimmermann, 'Advertising and Film: A Topological Approach', in *Films that Sell*, 21–40.

66 Meyers, *A Word from Our Sponsor*, 4.

67 Patrik Aspers, *Markets* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 33.

68 Bernd Glocke, 'Farbiger, doch nicht besser: 3. Werbefilm-Forum', *Werben & Verkaufen* 7, no. 3 (April 1969).

DM industry with a 250 per cent excess demand for ad slots.[69] Yet television was not the largest market for advertising. Advertisers ranked broadcasting far behind print – that is, behind newspapers, ad supplements, popular magazines, and trade journals.[70] In 1964, for instance, newspaper ads generated 1699 million DM in revenue, as compared to 374.7 million DM generated by television.[71] By 1972, gross advertising expenditure for newspapers was at 27.6 per cent, while only 8 per cent was spent on television.[72] Although print representatives often conjured up the threat of television,[73] ads in newspapers continued to dominate well into the 1980s. Advertising culture was, and remained, largely a *graphically oriented* culture.

Does this mean that print was the industry advertising was 'integrated into'? Obviously not, because advertising existed beyond the level of day-to-day market operations as an idea or system that extended beyond any single medium, and was enacted via open-ended negotiations of standards, shared beliefs, divisions of labour, organizational roles, and the like. If advertising was a cultural production, as Meyers states, this production was not entirely governed by market imperatives. In accordance with their cultural beliefs, advertisers engaged in risky rather than purely economic behaviour (by insisting on the primacy of creation over strategy, for instance) and partly did not live up to the standards introduced and touted by their institution (by adhering to something other than a period's *Leitmedium*). Even if we were to define advertising simply as an industry, or set of markets, we would do better to see these markets as processes and not as static entities.[74] During the 1960s and 1970s, advertising, television, and cinema all transformed at different speeds and in different directions – and none of them constituted an entirely stable market. As historians, we therefore cannot approach this 'industry' as a matryoshka doll in which markets are neatly stacked into each other by size, assuming they are identical in shape and function. Rather, we have to acknowledge the tensions between these various markets, their frictions and uncertainties, and to understand these frictions as key drivers of advertising's institutionalization, as will become apparent below.

69 Anon., 'Mehr Werbefernsehen?', *Filmtechnikum* 23, no. 5 (May 1972): 159.

70 Frank-Jürgen Stockmann, 'Die klassischen Medien im Überblick', in *Die Werbung*, vol. 2, 1786.

71 Hans Schneider, *Werbung im Rundfunk* (Frankfurt: Metzner Verlag, 1965), 10.

72 Siegfried S. Schmidt and Brigitte Spieß, *Die Kommerzialisierung der Kommunikation. Fernsehwerbung und sozialer Wandel 1956–1989* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1996), 201.

73 Sawatzki, *Die verwirtschaftete Freiheit*.

74 Hans Kjellberg and C.F. Helgesson 'On the Nature of Markets and Their Practices', *Marketing Theory* 7, no. 2 (2007): 137–162.

Was Charles Wilp an Advertiser?

How did Charles Wilp position himself vis-à-vis this emerging institution? Shall we consider him an advertiser, a film-maker, an artist? To answer this question, we need to get a better understanding of the culture he formed a part of. Institutional representatives often distanced themselves from Wilp, whom they described as an outsider, despite his continuous work in advertising. The trade journal *Werben & Verkaufen*, for instance, ran a series of articles that spread a negative view of Wilp when he was at the height of his success in the late 1960s. The series started in December 1969, after a long TV documentary had been broadcast about him. Two major trade organizations, Zentralausschuss der Werberwirtschaft and ADW-Verband deutscher Werbeagenturen und Werbemittlungen, published an open letter in which they complained about the documentary. They noted that it 'favored an extreme outsider to German advertising' whose work had 'nothing to do with reality' and would harm advertising's image. Wilp was also called a 'fraud' and was cautioned against becoming a 'megalomaniac'. Other critics noted his blatant self-promotion and the product placements in this documentary. *Werben & Verkaufen*'s editorial staff did not share the view put forward by those 'overeager clubmen', but agreed that Wilp was a 'loner' and was eager to promote himself.[75]

The ridicule intensified in 1972, when Wilp 'once again came to represent German advertising,' this time at Documenta V in Kassel.[76] The journal sarcastically mocked 'Master Wilp's' efforts to cast himself as celebrity advertiser and enfant terrible, and the oversized reproductions of his print ads now prominently featuring as artworks: 'Not only the Master's works have been found to bear such weight; he himself has been turned into an artwork [...]. Charles Wilp has become the definite measure of art in advertising.' The journal reminded its readers that he had never won a Golden Lion in Venice nor had he ever won any other industry award. He went unnoticed in most other trade publications. Wilp's major campaigns, such as Afri-Cola, were seen as word-of-mouth public relations efforts rather than proper brand advertising.[77] His creative work did not integrate with

75 Anon., 'Verärgerte Verbände: Wilp-Sendung erregt Mißfallen', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 19 December 1969; Peter Reichard, 'Offener Brief an Charles Wilp', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 12 December 1969; Ralph Schlehofer, 'Ärger mit Charlie', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 12 December 1969; Anon., 'Charles Wilp und die Schleichwerbung', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 19 December 1969.

76 Anon., 'Werbung als Kunstwerk oder wie Charles Wilp auf der Documenta wieder einmal die deutsche Werbung repräsentiert', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 25 August 1972.

77 Karl Grün, 'Werbung sucht neue Aufgaben', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 25 June 1968 (my translation).

strategy or market research.[78] As Wilp himself stated, 'I am not advertising in the usual way, but rather offer experiences into which the product is embedded'.[79]

Wilp's signature campaigns indeed appear to be a pop cultural reflection of contemporary advertising rather than actual advertising. A campaign commissioned by Isenbeck brewery between 1967 and 1974 exemplifies this quality. The campaign consisted of several series of television spots, print ads, and posters. One of these series, made in 1968,[80] builds its promotion around an action film mini plot reminiscent of the James Bond franchise. An attractive blonde or brunette is held captive by gangsters in a speedboat, helicopter, or at a party, only to be freed by 'Herr Isenbeck', a classy gentleman in a suit rushing to her rescue ('Please don't shoot, dear Isenbeck Pils!'). The five 30-second spots feature action such as chases and showdown scenarios easily recognized from genre film in order to establish the gentleman as a brand character and, consequently, Isenbeck beer as 'the new trend', playfully overstating the claims made by more conventional beverage ads: 'You will experience the Eighth Wonder of the World!' Wilp's campaign not only played on popular entertainment, however, it also alluded to an outdoor fashion ad campaign created by famous British photographer Terence Donovan in 1961. Donovan's 'spy shoots' featured a suited man with a machine gun even before the first Bond film was released in 1962. Wilp's work was linked to Swinging London in multiple ways: he owned a photo studio in Kensington, often contracted British models, and seems to have moulded his own public persona on David Bailey, the legendary photographer immortalized in *Blow-Up* (1966).[81]

To picture Wilp as a misfit or as an outside commentator of German advertising's production culture, however, does not acknowledge his success and the actual role he played within that culture. For almost three decades – from the mid 1950s through the 1970s – Wilp managed to work continuously in the industry. He had a legendary 'flair for converting unknown products into household names'.[82] Isenbeck, for instance, reportedly increased its

78 Hans Kuh, 'Die geeiste Glasplatte: Charles Wilp wirbt für Afri-Cola', *Gebrauchsgraphik* 40, no. 8 (1969): 14–17.

79 Ibid., 14.

80 According to Annette Groschke's inventory list, the can in the Wilp collection is labelled 'Boot 1968' (Boat 1968). SDK07003-K, 35mm, black and white.

81 Wilp resembled Bailey (or rather, David Hemmings's *Blow-Up* impersonation of Bailey) with his air of 'tired paparazzi', as one contemporary put it, with his easy-listening jazz-infused studio footage, and by engaging with female models in eccentric and sexualized ways.

82 Anon., 'Europe's Creative New Breed', *Time Magazine* 95, no. 11 (1970).

sales by 29 per cent after Wilp's campaign. For his Afri-Cola spots, Wilp had a 4 million DM budget; Afri-Cola's turnover allegedly grew by 15 per cent in Germany and by 13 per cent in Austria in 1968 as a result of his promotion.[83] A campaign Wilp launched for the German Red Cross in 1969 earned him 525,000 DM, and he was said to have had an annual budget of 15 million DM that year.[84]

Wilp also was not an agent of mass culture critique – quite the opposite. He co-organized *Teenage Fair 1969* in Düsseldorf, a consumer fair targeting young people, which was massively criticized by consumer advocates, the Socialist German Student Union (SDS), and APO (the extraparliamentary opposition) for the way it aimed to transform young people's anti-capitalist protests into a consumer spectacle.[85] Many of Wilp's ads were more sexist than other ads of the time.[86] His well-known Afri-Cola campaign also appears to be racist. It promoted a brand that had been invented by the company F. Blumhoffer Nachfolger in 1931 as the 'German alternative' to Coca-Cola – a form of 'post-colonial commodity racism' that has been linked to statements by Wilp on how women of colour were '"close to nature" and "animalistic"'.[87]

To explain Wilp's role in advertising's production culture, we have to acknowledge how both his career and the industry changed during the 1960s. Wilp began as a photographer whose work was commissioned by ad agencies for campaigns in which Wilp had little or no creative control. He is, for instance, often credited with having created a longer series of films and ads for Puschkin Vodka from 1956 to 1962. This alleged Wilp signature

83 Hans Kuh, 'Die geeiste Glasplatte: Charles Wilp wirbt für Afri-Cola', *Gebrauchsgraphik* 40, no. 8 (1969): 14–17.

84 Anon., 'Freche Kampagne', *Der Spiegel*, 27 October 1969; Anon., 'Sehr rauschig', *Der Spiegel*, 1 December 1969. All these figures are questionable, however, and are now hard to verify. Alexander Flach later revealed that Afri-Cola never increased its sales to the degree claimed earlier (Harald Keller, 'Der große Afri-Cola Rausch', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28 August 2008).

85 Anon., 'Kampf der Bakterie', *Der Spiegel*, 18 August 1969.

86 The Bero Center ads (1972), for instance, are explicit in their use of soft-core conventions. Contemporaries noted that Wilp's campaign for Pirelli tires (1965) was extraordinary in the way it focussed on naked female legs. Another campaign sexed up the German Red Cross by featuring 'sex sisters', as *Der Spiegel* commented (Anon., 'Freche Kampagne', *Der Spiegel*, 27 October 1969).

87 Katharina Eggers and Robert Fechner, 'The "German Alternative": Nationalism and Racism in Afri-Cola', in *Colonial Advertising & Commodity Racism*, ed. Wulf D. Hund, Michael Pickering, and Anandi Ramamurthy (Münster: LIT, 2013), 197–213; Jeff Schutts, 'Die erfrischende Pause: Marketing Coca-Cola in Hitler's Germany', in *Selling Modernity: Advertising in 20th Century Germany*, ed. Pamela E. Swett, S. Jonathan Wiesen, and Jonathan R. Zaitlin (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 165. To describe Wilp's Afri-Cola campaign as deliberately or dominantly racist, however, would overstretch the argument.

campaign, however, was developed by Düsseldorf-based ad agency Team (which, in 1973, became BBDO Germany). Team was founded in 1956, and Puschkin was one of their first major accounts. Team was also the first German ad agency 'co-le[a]d by creatives from the very first day',[88] among them famed art directors Vilim Vasata and Jürgen Scholz.[89] Wilp, while acting as a creative, was merely hired in 1959 to do the photography for the films used during that campaign, based on Scholz's and Vasata's existing print strategy. By the 1960s, companies routinely outsourced advertising to ad agencies, and agencies usually interacted directly with corporate management in devising creation and strategy.[90] Although he later claimed credit for Team's landmark campaigns for Volkswagen or Tchibo, Wilp 'only followed the instructions of ad agencies'[91] until he managed to acquire the Isenbeck account in 1967. He was eager to surf the wave of the 1960s creative revolution without having initiated it.

This revolution is often associated with Doyle Dane Berbach (DDB) and a legendary 1959 print ad campaign for the Volkswagen Beetle.[92] The New York agency not only changed the look, language, and tone of American advertising, but also broke with a managerial style epitomized by large bureaucratized agencies such as J. Walter Thompson that monopolized clients and excessively supervised their creatives. Decisions within these agencies were made by account executives and businessmen rather than by designers. Some of the young revolutionizers such as George Lois left DDB in the early 1960s to start their own creative workshops, embracing a 'lack of constraints, bureaucracy, [and] established procedure', and 'an allegiance to art rather than science'.[93] This trend was even observed in Germany. Team, considered 'more alike DDB than any other German agency', had been founded in response to overmanaged agencies such as Hubert Strauf's

88 Team BBDO, *Die Agentur* (Hamburg: Team/BBDO Hamburg, 1979).

89 Anon., 'Markt für Muffel', *Der Spiegel*, 23 May 1966. Another article names Wolfgang Vorwerk as the creative mind behind this campaign, but there is evidence that creative decisions were made in teams. Anon., 'Weil er hart ist', *Der Spiegel*, 30 October 1963.

90 Hans-Gerd Schmidt, 'Wie Zeitgeist in die Werbung kommt. Aspekte einer produktionsästhetischen Analyse von Sinalco-Werbefilmen', in *Werbefilme: Spiegel der Zeiten – Chronik des Alltags*, ed. Hans-Gerd Schmidt and Bernd Wiesener (Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte 2002), 67; Schmidt and Spieß, *Die Kommerzialisierung der Kommunikation*, 207.

91 Anon., 'Weg vom Zinn', *Der Spiegel*, 20 February 1967; personal communication with Stephanie Pahmeyer, BBDO Group Germany, 28 June 2017.

92 Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counter Culture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 55. The legendary 'Think Small' ad features an empty white background with only a small VW beetle in view.

93 Ibid., 82.

Die Werbe.[94] By 1969, Team itself started to lose its teams.[95] More and more young advertisers opened independent 'workshops', opting out of an inefficient agency culture that was based on market research rather than on creativity. Young German promoters such as Uschi Roos, Wolfdietrich Spehr, Michael Grashoff – and Charles Wilp – chose such kinds of increasingly independent, flexible careers in advertising.[96] In 1969, *Werben & Verkaufen* counted 25 to 30 'hot shops' specialized in supplying creation either directly to companies or as a service to agencies.

The journal also warned against 'a few frauds' among the new hip creatives, 'whose performance is nothing but illusion based on fancy masquerade'.[97] This probably alluded to Wilp and his eccentric yellow overalls, because the journal featured an open letter calling him out as a fraud on the very next page. Both institutional representatives and young creatives seemed to dissociate themselves. The signature campaigns Wilp developed as a freelancer after 1967 imitated the anti-establishment attitudes of George Lois or Jerry Della Femina, with the difference that Wilp had no proper agency background and did not subject creation to strategy. His Afri-Cola spot commercials (1968–1978) come closest to Lois's conviction that advertising should shock like art: 'It should unhinge your nervous system. It should knock you out! […] In that swift interval between the initial shock and the realization that what you are seeing is not as outrageous as it seems, you capture the audience'.[98] Afri-Cola's shock aesthetics relied on fast-paced, disjunctive editing, for instance, and on outrageous subjects (lustful nuns, naked soldiers), as well as an atonal, noisy score provided by controversial beat band The Monks.

Wilp's career can thus be situated within a paradigm of creative freelance work that shaped Germany's advertising culture in the 1960s. This shift from agency integration to freelance creation was facilitated by two factors. First, clients were not yet used to interacting professionally with ad agencies. Companies lacked proper marketing departments, and decisions were often made by company owners themselves. Isenbeck's president Egon Wüstenhofer engaged Wilp, for instance, as did Afri-Cola's founder Karl Flach, who handed Wilp a blank cheque without asking for market research

94 Anon., 'Markt für Muffel', *Der Spiegel*, 23 May 1966.

95 Anon., 'Sternchen im Kopf', *Der Spiegel*, 10 March 1969.

96 Gunter R. Gerlach, 'Sind die Agenturen noch zu retten?', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 12 December 1969; Anon., 'Joghurt für Jungfern', *Der Spiegel*, 4 September 1967.

97 Anon., 'Kreative Zulieferanten der deutschen Werbung', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 12 December 1969.

98 Quoted in Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, 85.

or concept presentations in return.[99] The lack of standards and specifications meant low barriers of entry for newcomers. A second facilitating factor was the spectacular revaluation of creative work in the United States and Great Britain. Even more established brands began to cut out the middlemen when learning about the cost efficiency of American or British campaigns. Martini & Rossi separated from their agency and handed the account to Wilp in 1969, for instance.[100]

While Wilp managed to work in the industry for almost three decades, he did not succeed in acquiring larger accounts after 1970. Before 1967, he mostly worked as a photographer for ad agencies, and as a freelancer he only had long-term relations with Isenbeck, Afri-Cola and Bluna (both owned by Karl Flach), and Stiebel Eltron, none of which were major brands. Martini & Rossi only commissioned six spot commercials in 1968–1969 and in 1976 chose Team to promote its products.[101] In other words, Wilp was 'hot' from 1968 to 1970 when his work was commissioned by multiple firms, even smaller ones such as Skol, Schwechater, Signal, Lukiluft, Neff, Jedermann Furniture, or Kwas. Ad agencies then quickly co-opted the attitude and designs of the creative revolution. Wilp, in turn, began to reproduce his Isenbeck and Afri-Cola campaigns rather than develop new approaches.

His renunciation in trade journals around 1969 was due to several factors. Wilp's initial surprise success threatened to further deteriorate agency–client relations. He became an easy scapegoat for advertising representatives who were careful not to speak out against more established freelance creatives. The latter, in turn, might have seen his work as derivative, since it was not properly based on market research.[102] Finally, Wilp's public statements and ads were deliberately provocative.

Are Wilp's Films Ads?

Shall we consider the films in the Charles Wilp Collection as 'tools' that were 'useful' for the institution of advertising? Obviously not, at least not

99 '80 Jahre anders. Interview mit Alexander Flach, Sohn des afri Erfinders Karl Flach', undated. Thanks to Helga Peter, Marketing Manager, Mineralbrunnen Überkingen Teinach AG, for providing me with this interview.

100 Anon, 'Joghurt für Jungfern', *Der Spiegel*, 4 September 1967.

101 Team BBDO, *Die Agentur*.

102 Speaking for the creatives, Gerlach noted that creation always had to be fully integrated into research in a broad sense (Gunter R. Gerlach, 'Sind die Agenturen noch zu retten?', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 12 December 1969; Anon., 'Joghurt für Jungfern', *Der Spiegel*, 4 September 1967).

in a direct, positive, and simple sense. Wilp's work after 1967 contradicted ideas of what advertising was. If anything, these works defined a *negative standard* against which principles of best practices could be articulated. This included the need to integrate creation and market research so that the ads would target particular groups of consumers, to follow the ethical and aesthetic frameworks of television programming, and to communicate unambiguous ad claims.

The lustful nuns in Wilp's signature campaign for Afri-Cola, for instance, were said to have failed to persuade young people between 14 and 24 years of age, a target demographic for cola drinks.[103] Wilp also seems to have been accused of missing Isenbeck's key target market, an accusation he tried to counter by rehearsing arguments on an audio tape found in the Wilp Collection.[104] He thus breached a principle of efficiency that agencies such as Team BBDO would later codify into what they called the 'Four-Point Process', a process that subjugated any media strategy to the aim of *knowing your prime prospect*, *knowing your prime prospect's problem*, *knowing your product*, and *breaking the boredom barrier*.[105] While Wilp certainly succeeded with the last of these goals, he also clearly violated the explicit and tacit rules of German television advertising with his signature campaigns for Afri-Cola, Bluna, and Isenbeck. Public-service television's 'Programmrichtlinien' (programming guidelines) of the 1960s defined marriage and family as institutions that were not to be questioned or ridiculed. International guidelines furthermore demanded that advertising should 'not include anything which either directly or by way of implication, omission, or ambiguity may mislead the consumer'.[106] Wilp's signature ads suspended literally *every* rule of traditional television advertising.[107] At the same time, the ads obviously worked for his long-time clients.

Hence, while all parties agreed that Wilp's films were meant to function as ads, they did not all agree on their function. If advertising is a 'system of systems', then this system stabilizes through failures as much as successes. But what about Wilp's work *before* 1967? These earlier spots are mostly unknown.

103 Anon., 'Mit Differenzierung durch den Geschmack den Anteil auf dem Cola-Markt vergrößern', *Werben & Verkaufen*, 25 February 1972.

104 Sammlung Charles Wilp, Kinemathek Berlin, CD07, Tracks 06 and 07.

105 Team BBDO, *Die Agentur*.

106 Friedrich Knilli, *Der tägliche Sündenfall: Fernsehen und Werbung* (Frankfurt: Haus der Evangelischen Publizistik 1972), 19.

107 A 1954 book commissioned by powerful ad agency McCann, for instance, asked to avoid optical tricks, overly exaggerated claims, and implausible product benefits (Harry Wayne McMahan, *Fernsehwerbung. Gestaltung und Produktion wirksamer Werbesendungen* [Düsseldorf: Econ, 1957], 17).

Are there formal continuities in the Wilp ads made before and after 1967, and what are the commonalities between Wilp's ads and ads more generally?

Screen Ads: A Definition

To answer this question, we need a minimal definition of the screen ad form. Above, I have already introduced a typology that includes both direct and indirect, theatrical and non-theatrical (or non-televisual), and more or less institutional forms. When it comes to the form of screen advertising itself, some more precision is necessary. What are the essential elements that allow us to distinguish a promotional form from one that does not promote? Pragmatists caution against such essentialism, of course, pointing to the fact that any film could theoretically be turned into a commercial if shown in a certain context. Most viewers nevertheless have histories with this form that allow them to make such a distinction, and this includes consumers as much as clients, film-makers, and ad agency personnel. Tentatively, we may define the basic form of all screen advertisements as consisting of four recurring elements. First, a brand. An ad always refers to a name given to some product, service, or idea. Second, there is some relation of indexicality between the object thus named and the viewers' lifeworld. Third, a form of presentation that shows the object as being shown to the viewer. And fourth, a movement of sorts.

Brands and trademarks are key in advertising because they establish a unique relationship between name and product, image and real-life object. Without brands, we lack any criteria for distinguishing between similar goods and services and thus the very basis of consumer capitalism. As I have noted elsewhere, trademarks are signifiers that establish the right of sellers to exclude others from using the sellers' reputation for the quality of their goods.[108] Trademarks can of course be shown in screen ads in- and outside of cinema or television, in direct or indirect ways (e.g., in a product placement). They can also be presented in inadequate, useless, or unprofessional ways, as judged by the institution.

Brands in film may be fictional but figure as trademarks only when becoming reality at some point, such as Bubba Gump Shrimp, which became a restaurant franchise after being mentioned in *Forrest Gump* (1994), or the Wonka Bar chocolates introduced in the wake of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. In other words, a film only qualifies as a screen ad

108 Vonderau, 'On Advertising's Relation to Moving Pictures', 12.

when its featured brand relates to a good or service that once existed. If the film's branded object were not available in the real world as something to desire, purchase, or remember, the film's form would be a *representation* of advertising rather than advertising.

Yet brands are not simply presented for viewing. They are also shown in a way that shows the showing. To some degree, all screen ads gesture demonstratively to their viewers. Even the allure of showing a brand in passing remains a purposeful showing recognizable as such. Ads are paid for by clients rather than viewers, and the clients want to recognize their brand as being shown; a Rolex featured in a Bond movie needs to be featured with its name or recognizable design, so that the name can be seen and remembered. Traditional spot commercials introduced the pack shot as a separate segment, often near the end, that would lend time and space to recognizably feature a product's name and qualities. Even negative campaigning has to be done in a 'demonstrative language' or an attractional display that follows an instrumental logic of actions towards a final goal.[109]

All screen ads also include some form of movement. Screen ads are not permanently on-screen like a bumper sticker on the back of a computer. Some move passively, like slides that are moved on and off the screen, presenting an object as motionless. Others may display varying degrees of movement in the image, from an image's gradual build-up in today's vertical digital display ads to the rapid montage of a 20-second TV commercial. Sometimes the advertised object itself may move; sometimes it may remain static or appear simply as a background image. But screen ad programming requires movement, as it depends on catching viewers' attention. Commercials are always shown in blocks, rather than separately; change has to occur. An entire feature may be devoted to a brand, such as the volleyball Wilson featured in *Cast Away* (2001), with plenty of movement in the picture. Most screen ads use a sequencing of information, narrative or not, that requires the movement of images.[110]

109 André Gaudreault, *From Plato to Lumière: Narration and Monstration in Literature and Cinema* (London and Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 72.

110 I am not making a distinction here between screen ads and more conventional billboard displays, digital or non-digital (backlit paper). Shopping mall displays, for instance, sometimes have rotating copy to provide eye-catching movement, and this practice is related to moving picture screen ads in the narrower sense. My definition of course is debatable because making posters for billboards and making commercials are different fields of practice. But in making this distinction, one would also need to differentiate between slides and films shown in cinema. With the increase of digital outdoor displays, movement may increase in the future, further blurring the boundaries between screen ad practices.

All of Wilp's films fit into this larger pattern. Even his unorganized, arty, theatrical spot commercial for Bero Center (1971) features a branded shopping mall that actually exists, addressing viewers in a direct promotional way through a juxtaposition of shots and movements in the image. Yet formal specificities extend beyond these general features of Wilp's ads. There is one commonality in almost all of Wilp's screen advertisements, which is striking given his reputation as enfant terrible: they are merely *animated billboards*. Comparing the print and film campaigns, it becomes obvious that Wilp's films are largely filmed posters or print ads. They augment print and poster photography with limited movement through character action and editing as well as sound.[111] In terms of production, it seems that Wilp often used the same photo studio set-up to shoot the print ad material as well as the commercial. This even explains why his public image and contemporary making-of documentations centre on the studio photo shoots. Over three decades of work, Wilp thus stayed within the *graphically oriented culture* of German print advertising.

To elaborate, consider the element of movement in two commercials made for Bosco Tonic in 1969, another soft drink distributed by Karl Flach.[112] The ads consist of one static full-body shot, showing a half-naked female 'boxer' with curly blonde hair working out her legs without moving around. The model swings her fists before her chest, probably playing with a male viewer's anticipation that she might incidentally reveal her breasts. A sportsman in a white sweatsuit kneels at her side, presenting a can of Bosco Tonic to the viewer (and, by implication, her). Both face the viewer directly and are placed against a black background. The exact same imagery is found in an accompanying print ad campaign, which also includes the identical claim, 'Das Erfrischungsgetränk für Erwachsene' ('The soft drink for adults'). A similar approach even occurs in one series of spots made for Isenbeck beer, for instance, which features camera-facing models set against a black background in a static shot accompanied by party music and off-screen copy claims, and in the Afri-Cola and Bluna signature campaigns.[113] Importantly, this is the same approach Wilp had already followed before 1967 when

111 This is a feature also found in other screen ads associated with the so-called creative revolution, such as the 'Think Small' campaign. See, for instance, 'Legendary VW beetle Think Small commercial!', www.youtube.com/watch?v=qw2rRSLvIO0 (last accessed 5 April 2021).

112 Sammlung Charles Wilp, Kinemathek Berlin, SDK6877-K-6878-K. The two spots use different models but are identical in other respects.

113 For instance, Sammlung Charles Wilp, Kinemathek Berlin, Bluna SDK6934-6944-K; SDK6956-K-6966-K. Afri-Cola spots circulate widely on the internet.

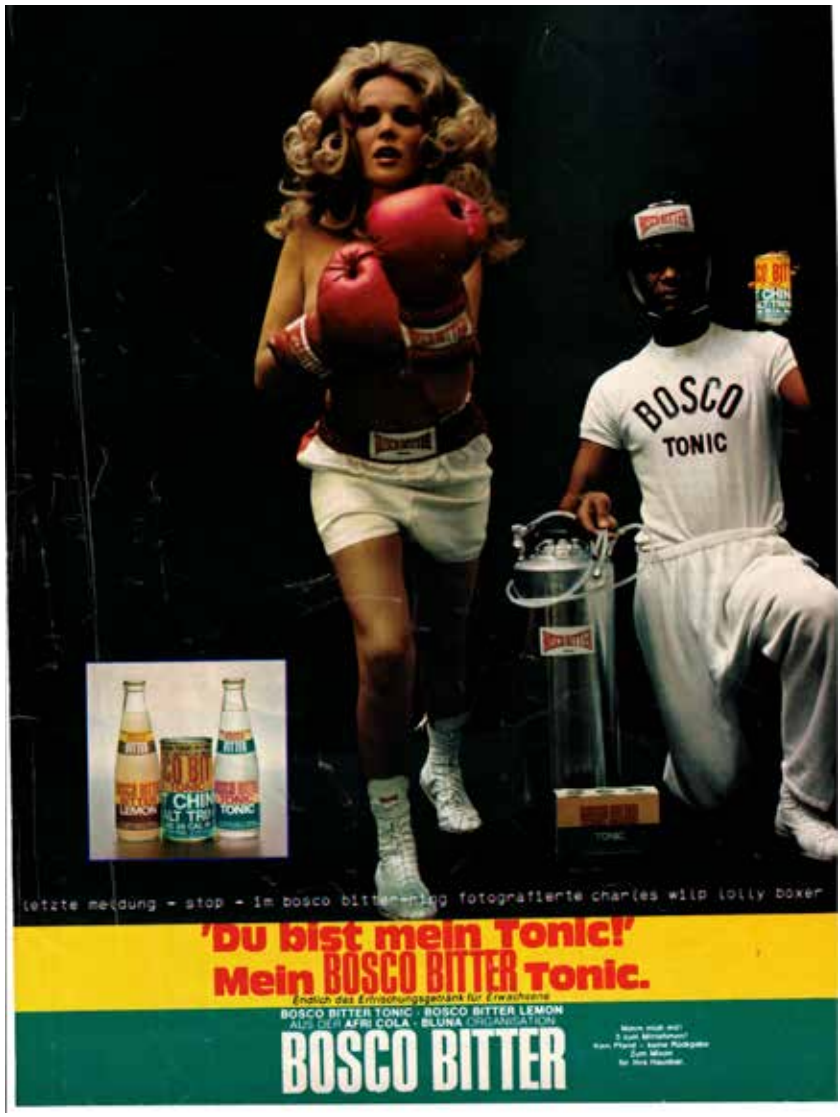

Figure 4.5: *Identical Set-Up for Print Ad and TV Spot: Bosco Bitter Tonic* (author's collection).

working for Team's Puschkin Vodka and other brand campaigns he photographed.

The eighteen black-and-white television spots made for Puschkin between 1957 and 1962 are all structured in an identical way.[114] In 20 seconds, they

114 Sammlung Charles Wilp, Kinemathek Berlin, Puschkin, SDK07010-K.

Figure 4.6–4.8: *'For Tough Men': An Ad for Puschkin Vodka* (Deutsche Kinemathek).

stage a brief conversation between a classy gentleman and a brown bear. Many of them follow the same editing pattern, consisting of merely three or four shots. The first shot shows model Hans Meyer in a close-up of his head and shoulders against an outdoors background of streaming water and rocks, his hair blowing in the wind. He speaks to someone off-screen. Secondly, a medium long shot reveals the bear he is talking to and a bit more of the outdoor scenario that was implied in the first shot. The third shot presents the man and the branded Puschkin bottle in close-up, facing the viewer. The copy reads: (1) The man: 'They [i.e. the fish] are not getting hooked.' Voice of bear: 'Must be the bait.' (2) The man: 'Puschkin would be the right one.' The bear: 'For trout?' (3) The man: 'For tough men'.[115] The pattern is varied in different scenarios: on a mountaintop, in an airplane, at a bar, in a hunter's tree stand; it always returns to Puschkin's tough-guy claim at the very end.

The screen ads and their drinking scenarios are identical to the print ad campaign, including the dialogue conveyed in print. What differs is not so much the movement in the image – there is very little movement – but the visual pun made possible by editing from a close-up to a medium long shot, so that the viewer is surprised to see the 'tough guy' talking to a bear. Although this and many other Wilp ads were gendered in a traditional and sometimes chauvinistic way, the ad ironizes 'toughness' by having the tough-guy talk to an unlikely (inner) friend. The overall form of the ads amounts to a repetition of a simple, minimalist design principle. This principle seems to have first been developed by Team's legendary art director Vilim Vasata for print ad design. In Vasata's view, print ads would need to work 'against the medium and for the ad' to get a reader's attention. He called ads a 'technique of gaining attention and remembrance' that used a 'mechanics of repetition'.[116] Referring to the Puschkin print ad campaign, Vasata spoke of the need to 'always offer some new content while keeping as background a unique and unchanging layout context'. Vasata also underlined the advantage of using eye-catching imagery, surprises, and a form of 'creative selling' or 'artful self-reference', playing on the fact that both readers and advertisers know what they are engaging in.

115 '"Die beißen nicht an." – "Liegt wohl am Köder." – "Puschkin wäre der richtige." – "Für Forellen?" – "Für harte Männer."' Sammlung Charles Wilp, ibid.

116 Vilim Vasata, 'Die Gestaltung von Anzeigen in Publikumszeitschriften', in *Die Werbung,* vol. 2, 1185ff.

'Outer' and 'Inner' Principles of Form

We may therefore say that Wilp's ads adopt both an 'inner' and an 'outer' principle of form. I have described the inner form principle above as rooted in a graphically oriented practice that had been institutionally codified in print advertising. The Puschkin Vodka campaign followed an inner form that relates to other works created by Wilp before 1967. In 1964, for instance, he shot ten 20-second television spots for a hairstyling gel called Fit, commissioned by Schwarzkopf, a well-established German brand.[117] The campaign has the same marks of irony, reduction, and repetition. The spots consisted only of two static shots. The first always showed a male model in close-up against a white background, while the second was a group shot. The surprise and eye-catching effect here related to the first close-up shot of the man facing an existential hair problem: how to deal with unruly hair? The problem was conveyed visually, while a voice-over offered various solutions: (1) 'You may choose to go out only after dark [...] to hide in your bed [2] or, to use Fit by Schwarzkopf', making the last solution the most obvious. Again, this principle was varied across the entire series, introducing different problems. The ads had the same understated, ironic quality as the Puschkin ads, building on the underdog appearance of a male model clueless about how to handle his hair.

By outer form, I refer to how screen ads integrated with the medium in which they were presented, or more specifically, how they obeyed the formal rules ad-makers associated with television or cinema. Thus, while Wilp's ads partly relied on principles known from print advertising, they also related to media theories circulating within the advertising sector. A campaign's media strategy usually started from some idea about media specificity, spelled out in terms of target audiences, for instance, but also in regard to a mode of aesthetic experience, apart from the obvious factor of screen time.

Television was not seen as a medium that could be used for targeting specific groups. Public service broadcasting's strictly regulated 'Werbeblock', or daily ad slot, aggregated ads for various audiences without differentiating between them. Although TV households increased nationwide, ads were not widely accepted and were considered an unwelcome break by many, according to surveys. Critics within advertising described TV ads as too short and ephemeral to leave an impression. Sound and image were inconsistent, cramped with information, and derivative of print ads. On the positive side, TV

117 Sammlung Charles Wilp, Kinemathek Berlin, Fit, SDK6839-K-6852-K.

Figure 4.9–4.13: *'Change Your Profession. Or Use Fit – by Schwarzkopf'* (Deutsche Kinemathek).

ads could demonstrate a product's benefits in a realistic way; they combined image, movement, sound, and typography; and they were viewed in the home in a relaxed mode and without much competition from other media.[118]

Cinema, on the other hand, turned into a target medium, as its audiences developed into specific demographic segments during the 1960–1980 period, which was especially useful for reaching those aged 14 to 30 years of age.[119] Its advantages were 'strong impact, a multi-sensorial medium, colour, the big screen'.[120] Audiences were placed in the dark and fully focussed on the

118 Steinmann, *Das Werbefernsehen im Konkurrenzkampf*, 37f.; Stockmann, 'Die klassischen Medien im Überblick', 1806ff.

119 Stockmann, 'Die klassischen Medien im Überblick', 1808f; Dierks, 'Die wirtschaftliche Bedeutung der Werbung in Filmtheatern', 1583.

120 Ibid.

screen, in Metz's sense of a *dispositif*: 'The darkened space, the large and fully illuminated screen, the excellent colour rendering, the good sound quality, and the relaxed state of the viewer are ideal communicative conditions'.[121] And yet, cinema never developed into a dominating medium for direct screen advertising, probably because it held greater potential for indirect forms of promotion and merchandising.

To summarize, Charles Wilp produced screen advertisements for television that were aesthetically organized akin to print ads and might have had a larger impact on theatrical screens, if cinema would have been recognized as a key advertising medium. Thus, while Wilp definitely aimed to act as an advertiser – although one without agency experience – his work was caught between more than two stools. What does this imply for advertising as an institution? And in what ways could these historical findings be helpful for archivists?

Conclusion

As historian Pierre Sorlin once noted, 'what appears as a simple consideration of institutional determinants turns out to be terribly complicated'![122] As Sorlin went on to elaborate,

> before we even start to theorize practices, we have to study the differences between their determining factors. I am thinking of determinants which are not empty words such as 'institution of propaganda' or 'institution of advertising,' but actual social forms of behaviour that can be studied in regard to their spatial and temporal variants.[123]

As this chapter has shown, the practices of screen advertising were indeed determined by many factors distributed in time and space rather than one all-encompassing and never-changing institution. We have to acknowledge the 'non-synchronisms' (in Ernst Bloch's sense) of these determinants, such as print's prevalence in a world of television. We also need to acknowledge that these practices were never fully determined by anything. On the contrary, any practice, even a failing one, fed back into the overall 'system of systems'. As a social, cultural, and aesthetic practice, direct spot advertising was not owned by a particular industry or medium. At the same time, its form was

121 Stockmann, 'Die klassischen Medien im Überblick', 1808f.
122 Pierre Sorlin, 'Promenade dans Rome', *Iris* 2, no. 2 (1984): 15. My translation.
123 Ibid.

surprisingly robust, relying on a standard of length and structure already established in the 1910s, and kept alive through institutional negotiations between various actors.

The notion of the institution is helpful to produce a differentiated historical account of screen advertising. It also has enabled us to observe a strange 'in-betweenness' of advertising practices. Wilp seems to have constantly moved between different worlds: the worlds of art, television, print, and cinema, as did many other of his contemporaries in this business. In-betweenness seems constitutive for advertising more generally. It is key for practitioners in order to carve out a space for themselves; to sell their ads, they have to integrate or adapt to various media and styles. But it is also key for the selling of products within the ads; such selling always needs to work against the learning histories of media users who, quickly accustomed to even a recently introduced technique of persuasion, may fail to like it or be pleased. Advertising thus is not so much a powerful parasite of existing cultural forms but 'para-sited' in between various social or cultural institutions, as I have argued elsewhere.[124]

As this chapter has demonstrated, any methodology for the study of screen advertising obviously depends on access to materials, and the way access is framed by archival epistemologies. While written documentation remains sparse, pilot projects involving both archivists and academic researchers show new efforts to access, digitize, classify, and present relevant collections, and more systematic attempts to relate screen ad material to data provided by ad agencies, key production workers, and other archives. Deutsche Kinemathek's work on the Charles Wilp Collection here may serve as a starting point.[125] Advertising may not necessarily belong 'to a product like electricity to a light bulb', as Charles Wilp proclaimed, but it forms part of cultural production and ought to be acknowledged as such.

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124 Vonderau, 'On Advertising's Relation to Moving Pictures'.

125 This project developed during the research for this chapter, initially funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Stockholm), and involved Annette Groschke, Martin Koerber, Daniel Meiller, and Maxi Zimmermann (all Deutsche Kinemathek, Berlin) as well as the author. Its aim was to digitize the Wilp collection and to develop an online presentation of these materials that allows for their proper historical contextualization.

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