

Spectocurrency: War Spectacle in Social Media

Vera Syamsi

Sampoerna University, Jakarta, INDONESIA

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Social Media,
Spectocurrency,
TikTok, Instagram,
Ukraine War,
War Spectacle.

Corresponding Author:

Vera Syamsi
Sampoerna University, Jakarta,
INDONESIA

Email:

vera.syamsi@sampoernauniversity.ac.id

Social media has been influential and important in people's life as a place for socializing, finding entertainment and - nowadays- information. People share various images and videos – or spectacles- through the platforms, with Tik Tok and Instagram as two of the most popular platforms. This research highlights and analyzed war spectacles created by the President of Ukraine and a Ukrainian university student on those platforms that were aimed at raising people's awareness and empathy to the sufferings of the country and hopefully support their fight against Russia's invasion, using semiotics concept, and proves that spectacles do have power to move people and generate reaction that can eventually cause expected changes, or spectocurrency.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY](#) license.



INTRODUCTION

Even though social media has been around for 35 years, its popularity keeps increasing, with the number of users reaching over 4.5 billion people around the world—about 57% of the global population in 2021 (Ang, 2021), and by January 2022 the percentage increased to 58.4% of the world's population (4.62 billion people), with the average of use accounts for 2 hours and 27 minutes daily (Chaffey, 2022). The fact that the users are more than a half of the world population elucidates that social media is convincingly an ideal platform for people to express their idea or perform something that can serve the purpose of sharing information or a mere entertainment.

It is believed that the beginning of social media emerged in 1969 with a project called the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network — the ARPANET (The Evolution of Social Media, n.d.), which then evolved into another nationwide and more robust digital network called the NSFNET, and it takes a decade until the first social media platform was launched in 1997. Later on, the first social media platform that could reach a million users was MySpace in around 2004, that could be considered as the beginning of social media (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). A platform that initially offered a direct electronic information exchange finally changed into a virtual gathering place, to retail platform, and also to a vital 21st-century marketing tool (The Evolution of Social Media, n.d.). Based on a survey in 2019, Facebook dominates the virtual realm with 2.3 billion users, while the other platforms such as YouTube and WhatsApp also have more than one billion users each (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). With the total number of world population that reached 7.7 billion people, there are at least 3.5 billion online, a statistic that reveals the fact that social media platforms are used by one-in-three people in the world,

and more than two-thirds of all internet users (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019), proving that social media possess a strong power to reach people from all over the globe.

SPECTOCURRENCY

In my dissertation (Syamsi, 2019) I proved that nowadays spectacles hold a pivotal role in the socio-economic aspects of communities living and connected with digital technology or what Castells (2010) refers to as a network society. In this society, Castells propagated that people operate within three types of identity; legitimizing, resistance, and project identity, and they would try to obtain the legitimacy for what they do. Meanwhile, due to digital technology, people nowadays are no longer focusing on achieving a legitimate identity, but they work more on the project identity (Syamsi, 2019). When Castells refers to a project identity as a moment, “when social actors, on the basis of whichever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their positions in the society and, by doing so, seek the transformation of overall society structure” (2010, p. 8), in my research I proved that by having a project identity the actor(s) do not seek to transform the society, but more to have a temporary identity that is operating on a profit motive.

Based on my research on Debord’s theory of *The Society of Spectacles* (2005), I conducted research on a fierce rivalry between two nations in Spain – Castilians and Catalans- represented by the two biggest football clubs: Real Madrid CF and FC. Barcelona, dubbed as El Clásico. The first is considered to represent the government of Spain – hence holding the legitimate identity, while the latter represents the rebellion of the Catalans – holding a resistance identity. Using their respective stadiums, every football match between them was used as a “battlefield” between the two nations, and each one would make use of the opportunity – especially FC Barcelona and their fans showcase their rebellion in a power relation toward the government of Spain (Castilians) - to show their position based on their identity affixed to them by the press and media and both sides seem contented holding on to that. On one hand they do have a fierce opposition and try to be more superior on and off the football fields, on the other hand, each club also creates a project identity by compromising their legitimate and resistance identity, in some efforts to gain more money they need to build and maintain the clubs. For the purpose of attracting a larger audience, the match called El Clásico is much more a spectacle than a “real” rivalry between the two nations. Spectacle is needed for both teams, and hence project identity is also used for profit motive, beside the other two types of identity.

In his theory, Debord argued that a spectacle can be used to understand how a community is operating, what is happening in it, because a spectacle is a reflection of it (2005, p. 7). Within a society where values of materialism and capitalism prevail, people are no longer measured by what they are capable of or their achievement, but what they possess, and what they possess must be displayed, or as he argued:

The first stage of the economy's domination of social life brought about an evident degradation of being into having human fulfilment was no longer equated with what one was, but with what one possessed. The present stage, in which social life has become completely dominated by the accumulated productions of the economy, is bringing about a general shift from having to appearing - all "having" must now derive its immediate prestige and its ultimate purpose from appearances. At the same time all individual reality has become social, in the sense that it is shaped by social forces and is directly dependent on them. Individual reality is allowed to appear only if it is not actually real. (Debord 2005, p.10)

This leads to people enjoying showing what they have and can do, while the other part of the society also enjoys watching the spectacles produced. Now comes the role of social media as a platform that can display spectacles to billions of audiences. To be attractive and different from the many people who have created spectacles, people rely on project identity, an identity that works temporarily and very flexible depending on

what branding the *spectaclists* – a term Debord used to refer to people creating spectacles-, want to create that in the end can decide the taste of the people. The finding of my research finally results in a concept of spectocurrency; the power and value of a spectacle that can be used to shape opinion, challenge status quo and bring about changes in a power relation tension and exchanges in daily life, besides its ability to obtain financial profit.

SOCIAL MEDIA & SPECTACLES ON UKRAINE WAR

Due to its popularity and global reach out capacity, people use social media for various reasons, and this research highlights the spectacles created by the President of Ukraine - Volodymyr Zelenskyy and a 20-year-old Ukraine female student who became famous after posting a Ukraine invasion video on her Tik Tok account. To exemplify further the concept of spectocurrency, I will start by analyzing and elaborating two *spectaclists* related to the war between Russia and Ukraine, that started on February 24, 2022, with Russia attacking and invading Ukraine. The Ukrainian government and people have been resisting and refusing to give up, causing many casualties on both sides. Under such circumstances, the president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy made use of a social media platform that later was captured and re-posted by bbcnews Instagram account- a part of British Broadcasting Corporation that claim they are "responsible for the gathering and broadcasting of news and current affairs" - to actively post his statements and activities to show Ukraine's resistance and obtain some support from countries around the world, especially from the United States of America and The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). There are two postings from Zelenskyy that will be analyzed using a semiotic approach.

In the first posting analyzed in this research, it is written as follows, "We will not surrender, we will not lose, we will go to the end." He also quoted Britain's wartime leader Winston Churchill as he appealed to the MPs in the United Kingdom for more help in his country's fight against Russia." Besides that, in his remarks, he also quoted a famous question from a scene of Shakespeare's work "to be or not to be". He alluded to those familiar names when speaking to the UK's Members of Parliament in trying to win their support. He is aware that by showing some familiarity to the history and culture of the country he will have a bigger chance of getting support. Winston Churchill is considered as one of the greatest leaders in Britain, and especially during World War II, or as written in the UK's government website "Winston Churchill was an inspirational statesman, writer, orator and leader who led Britain to victory in the Second World War." (Gov. UK). Mentioning Churchill under a similar circumstance is a strategy used by Zelenskyy to make an appeal to the UK's MPs, and he hopes his country will come out winning the war, as what Churchill achieved in World War II. When speaking to the members of the parliaments, the president chose only to wear a green t-shirt, and serious expression, but not showing anger nor vengeful. The whole setting was prepared to show a serious intention, appealing, but not provoking, and at the end of his remarks he expressed himself as a resolute leader of a country that will never give up until they can free their country from the invasion of Russia.

In the second posting, President Zelenskyy stated, "If you surrender to our forces, we will treat you the way people are supposed to be treated. I know you want to survive." He also said that Russian forces have suffered worse losses during their invasion of his country than in the Chechnya conflict. From the semiotics perspective of Barthes (1972, pp. 111-113), Zelenskyy's statement shows how he positions himself to be more superior than the Russians because he offered the troops to surrender, and at the same time showing that the Ukraine are civilized community who know how to treat their war opponent. Implied in it is that Russia is not very strong, and they do not hold on to the humanity value. The expression he showed was a very serious one, but not showing anger nor revenge, and he wore a t-shirt and jacket, appropriating the dull atmosphere the country is experiencing. He chose to look modest yet courageous as a war-time leader, but at the same time as a leader of a nation that holds humanity value highly. By choosing that stance, he would more likely get people's sympathy.



Figure 1. Ukraine's President Zelensky speaking to the member of parliament of the United Kingdom
Source: bbcnews Instagram account on March 9, 2022



Figure 2. President Zelensky's statement to the Russian's troop
Source: bbcnews Instagram account March 16, 2022

In his elaboration on the society of spectacles, Debord proposed 4 components in creating a spectacle, 2 of them are discussed and elaborated in this research. The first one is:

"STARS - SPECTACULAR (sic) representations of living human beings - project this general banality into images of permitted roles. As specialists of apparent life, stars serve as superficial objects that people can identify with in order to compensate for the fragmented productive specializations that they actually live. The function of these celebrities is to act out various lifestyles or socio-political viewpoints in a full, totally free manner. But the activities of these stars are not really free, and they offer no real choices" (2005, p. 29).

The star in a spectacle is a famous person, or celebrity, that is well liked by many people and therefore attracts people's attention. When a star is featured in a spectacle, it will be viewed by more people compared to when

it only features a common person. Zelensky was an actor and comedian who was already famous when he ran for president in 2019 (Schuster, 2022). His popularity was also pronounced when he won the second round of the election by 73%. His experience as a star has also contributed to the way he managed the conflict with Russia, as described by Schuster (2022), that:

Somewhere outside the capital, a secure bunker was waiting for the President, equipped to withstand a lengthy siege. Zelensky refused to go there. Instead, on the second night of the invasion, while Ukrainian forces were fighting the Russians in nearby streets, the President decided to walk outside into the courtyard and film a video message on his phone. "We're all here," Zelensky said after doing a roll call of the officials by his side. They were dressed in the army green T-shirts and jackets that would become their war-time uniforms. "Defending our independence, our country."

Rather than hid and be safe in the prepared bunker, Zelensky chose to create a spectacle of what happened to his country to then share it through social media. As a star, Zelensky played his role as the country's representative, its symbol. He was aware that he is under a lot of attention, and not only the people in Ukraine but all over the world wanted to know his actions and reactions- he played his limited role as a president of a country under attack. He is free to perform many activities, but limited as a president, and one of the limitations as president is he must be a courageous person. His people admire his audacity, and especially when he responded to the offer to flee his country as described below:

Offers came in from American and British forces to evacuate the President and his team. The idea was to help them set up a government in exile, most likely in eastern Poland, that could continue to lead from afar. None of Zelensky's advisers recall him giving these offers any serious consideration. Speaking on a secure landline with the Americans, he responded with a zinger that made headlines around the world: "I need ammunition, not a ride" (Schuster, 2022).

As stated by Debord, and quoted above, Zelensky's role as a president is analogous to a "specialists of apparent life, stars serve as superficial objects that people can identify with in order to compensate for the fragmented productive specializations that they actually live" (2005, p. 29), so for common people of Ukraine who do not have enough protection and weapons, Zelensky's action of going out of his fortification is a representation of how they feel; showing daring and bold mentality challenging the invaders. Zelensky as a star of a war spectacle becomes an anchor, especially during a disorderly circumstance.

Besides the spectacles created by the president of the country, there is another *spectaculist* that was successful in directing many people's attention to the Ukraine war. A university student, Marta Vasyuta was in the United Kingdom visiting her friend when Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022 (Clayton & Dyer, 2022). As soon as she heard about the invasion, she began to find some information on what happened in Ukraine from Ukrainian channels on the Telegram messaging app. that is very popular in Ukraine and used by Ukraine people to upload videos. She then selected one video, verified its content, and then posted it on her Tik Tok account at night and left to sleep. The following morning, she was surprised to find that the video she posted got 9 million views that made her instantly get hundred thousand of new followers to her account. She purposely posted it with the intention to share to the world the condition in Ukraine, as she elaborated in one interview, "I just want people to understand that Ukraine is not only a problem of Ukrainians, it's everyone's problem" (bbcnews, 2022). She is fully aware of the capability of a social media platform to enter people's private homes and space.

Once she got famous, more and more people are attracted to watch videos she posted, as she revealed that her second video achieved 49.1 million views and was liked by 9.3 million people. It was not a video she produced by herself, but she took it from available channels, as she admitted, "My phone is completely filled with all the videos, all the news I found," (Clayton & Dyer, 2022).



Figure 3. Marta Vasyuta's statement

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-60613331>, March 6, 2022



Figure 4. Marta Vasyuta in an interview with BBC

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-60613331>, March 5, 2022



Figure 5. Marta Vasyuta in an interview with BBC

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-60613331>, March 5, 2022

As stated previously, according to Debord there are 4 components of a spectacle, and the second one being "The Agent, which he refers to as follows:

THE AGENT (sic) of the spectacle who is put on stage as a star is the opposite of an individual; he is as clearly the enemy of his own individuality as of the individuality of others. Entering the spectacle as a model to be identified with, he renounces all autonomous qualities in order to identify himself with the general law of obedience to the succession of things. The stars of consumption, though outwardly representing different personality types, actually show each of these types enjoying equal access to, and deriving equal happiness from, the entire realm of consumption. The stars of decision making must possess the full range of admired human qualities: official differences between them are thus canceled out by the official similarity implied by their supposed excellence in every field of endeavor (2005, p. 29).

In a spectacle, the protagonist role is not always performed by a famous person, a celebrity, but it can also be carried out by a common person performing admired human qualities, referred to by Debord as an agent, so when they enter the stage of spectacle, they instantly become a role model for other common people; they are no longer the same person before they become an agent of a spectacle. Even if this agent has some other characteristics which are paradoxical with the admired ones, those differences will be ignored by the audience who will only focus their attention to the qualities they find admirable. Once a person carries the role of an agent, the audience will identify themselves with the agent, so that now the agent carries out a similar role with a star.

This is what Marta Vasyuta has gone through; being an agent of a spectacle. Before that, she was “only” a university student like many others around the world. She was visiting her friend in the United Kingdom when her country, Ukraine, was invaded by Russia, and she decided to share the circumstance her country to the world to get support and assistance from other countries; an act that later made her admired by many people, as Debord argued, “The stars of decision making must possess the full range of admired human qualities” (2005, 29). The audience – in this case people who sympathize with Ukraine- found her admirable for various reasons, it could be because they are sympathetic with the sufferings Ukraine was going through, maybe the audience have some cognate relationship, they can be driven by empathy, or it is also possible they adore Marta Vasyuta’s physical feature. Although she is a -relatively- young student, she has strong determination to do her contribution for her country, to raise world’s population awareness to the suffering experienced by the Ukrainians, and that it could happen to any country, as she explained when BBC made an inquiry of her motive, “Ukraine is not only the problems of Ukrainians, it’s everyone’s problem” (bbcnews, 2022). Through her statement, Marta Vasyuta reminded everyone that nowadays what happens in one country will impact the others and will inflict some collateral damage to many people and countries. Especially in the era of network society where all countries are connected between one to the others, woeful ignorance can cause a lot of suffering to the whole world.

Once Marta Vasyuta chose to share a war spectacle – in this case Russia’s invasion to Ukraine- she is no longer only a student, as Debord postulated:

THE AGENT (sic) of the spectacle who is put on stage as a star is the opposite of an individual; he is as clearly the enemy of his own individuality as of the individuality of others. Entering the spectacle as a model to be identified with, he renounces all autonomous qualities in order to identify himself with the general law of obedience to the succession of things. (2005, p. 29).

Marta Vasyuta is now to a degree a fighter for her country, and it is that side of hers that is highlighted by her postings. Once she created a spectacle, she needed to continue, and that is what she did; she made more postings of the war spectacle, and her audience were eager to welcome it, proven by the number of views and likes she got; 49.1 million views and was liked by 9.3 million people. There can be many reasons why people like her postings, one of which is the immediacy of it. As stated previously, on the day the invasion occurred, she directly searched for videos of the attack, checked for its content and posted it, and on the following day she witnessed that millions of people already watched it. In trying to understand why her postings were popular, Marta Vasyuta offered an explanation that, “some people don’t trust professional journalists, even verified sources” (bbcnews, 2022). Her stance as an agent gives her people’s confidence, as it can make people feel relatable.

The fact that Marta posted her videos on Tik Tok is also a showcase of how the young generation are now aware of the potential they have to contribute to world peace through social media platforms. Tik Tok platform is one that young people are very familiar with -according to a survey in 2019- 41% of users were between 16-

24 years old and was initially designed for a younger demographic to express themselves through lip-syncing, acting, dancing, and singing (Marsh, 2022). During the pandemic, Tik Tok was the most downloaded app globally, with the numbers of 115 million times in March 2022 and 656 million downloads during 2021, and in the second rank it was Instagram at 545 million downloads (Marsh, 2022), a figure that illustrates the capability of the platform to become a stage for spectacles. Watching the videos of the conditions in Ukraines, sometimes from the war battlefield, gives the viewers an opportunity to experience it as if they were there in person, thus triggering a strong emotion. One Ukrainian vlogger stated that the war videos she shared were watched by 14 million people, which was also the reason why Marta Vasyuta decided to share videos, as she stated, “So I decided to this media work, as we call it”. Even president Zelensky made a special request to TikTokers to help end the war when he delivered a speech directed at Russian citizens (Dang & Culliford, 2022). Many people understand the power of a spectacle shared on a big global online stage – in this case a social media platform.

Marta Vasyuta took the opportunity offered by social media platform to inform the world how terrible the condition is in Ukraine, with the videos she shared showed a Ukraine’s city – Kharkiv- was bombed at (<https://www.tiktok.com/@martavasyuta/video/7070039842855341317?lang=en>), and she put a caption “That’s not what should happen in 21st century! #ukriane”, while inside the video, she wrote another caption of “Russia bombing Ukraine’s cities”, as can be seen in the screen capture result as in Figure 6.

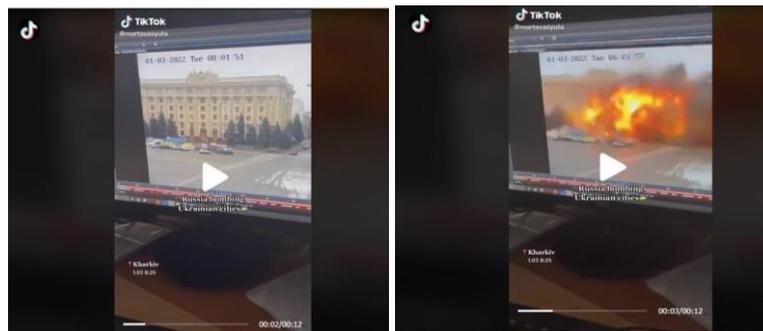


Figure 6. Marta Vasyuta’s video

Source: <https://www.tiktok.com/@martavasyuta/video/7070039842855341317?lang=en>, March 1, 2022

At the beginning, the video shows a big building in its complete and intact condition, with several cars passing by on the streets around it. After a few second, a bomb hit the building and soon an explosion destroyed it, including some cars that were passing by. In the end of the video, it shows the condition of the building and the car that were hit by the bomb; ruined and blackened. As a spectacle the video shows the complete process of the building and car destruction and is complemented with music that strengthens the emotion to the video, as it appeals to visual and auditory senses. A spectacle envisaged in a video would inflict a stronger emotion compared to the one in a photo or picture; through this video audience can see the whole demolition process - the condition before the bombing and soon afterward, and the audio element added to the video is meant to create a spectacle that can provoke people’s sympathy to Ukraine.

Another video (<https://www.tiktok.com/@martavasyuta/video/7073979369143717125?lang=en>), that she posted on March 12, 22, shows a woman who was standing at the fore ground, posing as if holding a tower standing at the background, when suddenly several fighter jets came flying and started bombing. Then an explosion was heard several times, followed by the sound of people shouting in panic and a child crying in fear, then a siren blasted, creating a horrific atmosphere. The video then shows some towers and buildings burnt with thick black smoke billowing high to the sky. After that it shows the following captions:

Don't like to see your city being bombed? Ukrainians either #ukraine #help Ukraine With caption; POV lost the war because the world didn't help enough Just think if this were to happen in another European capital.

“We will fight till the end. Giving us a chance to live. Close the sky over Ukraine, or give us air fighters. If we fall, you fall”. President V Zelensky. (<https://www.tiktok.com/@martavasyuta/video/7073979369143717125?lang=en>)

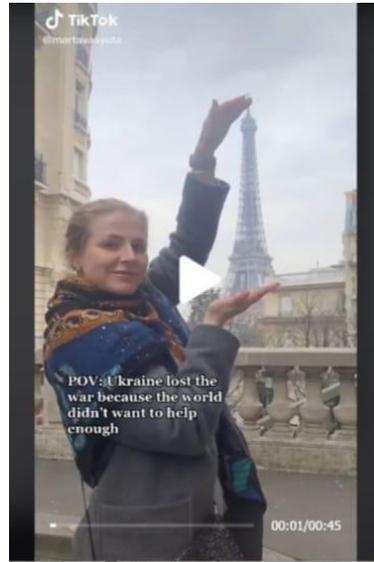


Figure 7. Marta Vasyuta's video

Source: <https://www.tiktok.com/@martavasyuta/video/7073979369143717125?lang=en>, March 12, 2022

The scenes and captions send most likely very strong messages to all viewers, and it is hoped that people will start helping Ukraine. A war spectacle that is sent to all corners of the world on one of the most popular social media platforms, that is in the form of moving pictures, rounded off with sound and “special effects” that can move people's hearts. It is sent by a ‘fellow common people’ who is supposedly free from a hidden agenda or propaganda – an agent of a spectacle who now has some admirable qualities.

CONCLUSION

Social media has become one of the unifiers of people in the network society. Previously, it was mainly used as a channel for casual interaction with other people, and to get entertainment, it has now shifted to be one of the channels to get the latest information – whether for something that has previously happened or in real time. One of the most famous platforms, Tik Tok was created for the purpose of expressing oneself using video that is complemented with music at the background, an element that is very and it serves as an open stage – with 1 billion monthly users- for anyone who wants to show something, and it is even easier to get followers or like reactions because the app does not require its users to follow one account to be able to watch all of its postings, and (Dang & Culliford, 2022). Tik Tok that aimed for the younger generation as its main target segment has even reached young people to be involved in a war conflict – even though online- and have some empathy to the suffering of the people of Ukraine caused by an invasion done by Russia, and made these young people be involved in a peace campaign.

Both President Zelensky and Marta Vasyuta are aware of the powerful capacity and capability of social media platforms in transmitting influence on millions or even billions of people through their postings; spectacles they created. Both take their role, as a star and agent, in creating a spectacle; President Zelensky who is famous

and therefore is in a spectacle because of his being well-known both before becoming a president and once he became a president. As a leader of a country, a president is a point of reference of the citizens. President Zelensky, who used to be an actor and comedian, is fully aware of what he must do in a spectacle; he wrote his own speech by alluding to specific points familiar to his audience, such as mentioning Prime Minister and war leader Winston Churchill, and the poet Shakespeare when speaking to the British parliament, in the hope of gaining support to overcome the Russia's attack. President Zelensky also shows his courage by going out on the second day of the attack, recording the situation while broadcasting it through an Instagram account, showing the world that both the people and president of Ukraine are not afraid and ready to fight off the invaders. He keeps using his Instagram account to share spectacles and even urges the Tiktokers community to do the same thing to help accelerate achieving the goal; fighting Russia's attack and winning the war, or even better to get the peace.

Meanwhile, Marta Vasyuta has transformed herself as an agent of a spectacle once she decided to create a war spectacle that she shared on her Tik Tok account. She did it because she is fully aware of the power of social media and videos, as she used a term of "media work" in an interview, and she wanted to help her country and people to be free from the invasion, the war and sufferings as its effect. Now she has the power equal to a star due to the spectacles she has been sharing, and she keeps posting more videos as a part of the campaign. It gives her an admirable quality that makes some audience decide to be her followers, and it also proves the power of spectacles she shared. She is not identified as a university student anymore, but as a Ukrainian fighting for her country and helping the president to get support from all countries in the world. She echoed the president's campaign by re-writing the plea the president previously made as a caption of her video – her spectacle.

As argued by Debord that, "THE SPECTACLE (sic) presents itself as a vast inaccessible reality that can never be questioned. Its sole message is: "What appears is good; what is good appears." The passive acceptance it demands is already effectively imposed by its monopoly of appearances, its manner of appearing without allowing any reply" (2005, pp. 9 – 10), a spectacle will be taken as the truth by its audience, and when something is considered to be worthy displaying, then it will be enjoyed by an audience. When a phenomenon is already displayed as a spectacle, it requires no approval from any audience, but it will infiltrate people's domain and will create various impacts. In the case of spectacles shared by Volodimir Zelensky and Marta Vasyuta were aimed to raise people's awareness toward the sufferings of the Ukrainians. A war spectacle created is a reflection of the reality, as argued by Debord:

...a not a mere decoration added to the real life element. On the contrary it is the very heart of society's real unreality. In all its specific manifestations -- news or propaganda, advertising or the actual consumption of entertainment -- the spectacle epitomizes the prevailing model of social life. It is the omnipresent celebration of a choice already made in the sphere of production, and the consummate result of that choice. In form as in content the spectacle serves as total justification for the conditions and aims of the existing system. It further ensures the permanent presence of that justification, for it governs almost all time spent outside the production process itself (Debord, 2005, p.8).

Images captured in a spectacle serve a function of reminding people of what is happening, it is not only, "a matter of images, nor even of images plus sounds. It is whatever escapes people's activity, whatever eludes their practical reconsideration and correction..." (Debord, 2005, p.11). The videos they share have the power to move people to join in a global campaign, grow empathy, and also inform the latest updates on Ukraine, because spectacles have the "hypnotic" power (Debord 2005, p.11) that can generate expected changes, therefore spectocurrency.

REFERENCES

- Ang, C. (2021). *Ranked: The world's most popular social networks, and who owns them*. Retrieved from Visual Capitalist. <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/ranked-social-networks-worldwide-by-users/>
- Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies*. The Noon Day Press.
- Castells, M. (2010). *The information age economy, society, and culture*. 2nd Ed. Volume II the Power of Identity. Wiley Blackwell Publishers, Ltd.
- Chaffey, D. (2022). *Global social media statistics research summary 2022*. Retrieved from Smart Insights. <https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>
- Clayton, J. & Dyer, J. (2022). *Ukraine war: The TikToker spreading viral videos*. Retrieved from BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-60613331>
- Dang, S., & Culliford, E. (2022). *TikTok war: How Russia's invasion of Ukraine played to social media's youngest audience*. Reuters. Retrieved on April 30, 2022 <https://www.reuters.com/technology/tiktok-war-how-russias-invasion-ukraine-played-social-medias-youngest-audience-2022-03-01/>.
- Debord, G. (2005). (Translation by Ken Knabb). *The society of the spectacle*. Rebel Press.
- Marsh, B. (2022, January 25). 10 tip-top facts about TikTok. The Fact Site. Retrieved September 29, 2022, from <https://www.thefactsite.com/tiktok-facts/>
- Ortiz-Ospina, E. (2019). *The rise of social media*. Retrieved from Our World in Data. <https://ourworldindata.org/rise-of-social-media>
- Schuster, S. (2022). *Inside Zelensky's world*. Time magazine. Retrieved from <https://time.com/6171277/volodymyr-zelensky-interview-ukraine-war/> Retrieved on March 28, 2022
- Syamsi, V. (2019). *Konstruksi identitas, nasionalisme dan kapitalisme dalam masyarakat tontonan: Studi kasus terhadap El Clásico* [Identity construction, nationalism and capitalism in society's viewing: A case study on El Clasico]. Dissertation. *The Evolution of Social Media*. (n.d.) Maryville University. <https://online.maryville.edu/blog/evolution-social-media/#history>