



## No One Sees The Spectacle: A Debordian Re-Reading Of Martin Crimp's *No One Sees The Video*

Hiç Kimse Gösteriyi Görmüyor: Martin Crimp'in *No One Sees The Video* Adlı Oyununun Debordcu Yeniden Okuması

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### ABSTRACT

In the second half of the 20th century, a relatively small group of influential Paris-based intellectuals led by Guy Debord whose origin had an avant-garde artistic tradition started a new revolt against the established vision of reality in the world: they were called Situationists (1957–1972). All through the 1950s and 1960s, the situationists claimed that the alienation of the people to both themselves and the society, accompanied by the alienation of labour in the 19th century, was due to production, but in the 20th century, it changed form and became rooted in consumption. To them, consumption is the force to define happiness and to conceal all other opportunities for freedom and selfhood. The concepts behind 'culture' were as much dangerous as those behind the industry. Guy Debord has named this new dominant social order, where all realities have turned into abstract images, 'the Society of Spectacle'. Martin Crimp deals with the similar problems in his plays and focuses on the influence of addiction to consumerism on human beings and thus we will examine in this study if Crimp's *No one Sees the Video* can be reread under the light of Debord's book *The Society of Spectacle* and the concepts he offered in this book such as recuperation and 'détournement', and 'Spectacle'.

**Keywords:** No one Sees the Video, Guy Debord, Martin Crimp, Spectacle, Détournement

### ÖZET

20. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında, kökeni avangart bir sanatsal geleneğe dayanan, Guy Debord liderliğindeki nispeten küçük ancak etkili bir Paris merkezli entelektüel grup, dünyadaki yerleşik gerçeklik algısına karşı bir isyan başlattı: Bu entelektüellere Durumcular adı verildi (1957-1972). 1950'li ve 1960'lı yıllarda Durumcular, 19. yüzyılda emeğin yabancılaşmasının eşlik ettiği halkın hem kendilerine hem de topluma yabancılaşmasının üretimden kaynaklandığını, ancak 20. yüzyılda bu yabancılaşmanın şeklinin değiştiğini ve tüketime dayalı bir hale geldiğini iddia etmeye başladılar. Onlara göre, tüketim mutluluğun anlamını saptıran ve özgürlük ve benlik için var olan diğer tüm fırsatların üstünü örten güçtü. Kültür'ün arkasındaki kavramlar endüstrinin arkasındaki fikirler kadar tehlikeliydi. Guy Debord bütün gerçekliklerin soyut imgelere dönüştüğü bu yeni egemen toplum düzenine Gösteri Toplumu adını vermiştir. Martin Crimp de oyunlarında benzer sorunlarla ilgilenir ve tüketim bağımlılığının insanlar üzerindeki etkisine odaklanıyor. Bu nedenle biz çalışmamızda, Crimp'in *No one Sees the Video* adlı oyununun Debord'un *Gösteri Toplumu* kitabı ve bu kitapta ortaya attığı 'asimilasyon' (recuperation) ve 'saptırma' (détournement), gibi kavramlar ışığında yeniden okumasını yaparak, bu kavramların oyunda karşımıza ne ölçüde etkili olduğunu inceledik.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** No one Sees the Video, Guy Debord, Martin Crimp, Gösteri, Saptırma

### NO ONE SEES THE SPECTACLE: A DEBORDIAN RE-READING OF MARTIN CRIMP'S *NO ONE SEES THE VIDEO*

In one of the most widely watched and appreciated science-fiction movies of all time, *Matrix* (2003), Thomas A. Anderson, or, as called in the movie, Neo, is a computer programmer who turns into a hacker questioning the reality at nights. When he comes into contact with Morpheus, a legendary hacker who has been declared to be a terrorist by the government, he is also targeted by the police. Morpheus makes Neo understand that the place that they believe to be the real world is nothing more than a place where most of humanity is captured by a machine race living with people's body temperature and energy and trapping human's minds in a cyber-reality identified as *the Matrix*. Determined to fight against the machines, Neo does not have any choice but to go back to the Matrix and confront the agents: super-strong computer programs keen on destroying Neo and the entire human rebellion alienated to themselves and reality.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a relatively small group of influential Paris-based intellectuals led by Guy Debord whose origin had an avant-garde artistic tradition started a similar revolt against

the established vision of reality in the world: they were called Situationists (1957–1972). All through the 1950s and 1960s, the situationists claimed that the alienation of the people to both themselves and to the society, accompanied by the alienation of labour in the 19th century, was due to production, but in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it changed form and became rooted in consumption. To them, consumption is the force to define happiness and to conceal all other opportunities for freedom and selfhood. “The concepts behind ‘culture’ were as much at stake as the ideas behind industry” (McDonough, 2002, p. 2).

According to Guy Debord (1967), in the present societies that are under the control of modern production conditions, the whole life is comprised of a vast accumulation of spectacles. Everything experienced by people has turned into images representing pseudo-realities. The images that separate from all aspects of life blend in a common stream where the unified life cannot be reproduced again. According to Debord:

“The images detached from every aspect of life merge into a common stream in which the unity of that life can no longer be recovered. Fragmented views of reality regroup themselves into a new unity as a separate pseudo-world that can only be looked at. The specialization of images of the world has culminated in a world of autonomized images where even the deceivers are deceived. The spectacle is a concrete inversion of life, an autonomous movement of the non-living” (2014: 2).

In our present life, there have been more representations than ever before, but they are not as separate as they once were. They constitute “a spectacle which is so much closer to us than the non-representational that the non-representational has become an unreconstructible abstraction” (Weberman, 2002: 230). To illustrate this, we will take Martin Crimp’s play *No One Sees the Video* (1990) and study the immediate surrounding of humanity and the extent to which the reality is shaped and controlled by human creation and production and if it turned to a ‘society of the spectacle’ considering the ultimate state of consumption.

*No one Sees the Video* had its premiere at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, London, on 22 November 1990. The characters in the play are as follows: Elizabeth (34), Karen (23), Colin (32), John (44), Joanna (15), Sally (17), and Roger (40). The first act of the game takes place in March, the second act in April and the third act in April of the next year in southwest London except for the Feathers Hotel in northeast England, where Liz stayed to conduct market research.

As Debord states, “the spectacle is both the result and the project of the present mode of production” (2014:3), which is not a simple addition or embellishment to the actual world; it is the nature of this real society's illusion. Together with all its distinct manifestations in the form of news, advertising, recreation, and propaganda, the spectacle is the version of the current way of life. As the play will show us directly and clearly, it is the universal confirmation of the alternatives to have been fashioned in the field of not only production but also in the consumption indicated by production itself. Through not only its form but also its content as well, the spectacle provides overall reasoning of the conditions and objectives of the current system. “The spectacle is also the constant presence of this justification since it monopolizes the majority of the time spent outside the modern production process” (Debord, 2014: 3).

One of the most important ways for the justification of the present system of spectacle is advertising and making market research to find out and manipulate the consumption habits of the people. Accordingly, the play begins with Elizabeth, or shortly Liz, one of our main protagonists walking down the street, coming across to Karen who wants to conduct a survey on market research with her. Karen’s words that “Shopping. It’s about . . . well it’s about shopping” summarizes the present situation of the people in this so-called post-industrial age. It shows that “the social practice confronted by an autonomous spectacle is at the same time the real totality which contains that spectacle” (Debord, 2014: 3). The conversation between Karen and Liz (Elizabeth) indicates that

“the language of the spectacle consists of signs of the dominant system of production-signs which are at the same time the ultimate end-products of that system” (Debord, 2014: 3). Karen asks questions about Liz and her family and when Liz says that she is married to a writer, Karen immediately classifies her a Group A indicating that the language of the spectacle depends on not individual characteristics of the people but their consumption habits.

**Karen** I understand. Look, I’m putting you down as married. I shouldn’t do that, but I’ll do that so that you qualify.

**Liz** How d’you mean: qualify?

**Karen** Can you tell me your husband’s profession?

**Liz** What d’you mean: qualify?

**Karen** To take part in a depth interview. I’m sorry, but I really do need husband’s profession.

**Liz** (Writer, he’s a writer.)

**Karen** A writer. OK. What this involves - no, that’s fascinating, is he famous? - what it involves is a one- hour interview with one of our executives on Wednesday the fourteenth (which is i.e. a week from now) at 8.30 p.m. in the Masonic Hall and for your participation you will receive a small cash gift.

Listen.

**Karen** Writer. That’s fascinating. I don’t have a classification for that. Let’s say upper managerial. That makes him an A. If he’s an A, you’re an A. (Crimp, 2005: 13)

As Liz does not have a job, she is dependent to her husband even for the classification. Karen is only interested in her husband’s profession, not her real name or surname. She regards the people she interviews as the images of the consumers, nothing more because she only gets paid by the number of people who respond (Crimp, 2005: 11). Their views about the products of different sorts are what the producers are interested in: “That’s exactly what they’ll want. They’ll want your views” (Crimp, 2005:14). Like big brother shows, the spectacle surrounding people records everything for its purposes and thus the life transforms into a spectacle or a video. Thus, Crimp shows that “the control of life or bio-power that is exerted through the ‘camera’ stands in for all the surveillance mechanisms that control identities and the passage of life, maintaining Western hegemony and an unequal world order” (Agustí, 2013: 21).

The conversation between Colin and John in a pub in the second scene of Act I shows the influence of the spectacle on people. Colin’s expression: “I’ll tell you something: no one is going to tell me what to think” clarifies his view that he and all the other people around him are directed by as he declares “newspaper, television, and religion” (Crimp, 2005:16) and so on. He is just like a patient who is about to get out of the effect of anaesthesia realizing the real world around him. His is an unconscious attempt to rebel against the society of the spectacle which surrounds his life from all directions and controls it. As Debord says, individuals must start the action “that disrupts the unchanging social order” (2014:70) by changing their way of thinking and life first. That is why Colin does not want to be told what to do but to decide himself (Crimp, 2005:16). Because the spectacle that misrepresents truth is still a genuine consequence of that reality, “while experienced reality is greatly occupied by the reflection of the spectacle and ends up absorbing it and aligning itself with it” (Debord, 2014:3). “In a world that has really been turned upside down, the true is a moment of the false” (Debord, 2014: 4).

The oppression of the spectacle in the form of tradition, religion, or the culture on the sexual lives of the people is also very apparent in the play. They determine where, with whom, when, and under

which conditions they can have sex. Even Colin, who is an important part of the spectacle as the head of the market researchers resents that he is told he should not have sex (p.18). He continues what he means saying that:

No, I'm talking about the dreaded. Because I get some leaflet about the dreaded and what's the gist of it?

The gist of it is, is thou shalt not. OK, so it's safe to masturbate with my partner, but let's face it I don't need a partner to do that.

...

And before you know where you are like everything else it's twisted into some kind of moral issue: stay within marriage, one faithful partner. Because why should I be limited in that way? (Crimp, 2005:18)

As SI asserts "this decomposition can be seen everywhere. It is no longer a matter of noting the increasingly massive use of commercial publicity to influence judgments about cultural creation" (Debord, 2006: 32). Attila Kotanyi claims that there are numerous damaged spectacular images through which the predominant society presents itself to the oppressed. It aims at mystifying them by televised sports, almost all films and novels, and other forms of fiction, marketing, and the products that are regarded as the symbols of status (2006:75). According to Mustapha Khayati, the ideologues in different fields are the watchdogs of the controlling spectacle that fulfil this task, "emptying the content from most corrosive concepts and putting them back into circulation in the service of maintaining alienation" (2006: 226). For instance, Jim Martin reports that many of the mental problems of labourers in that time were the obvious end of their economic conditions, which constricted the nuclear male-controlled family, and had a sharp effect on the sexual life of the people (Martin, 1996, p. 188). The despotic, sex-negative and patriarchal family that Nigel defends (Crimp,2006:68) in the play produces the kind of insensitive, frightened, and frozen adults required to do tedious and banalized work of industrialized capitalism.

All the neighbourhoods and streets are under the degenerated occupation of commerce and tourism in a way that makes social relations impossible. The new neighbourhoods created by the Spectacle are composed of only automobile traffic and so-called household comfort which are the symbols or manifestation of bourgeois pleasure (Kotanyi, 2006: 71). The stage in which people were forced to live lacks real ideologies and its only determiner or active factor is advertising. It ignores any former critical reasoning or transforms such conviction into a simple conditioned reflex. The complicated process of sales practices has managed to reach the point of surprising even the professionals of advertisement by repeatedly producing pseudo-subjects of intellectual dispute (Debord, 2006: 32).

Guy Debord, who was the intellectual leader of the Situational International (SI), asserted that "the basis of society has moved from the production and consumption of things to the production and consumption of images" (Bonnett, 1996: 193). Though SI created numerous tactics to resist these new forms of spectacular relations, their most widely practised and known method has been 'détournement'. It requires taking elements from a social stereotype and, through their modification and reversal, transforming them into something that is against it so that it turns out to be disrupted and exposed as a result of alienation. It has been expected, for Bonnet (1996), that the parodic subversion of the product-image possibly will shock people out of their isolation and submissiveness.

Another important leader and intellectual of SI, Raoul Vaneigem defines détournement as something that requires "a kind of anti-conditioning. Not a new form of conditioning, but a new game and its tactics; the game of subversion" (Vaneigem, 2001:188). For Vaneigem, making the viewpoints upside down transforms knowledge into praxis, "hope into freedom, and mediation into

a passion for immediacy.” (2001:188). It provides the triumph of a system of human relations built on three conjoined principles: participation, communication, and self-realization. *Détournement* is to prevent seeing things all “through the eyes of the society, of ideology, of the family, of other people. To grasp hold of oneself as of something solid, to take oneself as starting point and centre”. (Vaneigem, 2001:188).

According to *Situationist International Anthology*, it is proposed by the members of SI that the first attempt of *détournement* must be started on photo-romances and "pornographic" photos by “bluntly imposing their real truth by restoring real dialogues by adding or altering the speech bubbles”(2006:276). This process will bring to the surface the rebellious bubbles that are instinctively, but only momentarily and half-intentionally, created and then conveyed in the thoughts of those looking at these images. Though the examples given by the members of the SI such as photo-romances, pornographic photos, advertising billboards, and subway corridors are valid for the *détournement* of the pre-established tools of Spectacle in the 1950s and 1960s, in *No one Sees the Video* we have more modern and direct forms of alienation through video recorders, tv programs and face to face interviews and so on. Instead of changing the statements in the bubbles of photo-romances or the billboards, it is necessary today to reverse the statements of the advertisers, politicians, the men of religion and celebrities, etc. to make people rethink what they are presented and a stir a moment of self-realization which can be the starting point for the individuals for a rebellion against the market or spectacle dominated society. The most important means of *détournement* in the play can be realized through the use of video records of all the people interviewed; however, they are only seen by the owners of the production firms and only the positive views about products and brands are made public. So, as Linda does, it is necessary to make people hear and see the negative sides of the products, and their usage to give an end to the continuation of the dominance of the spectacle over the society. It is the only means to disrupt the protective shield of the spectacle and let the people go out of it and be free from its manipulation.

After the play *No one Sees the video* was written, Spectacle has produced new forms of communication that are used by it to manipulate more people in a shorter period. Social media, internet news portals, YouTube and its derivatives, etc. took the places of printed newspapers and Tv programs. In the same way, it is also likely to detour any means of advertising or manipulation using anti-conditioning of those in the social media or internet, and all the other tools of spectacle because any amateur user of the internet today can to some extent detour the messages given by the spectacle. Crimp attempts to show how effective the communication tools are when Liz interviews with Sally who is very interested in being recorded on a camera and who persistently wants to learn when the recorded video goes out on TV: “Cos if it’s on TV, y’know, my friends would like to see it. When does it go out?” (Crimp, 2005:48).

The influence of TV commercials on Jo, Liz’s fifteen years old daughter, is also very important to show how spectacle manipulates the people:

**Jo** ... I used your conditioner. Smell.

**Liz** Why?

**Jo** It’s got that oil in it, that South American oil. It smells good.

**Liz** Why did you do that?

**Jo** It says on the bottle this South American oil (why d’you think?) comes from a rare white flower which opens its petals just before dusk (Crimp, 2005:39).

With this scene “Crimp criticizes capitalism, which is based on consumerism and the pleasure of consumption” (Takkaç & Yılmaz, 2019: 313). The scene shows, as Debord claims, that the needs of the people are directly manipulated by the spectacle or consumer society itself. It is not important

what you need in reality, on the contrary, it is important what the consumer society makes you feel you need. That's why Jo uses her mother's conditioner instead of her own. Though they show the same effect on her hair, she prefers using the one with that South American oil. There is not in reality any connection with where this white flower opens just before dusk and its use as a conditioner, but the spectacle makes her feel that using it is a necessity for Jo because it is a socially conditioned need.

As he does in *No one Sees the Video*, Crimp describes, in all his plays, an environment in which the free market economy occupies the field of personal relations in the socio-economic system, which is managed by these new power foci. He depicts an environment in which people become selfish, insensitive, and lose their moral essence in the sense of responsibility towards the other (Takkaç & Yılmaz, 2019, p. 313). The spectators like Jo are alienated through the contemplated objects resulting from her unconscious activity. As Debord says:

“The more he contemplates, the less he lives; the more he identifies with the dominant images of need, the less he understands his own life and his own desires. The spectacle's estrangement from the acting subject is expressed by the fact that the individual's gestures are no longer his own; they are the gestures of someone else who represents them to him (2014: 11).

Colin who feels that there is something wrong in the present system does not know that it is the spectacle which is responsible for it, and thus he accuses of the politicians running the country saying: “People who have a playwright running the country, these must be people whose mission in life it is to suffer” (Crimp, 2005:16). Yet, he is aware of the fact that the life imposed on them is a kind of play written by some external forces, in which we are only fictitious characters. Being aware of this, Colin continues saying “no one's going to tell me that I'm made of these things and that because of these things, these acids, I am in some way programmed to behave ...” (Crimp, 2005:17). The problem is that the spectacle makes us believe that everything we experience is real, though they are only caused by the spectacle itself, because “the spectacle is an affirmation of appearances and an identification of all human social life with appearances” (Debord, 2014: 4). However, if someone comprehends its real character, s/he can transform it into a negation that has taken on a visible form as Colin is trying to do.

According to Debord, “the institutionalization of the social division of labor in the form of class divisions is” nothing more than “an earlier, religious form of contemplation: the mythical order with which every power has always camouflaged itself” (Debord, 2014: 8). Religion and the conventions, and even culture in the society have always supported the interests of the masters with all the means they have. To do this, they manipulate the people with a vast obscure reality that can never be doubted:

**Colin** And before you know where you are like everything else it's twisted into some kind of moral issue: stay within marriage, one faithful partner. Because why should I be limited in that way? (Crimp, 2005:18).

...

But what matters, John - as you so rightly point out - is freedom, freedom of choice. And every so-called law is by definition a restriction of that freedom. It's reducing in the very broadest sense the products that are available to me. You see I'm afraid I can understand crime. I can put myself in that man's mind. I can see the process . . . (Crimp, 2005:21).

Debord argues the function of religion and religious institutions as one of the most important tools of spectacle making people believe that the images imposed by it are real. Thus, to change the situation in the society and make people free from the influence of religion, conventional history, and policies is the first step of getting rid of their influences. For SI, one solution to this problem

was “the total destruction of religious buildings of all denominations, leaving no trace and using the sites for other purposes” (Knabb, 2006: 12). Another situationist Gil J. Wolman offered not to destruct the churches but strip of all its religious content and turn them into places in which children can play (Knabb, 2006:12).

In the next scene, Colin and Liz are together and speaking about how some brands can be advertised. Colin has control of the conversation and directs her to a certain point to reach his aim to teach her the ways to influence the consumer. He focuses on the brand of the jean they are dreaming to advertise first.

**Colin** Good. Do you recall the brand?

**Liz** I’m sorry?

**Colin** What brand is that?

**Liz** I couldn’t tell you. One of the big names.

**Colin** Which are the big names?

**Liz** I couldn’t tell you the brand.

**Colin** Which are the big names?

**Liz** Well you know the big names.

**Colin** Imagine I don’t (Crimp, 2005:24)

As people are classified into different groups such as A, B, C, or D according to their social status, the products are also classified. Thus, the names of the brands are more important than their quality. The language and the adjectives used to describe it are of great importance to distinguish a brand from the others. Through these adjectives, they embroider the brand in the mind of the consumer as they wish. As Debord asserts, it is the way by which “the spectacle presents itself as a vast inaccessible reality that can never be questioned”, the only message of which “is: “What appears is good; what is good appears” (2014: 4). It always demands a passive acceptance and is imposed by the monopoly of appearance. Commercials are the most important means to impose all these unreal appearances as the ultimate reality. The spectacle never lets the people to reply to its manipulated reality negatively.

The spectacle uses a special method which is called as *recuperation* in order to survive. It “refers to the manner in which the repressive system seeks to neutralize or contain the attacks launched against it by absorbing them into the ‘spectacle’ or by projecting its own meanings and goals onto these oppositional activities” (Knabb, 2006: 528). Liz who was against doing something that she has no desire to do for payment (Crimp, 2005:14) is transformed into a part of the commercial business as a market researcher. According to Knabb, one can understand what recuperation is, when s/he understands “how working-class struggles are kept under control and how working-class demands become integrated into capital’s strategy” (2006: 528), through the media and modern unions.

To get rid of the possible threats against its existence, the spectacle takes everything down using different methods. In the twenty-first century, this is performed by means of tracking people’s social media accounts, newspapers, television stations, and the whole internet. In the play, Colin records their conversation and when Liz realizes the camera, tries to comfort her saying that “I do this (forgive me) I do this in order not to take notes. No one sees the videotape apart from myself. It just helps me recall your reactions” (Crimp, 2005: 26). To recuperate any action of a rebel, it is very necessary to collect information about them and accumulate this information to manipulate people when required.

Commercials are used to make people believe that they need the products and when necessity turns into something that is socially dreamed, it remains necessary. As Debord says: “The spectacle is the bad dream of a modern society in chains and ultimately expresses nothing more than its wish for sleep. The spectacle is the guardian of that sleep” (Debord, 2014: 7), and it does everything for the continuation of this state.

When Colin and Liz come together for an interview about some products, it is understood that the videos of the interviews of the consumers are carefully examined by the clients (Crimp, 2005:33-34) though Colin said her before that no one sees the video. The only thing that is important for the representatives of the spectacle is to reach their aims and thus lying is ordinary for them. The conversation between Colin and Liz shows the indifference of the spectacle to the people very apparently:

**Colin** Well I’m sorry, I’m terribly sorry but whichever word you use I still have a client who expects to see not five but six videos of AB women reacting to his product.

**Liz** You told me no one would see the tape.

**Colin** Did I? (Well maybe in the heat of the moment. . .)

He laughs and shakes his head.

Did I really tell you that? Because that’s not true, that just isn’t true (Crimp, 2005:33-34)

The spectacle takes its power from its ability to speak in the name of all other activities. As an act of recuperation, Colin wants her to work for them as a market researcher and gives her some money in an envelope though she resists it at the beginning.

**Colin** The idea is - it enters my head just now looking at you - and it is that I could employ you.

**Liz** *laughs.*

**Colin** (laughs) I’m serious. I could employ you. That is within my power.

**Liz** If you think I’m going to stand out on the street -

**Colin** Not on the street. No. To do what I do. You could do (if you liked) what I do. That is within my power (Crimp, 2005:35).

Using the phrase ‘within my power’ twice, Crimp shows the dominance of the spectacle on almost every field of life because “the present stage, in which social life has become completely occupied by the accumulated productions of the economy” (Debord, 2014: 5) allows the ones who control the power and the money to control the society. Most possibly that is why they call the money they give to the people they interview a ‘gift’ not a payment. It is because, as Debord claims “the spectacle is money one can only look at because in it all use has already been exchanged for the totality of abstract representation” (Debord, 2014: 19). The spectacle is both the servant and in itself the pseudo-use of life through the people, such as Liz and Colin, whose “job is manipulating people” (Crimp, 2005:78) as there are benefits and they are surrounded by them.

The rebellious voice arising from an anarchic community of resistance is directly portrayed in the play through Linda. When Liz is asked to interview a group of six women on some products, for the first time in her short career as a market researcher, someone named Linda rebels against her and the spectacle she symbolizes. Liz might see Linda as the one she in fact dreams to be before being part of the market research team and thus she is “attracted to the woman’s ethical stand” (Agustí, 2013: 203). Though she is very happy that she was successful at the interview, she can’t help saying that “I had one girl and she was so difficult” (Crimp, 2005:62). She continues telling the details of how she managed to make all the other with her believe that those products are very



necessary for them, but again mentions Linda and says that Linda was very rude to her (Crimp, 2005:63). Linda's reaction is so unexpected for Liz that she is disrupted. When she is at a hotel room with Paul, a local forklift driver and who turns out to be Linda's husband, she can't help telling Linda's rebellious action and criticizing her action showing how frustrated and shaken she is:

That's right. CzD women. She pipes up - I can't do the accent - but she pipes up and what she says is, is basically what's going on, what's going on here? She says, what's this about, it's supposed to be about shopping. She says she was told we wanted her views, her opinions, (With increasing bitterness throughout.) So, I tell her, yes, that's exactly so, I do want her views, but what I want are her views about the product, views about the blend. Not views about the world, Paul. Not views about what is or is not going on here. Just views about the blend, that's all I want in terms of her views. Because this is not (as I have to point out to her) not a free-for-all. It's not a party. It's not a time to search your soul (either within it or for it). It's not, Christ it's not therapy. It's not a political gathering, Paul, or a charitable body. It's not the Day of Judgement neither is it a game we're playing. It's not any of these things. But nevertheless, there's a structure, there are rules, and there is a limit. There is a limit, Paul. Because I have five other ladies in this room, five ladies who are perfectly happy as they are. But this one - to her - I can see it in her eyes that I represent something. What do I represent? I don't know (Crimp, 2005:86).

The spectacle in the market pretends as if it wanted to learn the customers' views and opinions, but it is only interested in what they think about certain products; nothing more. When someone succeeds in expressing his or her own views and opinions about the world, it disrupts the spectacle, which is one of the most important aims of Debord in his book *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967). Debord uses the term *détournement* for the most important method to disrupt the spectacle. *Détournement* "is the appropriation of images or ideas and the changing of their intended meaning in a way that challenges the dominant culture" (Matthews, 2005: 10). Linda turns the interview which is supposed to be about certain products and brands into a rebellious action against commercials and the dominance of the economy on people's lives. For the first-time during her interviews, Liz is forced to answer questions not about the products or brands but the logic lying behind the commercials and the market research.

Linda, as a character, is used by Crimp to reverse the state of alienation caused by the Consumer Society or, as Debord calls it, 'the Society of the Spectacle' so that she can direct individuals to rethink with a counter-alienation and to replace the images of the society of spectacle with their individual images.

The morals, customs, and the laws of society are also of great importance in the play and all these concepts are addressed in a way that is very similar to Debord's views on these subjects. When Karen, the market researcher, persuades Liz to interview with her, she assumes Liz to be married and directly asks not her profession but her husband's profession as to classify her as a customer: "To take part in a depth interview. I'm sorry, but I really do need husband's profession" (Crimp, 2005:13). This shows that the society in the play is a male-dominant one and thus women are classified according to their husbands' profession. The same situation shows itself in the third and the last act of the play when Liz says Paul during the interview that "It's how you're grouped, Paul. You're grouped as a D, and your wife is grouped as a D with you" (Crimp, 2005:82)

Nigel, a local character whom Liz met in a pub in the Feathers Hotel, in the Northeast of England, expresses how the family in that society must be:

Certainly, he's [Garry, a character in the pub], married. Got two lovely little 'uns what come here with his wife Sunday lunchtimes because there is a garden for them. He was born here, and he will die here, and his children were born here, and they will die here (Crimp, 2005:67).

Nigel continues to give details about the concept of society in his mind referring to the role of the women in the family:

You're working here. Doing what? Sounds very interesting. I don't think women should work, do you? This is nothing personal, I just don't think that they should. I think it's all wrong. I think they're too mobile. I think there's too much freedom and that's why nobody has a place, nobody has a role. Because there was a time when everybody knew their place and you can say what you like but the fact remains that they knew (Crimp, 2005:68).

Nigel's view on women that reflects the traditional perspective of the society shows how life has been transformed into a spectacle by the dominant forces through conventions, traditions, religion, and history into a play on the stage. Everyone has a certain role to play in it and those who want to act independently and individually are condemned and attacked by the defenders of the spectacle. Nigel is therefore deeply uncomfortable with the fact that women are working and out of the roles set for them.

The play ends with a scene in which Liz returns to her room and speaks about Linda with her daughter Jo. She is still under the influence of what Linda did and said during the interview. She associates Linda with Colin's wife who is waiting for him in the car and says "I think she suffers" as all the people who are aware of the fact that there is something wrong in the present situation of the people. Suffering can be the sign of being dissatisfied with the society of the spectacle and the beginning of the enlightenment of any individual.

### Conclusion

As Debord emphasizes and Crimp shows in *No one Sees the Video*, if the real world in which we live is turned into a sum of sole images, those images turn out to be real beings and become the only source of our hypnotic behaviours. As spectacle tries to show us a world which we can never grasp openly, "it naturally elevates the sense of sight to the special pre-eminence once occupied by touch" (Debord, 2014: 6). The sense of sight, as the most abstract and effortlessly misled one, is ready to adapt itself to the widespread abstraction of current society.

Creating an atmosphere of the fetishism of the commodity via the commercials, just like Karen, Colin and Liz do in the play, the world, which is perceptible for the people, is replaced by the one that society of the spectacle projects to them. In order to make the people believe that the spectacle is the real-life, the spectacle uses a special technique which is termed as *recuperation* by SI. Through it, the repressive system neutralizes or contains the attacks against it by taking them into the 'spectacle' or by anticipating its implications and objectives onto these activities of the opposition. Liz who was against changing her views in return for money and ready to express her own ideas under any conditions becomes a part of the spectacle at the end and manipulates people for spectacle's sake. Colin who expresses that he resents being what to do at the beginning of the play can never act freely as his statue and financial position are highly dependent on the spectacle. His existence is equal to the continuation of the present economic system. Colin shows how he is dependent on the money and its benefits when he describes the house in which he lives:

I like it very much, Jo. I live in a Chalfont. Do you know what a Chalfont is? A Chalfont, that has four bedrooms and an integral garage. It's similar to the Blenheim, only the Blenheim - although it has the double garage - it lacks, the essential difference is that it lacks the shower-room ensuite (Crimp, 2005:60).

Both Colin's and Liz's dependence on the money and the benefits it provides are examples of how they are recuperated by the spectacle and made a part of it. Colin and Liz who have some rebellious views on the present situation of the society are drawn into the system, and they serve it even if they are not conscious of the fact that they serve a network of images.

The controlling economic system is a brutal circle of isolation and the religious illusion created by the help of the religious institutions and social conventions. As Debord says: “spectacular technology has not dispersed the religious mists into which human beings had projected their own alienated powers” (2014: 6), on the contrary spectacle took those mists to the earth in a way that “the most boring aspects of life have become impenetrable and unbreathable”(2014:7). By means of these mists, the society controls the people living in it. Nigel a conservative supporter of patriarchy in the society is a good example for this situation, defending classical view of women in the family and the society as the people responsible for doing housework and serving their husbands.

All these means of oppression represented in the play especially by Nigel are also used by the spectacle for the recuperation of the counter-acts of the supporter of freedom in every field of life. The spectacle uses the oppression of the male-dominant society to support the rebellious actions of the people for freedom. For example, it pretends to take side with the people who demand sexual freedom, or who are against the dominance of the males in the family, or they support the freedom of young people. The logic lying behind this way of acting is that the spectacle needs women working, smoking, drinking in public, and demanding their own happiness through luxurious products instead of living for their family. For that reason, says Christopher Lasch “The advertising industry thus encourages the pseudo emancipation of women, flattering them with its insinuating reminder” (1991: 72). The more the women feel themselves free, the more products they demand and turn into perfect consumers of the so-called necessary products of the spectacle.

Though most of the characters are not aware of the dominance of the spectacle or consumer society as Crimp calls it, this does not mean that Crimp is hopeless about the situation of the people. Linda one of the minor characters when compared to the others represents one of the most important methods to use to disrupt the spectacle: *detournement*. It takes elements from a social stereotype, modifies, and reverses it so that they can be transformed into something that can be used against the spectacle. Thus, it turns out to be disrupted and exposed as a result of alienation. Linda, forcing the people during the interview to rethink the real meaning of the products and the brands and the methods used to advertise them, disrupts the spectacle, and opens the first hole in the walls of spectacle. For this reason, Liz cannot forget what Linda did and said. This is the individual response that is necessary to fight against the spectacle. Debord’s view that the change in the system or the revolution in its classical term will begin with individually enlightened persons, and Linda is a perfect example to them. If the spectacle working as a network creates its own stars and celebrities for the manipulation of the thoughts and acts of the people, Linda can be a counter-star or celebrity who creates a counter-reaction against the alienation created by the spectacle. This negation of the negative will make people get rid of the effect of the spectacle.

The play shows us that spectacle with the help of the point where technology reached is now able to create new customer demands “on convincing people to buy goods for which they are unaware of any need until the ‘need’ is forcibly brought to their attention by the mass media” (Lasch, 1991: 72). Thus, people like Karen, Colin, and Liz who work as market researchers are used by the spectacle to create the sense among the people that they need and deserve better things than they have not because they really need them but because they need the so-called prestige they give to them. This is an endless illusionary circle as every product will have a better version in a short period. As Guy Debord states, when limitless economic development is regarded as something unquestionable, it means substituting the satisfaction of now scarcely met main human needs with an incessant fabrication of pseudo-needs, “all of which ultimately come down to the single pseudo-need of maintaining the reign of the autonomous economy” (2014: 20) which is just what the society of the spectacle is.

After All, *No One Sees the Video* can be regarded as a play by which Crimp concentrates on the new processes of control, that is to say the spectacle, that now determines how people will live depending on the world-wide economic domination system of the spectacle. Though there have

always been images, for both Crimp and Debord, now these images can form a matrix-like network that controls the life in the society. The images of a video camera, and the videos recorded by it resemble the spectacle created by the modern production conditions, which transformed the whole life into a vast accumulation of spectacles as an important part of this network of images. Everything in the social life has turned into images representing pseudo-realities just like the images recorded by the camera. The pseudo-life in which people are only the characters are just like those in a play, and no one sees the spectacle as they have already been internalized by it.

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