

**The ‘Badass’ Female Fighters: Media Representations of Kurdish Women in
Kobane**

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The 'Badass' Female Fighters: Media Representations of Kurdish Women in
Kobane

'Belah' Kadın Savaşçılar: Kobani'de Savaşan Kürt Kadınlarının Medyadaki
Temsili

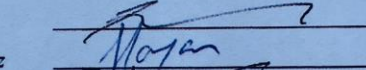
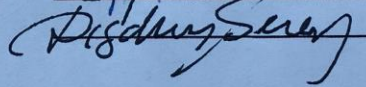
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Abstract

After the jihadist group, ISIS attacked in Kobane on 15 September 2014, the Kurdish fighters, YPG with its female unit YPJ and later Peshmerga started to defend the city. The United States tried to start its military support and participation of other European countries. Western media indicated their support with the representation of these fighters, especially of women. Whether women are used for a war strategy or not is studied based on the theories of Orientalism, Myths, and Commodification. The representation of these female fighters in five articles in fashion magazines; Elle, Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan, and Teen Vogue is researched in terms of the discourse analysis in qualitative research. It is interesting to study on fashion magazines, because they published an unusual topic for their fundamental aim.

Özet

15 Eylül 2014 tarihinde cihat yanlısı grup ISIS, Suriye'nin Kobani ilçesine saldırdıktan sonra Kürt gruplar şehri savunmaya ve korumaya aldı. Bu gruplar içinde YPG ve onun kadın kolu YPJ, daha sonrasında Peşmerge vardır. Amerika Birleşik Devletleri askeri yardım göndermek ve diğer Avrupa ülkelerinin çatışmaya müdahale etmesi için uğraştı. Batı da kadınları kullanarak savaşan grupları medyasında yansıtarak bu desteği göstermiş oldu. Kadınların bir savaş stratejisi olarak kullanılıp kullanılmadığı Şarkiyatçılık, Mitler ve Metalaşma teorileri kapsamında bu çalışmada incelenmiştir. Kobani'de savaşan bu Kürt kadınlarının Batı medyasındaki yansıtılması moda dergilerindeki 5 makale üzerinde çalışılmıştır. Bu dergiler Elle, Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan ve Teen Vogue'dur. Dergiler kalitatif araştırmadaki söylem analizi üzerinden incelenmiştir. Bu dergiler moda konuları dışında farklı bir temaya değindikleri için üzerinde çalışma konusu ilginç bulunmuştur.

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Madina Aynur Benakay

Abbreviations

CIRA Continuity Irish Republican Army

ETA Basque Fatherland and Liberty

HPG The People's Defense Force

IRA The Irish Republican Army

IS Islamic State

ISIL Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

ISIS Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

KDP Kurdistan Democratic Party

KRG Kurdish Regional Government

PKK Kurdistan Workers' Party

PYD Democratic Union Party

RIRA Real Irish Republican Army

YPG People's Protection Units

YPJ The Women's Protection Units

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1 INTRODUCTION

After the conflict in Kobane, the Kurdish female fighters defending the city started to draw international attention in Western media. In addition to news media, the Kurdish warrior women also were represented in fashion magazines. At this point, the warrior women have become the product of selling market and popular culture. Furthermore, their clothes were used for a new trend in fashion. There are two significant samples for this discussion. In the coverage of Air France's fashion magazine, called Madame, the women in very similar clothes to the Kurdish fighters' was covered in October 2014. She was in khaki jacket that is under the wide belt. She had hair in plait, and thick eyebrow. The most significant point is the background, because the photo was shot in like a hill or desert. So it is like a war environment in Syria ("A Fashion Issue" 181). The other important sample was seen in H&M's catalogue on its website. Although the famous fashion brand removed the outfit from the website, its reflections have still be found in website. The NY Daily News includes the shares in Twitter with sayings 'peshmerga chic', 'their bravery to be recognized', and 'peshmerga outfit sells in H&M stores'. Although the brand denied that there is no inspiration from the Kurdish female fighter, it worked to influence the public (Taylor 2014).

According to Barthes (93), fashion is about clothing, trip, weekend, etc. They are all from world, but they do not have 'specific world'; it means that fashion has no ideology. Moreover, the hidden messages of gender roles in fashion magazines have been gradually increasing, especially in 'feminine touch', 'ritualization of

subordination', 'body display', 'licensed withdrawal', and 'objectification'. They are actually identifying with the representation of women in sexual way and allusive way of stereotypes. (Lindner 413) According to Posavac (cited in Lindner 410), fashion magazines' target audience is firstly young women. The aim of these magazines is actually publishing pictures of fashion models to display their bodies in feminine touch or other above mentioned way. While studying on the representation of Kurdish women in Kobane, it is focused on the fashion magazines, which are the product of cultural industry

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Conflict in Kobane

Kobane or Kobani is also called with Arabic name as Ayn al-Arab. It is in the central northern Syria and it has a border with southern Turkey. On 15 September 2014, jihadist group assaulted and besieged Kobane (Holmes 2014). This jihadist group has been also called as ISIS referring to Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, ISIL to Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant IS, IS to Islamic State, and Daesh for the Arabic acronym of al-Dawla al-Islamiya fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham. (Vultaggio 2015). It becomes a big threat in Syria by trying to establish caliphate. Chechnya is one of the important supporters for this radical group. They have gathered to recover 'the lost glories of a resplendent Islam'. Their infamous act, which has been shared in media, is beheading their enemies. They have justified their acts in terms of the verses in the Quran (Gunter 102-103). Moreover, they have captured the ones not being one of them and sexually abused the female hostages and used them as slave traders (Ghitis 2014). Even so, it could be said that their fatal acts started to make fear people and make

them popular in media. Accordingly, the happenings in Kobane started to attract media's interest.

Some Kurdish forces who are YPG, People's Protection Units from Syria and then Peshmerga from Iraqi Kurdistan started to fight against them and have defended the city. They have been helped by European and US. After 131 days fighting, ISIS has been driven from Kobane on January 2015. According to many news sources like BBC News, the victory would not be gained without the help of US forces' airstrikes ("Syrian Kurds 'drive Islamic State'" 2015). On the other hand, there is a different statement about this help. Kurds have been used by US and its coalition partners in conflicting with ISIS in Syria and Iraq. The reason of this coalition between US and Kurds is explained by Thornton (866) in brief that 'my enemy's enemy is my friend'. ISIS is the enemy of Kurds and US, so it makes them unite. Fundamentally, US and other European partners are not happy with the situation of ISIS in Syria, so they want to remove ISIS from the area. According to Thornton, the fighting Kurdish group in the zone served their purpose.

When it comes to the topic of how they help, US and Western coalition countries have firstly supported the Kurds without sending their troops but with providing the weapons, airpower, training and technical support (Thornton 866). Later on, US started to send their troops to Syria but just to train fighting Kurdish group against ISIS on November 2015. Besides, Western countries have been contributing as military coalition to counter ISIS. For instance, Italy donated the guns to the Kurdish forces in the war territory (Del Re 84). From the last report from Congressional Research Service on April 2016 there are 66 nations in the coalition. The coalition has performed 10,962 airstrikes; 7,336 of them in Iraq and the rest of them in Syria.

As a result of those airstrikes, 17, 2016, 22,779 targets were destroyed. The US has spent \$6.4 billion for those operations since August 8, 2014 (McInnis 1-3). However, it seems like that Kurdish forces have achieved to defend Kobane with significant supporters. Thornton (866) asserted that Kurds do the dying on the ground in this war, so they become the essential for the coalition partners. Furthermore, this support of US and European coalition partners could make confusion to understand how they can help to 'terrorist groups'. In one way or another, Syria-based Democratic Union Party, PYD has a relationship with PKK even though there has not been a interconnection. As Güleç (2014) states that PYD is known as the Syrian wing of PKK but in an ideological relation, not in organic. According to US Department of State ("*Country Reports on Terrorism*" 329), PKK has been still listed as the foreign terrorist organization. The report in 2015 by the state mentioned about PYD and YPG. The report indicates that Turkish government regards the Syria-based PYD and its military wing YPG as terrorist organizations. Notwithstanding, both PYD and YPG have not been seen in the list of terrorist organizations. Moreover, Peshmerga from Iraqi-Kurdistan, which came to Kobane to help YPG has not been in ("*Country Reports on Terrorism*" 149). When there had been conflicts in Kobane and interventions of PYD in the city, US Department of State's spokesperson called Marie Harf, clarified in 2014 that "PYD is different organization from PKK legally, under United States law" ("*Daily Press Briefing*" - October 20). When it is looked at the present, John Kirby explained in 2016 "... we don't, as you know, recognize the PYD as a terrorist organization." He also said "...we see Kurdish fighters on the ground that have been successful against Daesh as an important partner in this fight" ("*Daily Press Briefing*" - February 8). In conclusion, from that day to this, there has not been any change in their thought about PYD as a terrorist organization.

Furthermore, they have remarked their advocating this group. It could be understood as the reason of the way of representation in Western media of Kurdish women in this organization.

In the war circumstances, two rival Kurdish group, KRG (Kurdish Regional Government) in Iraq and PYD (Democratic Union Party or Kurdish name as Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat) in Syria has brought together (Gunter 105).

These defensive forces also have aroused international media's interest, especially their female counterpart unit. PYD's armed wing, called YPG is the male unit. Its female wing is called YPJ or Kurdish Women's Protection Units ("YPJ: Kurdish Women's" 2015). It was formed in 2012 against deadly attacks of Syrian President Assad, the al-Nusra Front and ISIS (Griffin 2014). Salih Muslim is the leader of PYD and he has also had a voice in decisions about YPG and YPJ (Thornton 877). On the other hand, Peshmerga is the military forces of KRG. Its commander in chief is Masoud Barzani and has their origins in late 1800s, but formally formed in 1920s, after the World War I ("Profile: Who Are the Peshmerga?" 2014). Although the fighting female unit from Peshmerga is few in number in Kobane, they have also attracted the media's interest, but not as much as YPJ women has done. When it comes to the relationship between PYD and Peshmerga, the support from Peshmerga started in mid January 2015. Peshmerga went into Kobane to deploy the city in accordance with Masoud Barzani's claim and Salih Muslim's and PYD's consent (Thornton 875-877). According to Çandar (2014), the deployment of Peshmerga forces could not have changed the military balance, because only 150 fighters of Peshmerga went into Kobane. Even so, Peshmerga's being in Kobane makes historical event not because of military sense, but the sense of 'Kurdish national

unity'. He also states that Peshmerga has not been so successful when they were in Kobane. All the success in the city was provided by YPG under favour of US air attacks. Later on, Peshmerga forces finally pulled out from Kobane in April 2015. They went to Mount Sinjar to deploy after the request of Barzani (Thornton 878). However, as Çandar (2014) states that the commanders of Peshmerga quitted Mount Sinjar, so Barzani opened an investigation about them. On the other hand, he went to Kobane to congratulate YPG forces for their achievement. It could be said that the success of YPG in Kobane has been accepted and appreciated by other Kurdish groups and supported by US and its European coalition groups.

The women fighters in Kobane to defend the city and their position in this conflict will be pointed out in this paragraph. These women are worthy of research, because their resistance in Kobane has been seen as heroic and even mythicized (Del Re 84-85). These myths also have been represented in media. The most famous one is the ISIS's fear from being killed by Kurdish female fighters because of going hell. The details about this subject and the representation of these women in media will be mentioned in the chapter of Warrior Women in Media below. While it is researched in literature about these women, they are mentioned as 'female combatant', 'women as warriors' (Del Re 84), 'female soldiers', 'women fighters' (85), 'combat group' (Thornton 871), 'female unit' (Thornton 873), 'female heroes' (Kollárová 2) 'female fighters' (Kollárová 6; Taal 10), 'heroines' (Kollárová 29), 'female battalions' (Taal 10). While the city of Kobane becomes 'symbol of the resistance', these women become 'icon of heroism and bravery' with their fighting. These women are the female unit of YPG and Peshmerga. There has not been a certain number of them, but the numbers of female unit of YPG, in other words YPJ, should be more than

Peshmerga, because YPG fighters in total are a lot more than Peshmerga. The YPJ unit has approximately 7,500 women fighters, so they make up 35% of YPG. Their commander is Meysa Abdo, also known as Narin Afrin in the battleground (Ghitis 2014). These Kurdish women mostly come from Syria, Iraqi-Kurdistan and sometimes Turkey. All of them has an outstanding goal which is to fight against both Assad regime and ISIS (Del Re 86). To do this, they have gone to the forefront of the battlefield, taken up arms, deployed and attacked

When it comes to the result of the conflict in Kobane, the city was mostly destroyed due to the fact that ISIS had captured its nearly 300 villages. According to UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, approximately 1,600 people dead and most of its population fled to nearest border, Turkey. Unfortunately, in 2015, it seems that some of them returned and reconstruction began, but immigrations from Syria to another European countries have still been continued ("Syrian Kurds 'drive Islamic State" 2015).

2.2 Warrior Women

Since the focus on this study is women in war and conflict time, the situation of wartime should be firstly examined before explaining warrior women.

Many scholars have elaborated to describe war, but international lawyers and diplomats have mostly followed Hugo Grotius' conception. He accepted war as 'the condition of ones contending by force as such'. Therefore, from the point of Grotius, war is not a contest, but is a condition. He also added that violent contention is not enough to being called war, so conflict is necessary for being named as war (Wright

5). The other definition of war is described as ‘an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will’ by philosophically minded military writer, Carl von Clausewitz. He developed the claim that war causes the occurrence of interventions, aggressions, reprisals, defensive expeditions, sanctions, armed forces, insurrections, rebellions, violence, piracy and banditry (Wright 6). Consequently, the descriptions of Grotius and Clausewitz lend support to the claim that war and conflict together can be accepted as an extraordinary situation, especially with the results, which were explained by Clausewitz.

The members of society may suffer from the war, because in consequence of being called to participate into war, they can be injured or killed in the course of war, can lost their family, friends, home and country, so they can have physical and mental injuries and moral and material lost. When we look at the women in time of war, they are also sufferers even if they do not mostly crusade with guns. Seeing that men go to fight in war, women have to replace men in the workplace. They have to both work and look after the family by their selves. For instance, during the war years, 1939-1947 in Germany, much as women were encouraged to go to work by Nazis, one third of them went to work ("How Was Life Affected" 2014).

Besides being killed, war makes women have hard and bad experiences, such as being raped, brutalized, impregnated and infected with some disease, like AIDS/HIV. According to Irene Khan of Amnesty International, women are mostly seen as a bearer of honor in culture, society and religion, that’s why, if the fighters want to defeat to community, they most likely revenge with women by inflicting sexual violence to both women in army and home in this community (Marshall 2004)

Except for the women who have to work and have to live without their men at home in wartime, there are also women who crusaded. From ancient history to present, the warrior women have been willing to be engaged with wars and participate in armed forces. Although they are not exactly regarded equal with men, especially with their physical power, they are respected and accepted as equivalent. King indicates (379) that there are significant examples of warrior women; such as Amazons and female fighters in Soviet Union. Furthermore, there are also integration of other women into the combats and their contributions to the other significant wars, like World War I, II and the Civil War.

When it comes to considering woman warrior in history, it could firstly be associated with 'Athena, the Greek goddess of war, peace, and wisdom' (Berkowitz 609). There are many different explanations and myths about Amazons in Greek history. The validity of some is not certain. According to Mayor (18), they are mentioned in Greek mythology, ancient ages of Greece and Rome, and historical sources from Africa and Anatolia. Firstly, in Greek myth the word of 'Amazon' is used for strong horsewomen. Apart from the epics about those women in famous ancient Greek poems, like the Iliad, there are also illustrated images of Greeks fighting Amazons in ancient art. In regards to ancient Rome and Greece, Aethiopsis, following famous ancient Greek poem just after Illiad, describes the 'the arrival of Queen Penthesilea and her band of Amazon mercenaries who came help Trojans fight the Greeks'. As regards to Anatolian history, 'Mythic leader of a band of women' was also called 'Amezan' in ancient Scythian that was believed as Anatolian nomads. Moreover, there are recited tales about Amazon women's invasion of Lydia in the early

seventeenth century BC (Mayor 18). Consequently, as for African Amazon, it was a female corps in Dahomey Kingdom of West Africa and emerged between the late eighteenth and the mid-nineteenth centuries. The tribe develops its cops for struggling with slave trade (King 380). After those historical tales about Amazon, the new information and epics had still being arisen. Due to the fact that it is not clear whether they are right or not and the amount of them are too much, it is impossible to mention all about them in this study. Although the details of the “Amazon” give rise to speculation and debate, the above-cited information was claimed by many classical historians, philosophers, geographers, and other writers. (Mayor 19).

Notwithstanding of the different epics and stories from history about Amazon, at the present time the term of ‘Amazon’ has being used as a term for female fighters generally. For instance, while mentioning about Kurdish female fighters, are referred to as ‘badass Amazons’ (Dirik 2014). On the other hand, female warriors in Soviet Union were also called as ‘Soviet Amazons’. Nazemroay (2014) points that they fought Western military forces in Second World War and Great Patriatic War.

Although Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was a patriarchal society, their warrior women replaced from home to battlefields intimately. The 800,000 voluntary Soviet women fought directly in the front as ‘bomber pilots, tankers, machine gunners, infanteers and grenadiers’. In the middle of the Second World War, in 1943, these Soviet women are nearly 8% of Red Army. In the end the war, young women became 70% of all Young Communist soldiers (Engel and Posadskaya-Vanderbeck cited in Nazemroay 2014). Their fame was so much spreaded that they were referred as ‘Heroes/Heroines of the Soviet Union’. The most famous ones were Ukrainian sniper

Lyudmila Pavlichenko and the pilot Nadezhda Popova who was called as 'Night Witches' by the Germans (Botchlareva cited in Nazemroay 2014).

Furthermore, there are other different examples of warrior women in American Civil War. Miller (2013) points that Frances Clalin distinguished herself as a man to fight in cavalry against Union forces. She introduced herself as Jack Williams while being in army, and nobody understood that she was a woman, so she could fight in 18 battles. Although she lost her husband, she continued to fight while her three children were at home. With regards to her superiors, such as well trained, reliable and respected, she has been accepted as a 'model soldier'. She is not the only woman who fought in war by distinguished herself, but Frances' story caused a sensation at those times. The other Union female soldiers are Sarah Edmonds and Jennie Hodger and hid their sex to fight. Sarah Edmonds was called as 'frank and fearless'. Jennie Hodgers was fighting with her husband in the army, and she survived from 40 battles (Miller 2013).

The examples of these warrior women in ancient or closer than ancients history could be increased, but in this study, the most famous ones and the mentioned in literature are selected to review. The thing they have common is that they were fighting like male soldiers, so they brought down the prejudices about the equality between men and women in patriarchal society.

2.3 Guerrilla Women in The Movements

There are also noteworthy female warriors in organizations, like provisional IRA, ETA and PKK. The Irish Republican Army, or IRA was formed in the beginning of

the twentieth century to create an independent state for Ireland. It was seen as the most dangerous terrorist organization in the world because of their bloody bombings in their first years. On the other hand, it announced ceasefire in 1997 to continue their organization with peaceful political aims. It might also be noted that 'The IRA has never been listed as a terrorist organization by the State Department', but the groups under the IRA, such as RIRA (Real Irish Republican Army) and CIRA (Continuity Irish Republican Army) have been listed as terrorist groups as recently as 2015 by the US Department of State (Gregory 2010). In detail, according to US Department of State, most of RIRA members are from former IRA who are not satisfied with the ceasefire, so they formed RIRA in 1997 ("*Country Reports on Terrorism*" 377). On the other hand, CIRA was formed 1994 as the hidden armed wing of Republican Sinn Fein, which is the other Irish Republican organization. CIRA has still been carrying the initial aim of IRA to force the British out of Northern Ireland (343-344).

Cumman na mBann is the women branch of the IRA. These women are from Armagh Jail, which is the unique women's jail in Northern Ireland (Loughran 59). The majority of them were accused by 'terrorist' and political offenses, but as an organization it has not listed on the terrorist organization by the US Department of State. They began protests, called 'dirt strike' as a reaction to unfair treatment by guards and bad conditions of prison in 1980. There was a huge participation of feminist groups outside the prison. Under favour of these protests, Armagh became a feminist issue, because it was 'translated as support for republicanism and the 'armed struggle' of the IRA' (75). They announced their end of armed campaign in 2005, and six Irish women compelled the IRA to disarm, so continue to achieve their goal with peaceful political means. Because of their significant contributions, UK and US

government appreciated them (Nag 699). Their contributions have been seen as the important victory in contemporary world history and they have been called as 'extraordinarily courageous' (700). In a sense, the beginning and the end of the organization, women's participation is not ignorable.

On the other hand, ETA, also known as Basque Fatherland and Liberty was formed in 1959 with the goal of establishing 'an independent homeland based on Marxist principles encompassing the Spanish Basque provinces of Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa, and Alava; the autonomous region of Navarra; and the southwestern French territories of Labourd, Basse-Navarre, and Soule' (US Department of State "*Country Reports on Terrorism*" 340). Although the male domination was seen in the organization's first decades, women have become the majority of the group as a result of strong Basque feminist movement from 1970s (Hamilton, "Women and ETA" 176). They started to take up arms and join the 'fatal actions' with men. Furthermore, the current leader of ETA is a woman, called Iratxe Sorzabal Diaz. Therefore, the claim of that women are more dangerous than men in ETA, and they kill their male comrades has made.

Under the effects of these claims, the women of ETA were represented as 'sexy female terrorists', but according to Carrie Hamilton, the claims are more fantasy than reality ("Iratxe Sorzabal Diaz"). On the other hand, there is a fact that police has labeled the ETA women as 'dangerous elements' ("Women and ETA" 177).

Consequently, women in organizations as IRA and ETA, which are announced as 'terrorist' by US state, are mostly seen dangerous, successful and courageous. Their contributions to the organizations are non ignorable. They are active and willful like men in the group. The other Kurdish group being listed in 'terrorist organizations', PKK will be examined in detail in the other chapter.

2.4 The Roles of Women in Kurdish Movement

According to social movement theorists (cited in Çağlayan 27), the basic lifestyle, experiences, and social relation networks should be focused in order to understand the reason of that the simple Kurdish women have participated in Kurdish movement and became political actors. When we look at theorists' suggestion, man could marry he wants even so she could be child and does not want to marry him, and they could be killed by their husband or other male relatives under cover of honor (Marcus 16). So, there was a control by masculine on female body and honor. They had pressure in both society and family, girls were not significant beside boys. Firstly boys were sent to school, and then if possible girls may be sent or not. (Çağlayan 46) There was a clear hierarchy based upon gender. To understand clearly we can also look at the Çağlayan's description about patriarchy in Kurdish people:

“The patriarchy in Kurdish society is a system consisting of cultural establishment, social organization style, Islamic lifestyle, secular male order, the form of class power and product of national traditions. So the women in this system corresponds with the bottom line as Barth points.” (Çağlayan 40)

There were some Kurdish movements in society in 1940s and 1950s, and these movements influence the shape the description of ideal Kurdish women as ‘the encourager to their husbands, boys, brothers to their national movement as patriot women and the symbol of their nation’s honor by jumping off a cliff as a virgin and

bride' (Dersimi 279 cited in Çağlayan 79) Here, it can be said that women were used for their movement. They were still objects, not subjects.

The patriarchal institution in Kurdish family, which kept women under their control was started to criticize severely. Abdullah Öcalan was influenced by these repressive roles on women in patriarchal and traditional Kurdish society, so he wanted to change it, then tried to liberate women. (Marcus 16) When he and his friends established the PKK, Kurdistan Workers' Party or in Kurdish Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê in 1978, based on the principles of Marxist and Leninist, the place of women in society was also taken into consideration (Güleç 2014). Moreover, the situation of women influenced the Kurdish movement's principle of democratic revolution as part of movement's ideology (Çağlayan 97). In parallel with ideology, the participation of women was influenced, so women from cities and especially universities started to join this organization in 1990. When it was 1993, young women were one third of the organization in mountain (Özcan 160 cited in Çağlayan 101).

While the evaluation about being victim and becoming free of Kurdish women was made in society and even organization PKK, there were still no voice or interpretation of women. It was evaluated and talked in the name of women. So they are just subjects, not objects (Çağlayan 20). They actually became subjects when there was a clear change in the organization. This change occurred when women's active participation on structure of the organization, so political and military units only consisting of women were established (Çağlayan 117). Free women's movement's foreground mission was disassociation from men in terms of the ideology of women's liberation. However, it was thought that it is difficult to get rid of men's shadow and to create their own freewill, consciousness, and independent

power of thinking (21. *Yy'da Kadın Özgürlük Manifestosu* cited in Çağlayan 118). That's why; these justifications make women create their own administration. The liberation of women also influenced the developments of other Kurdish organizations by women participating to the organizations and establishing female units. This paragraph indicates the other Kurdish organizations' relationship each other. There are offshoots of PKK in Middle East, like YPG in Syria and Peshmerga in northern Iraq. PYD was established in 2003 under the influence of Öcalan's ideas. PYD and PKK have the same ideology from Öcalan's writings. The members of PYD are very close to PKK or also members in PKK. While PKK was formed as a political party, HPG, the People's Defense Force or in Kurdish called Hêzên Parastina, is PKK's armed wing. HPG trains YPG/YPJ, so they are fighting in Syria. Although HPG trains them, PYD actually commands YPG/YPJ. That's why; there are differences between HPG and YPG/YPJ, but they are connected (Paasche 82). Secondly, Peshmerga is the armed wing of KRG and is trained and controlled by KDP, Kurdistan Democratic Party or in Kurdish, Partiya Demokrat a Kurdistanê. (Paasche 83). The relationship between KDP and the other Kurdish groups has changed in terms of conjuncture. KDP is leaded now by Masoud Barzani. While his father was the leader, the relationship between PYD and KDP is better. When it comes to its relation to PKK, it is also not good. They had a fight for territory domination in northern Iraq. This fight influenced the PYD's viewpoint to KDP. Consequently, PKK controls widely in Iraqi mountain, especially Mount Qandil, so the relationship between PKK and PYD is more than KDP. Of course, the interaction between their armed wing is also same like that. (Paasche 83-84). This frame of relationship can make understand the reason of being a historic event in Kobane when Peshmerga forces went into Kobane to help YPG/YPJ and fighting together

against ISIS in Syria which are mentioned in the above chapter of Conflict in Kobane.

On the other hand, getting rid of men's shadow did not happen so easily in the organization. In the study of Demir, she made interviews with PKK's female fighters in the mountain. According to the explanation of these women, men reacted so angry for women's creating own administration, so it was hard days to prove themselves to men and to break gender bias in 1995. (111) Furthermore, they started to prove themselves physically by carrying heavy load and guns and working like them.

Although every guerilla carries according to own physics, they do the same work.

(127) In recent years 2015-2016, the struggle of women finally has started to change the men's mind. According to the Demir (127), there has been an apparent change in attitude, salutation, and genre to women. Men start to behave women as the movement's women, not ordinary women. On the other hand, some guerilla women do not think there is a change in men's mind. Their behavior can change but mind not. However, these women say to owe this change to leadership of Öcalan depending his discourses and analysis. Therefore, men whether they want or not, have to accept the change and equality of women in organization (Demir 23). In conclusion, it can be said that the change of women's role in PKK organization and then society provides the women gaining their own authority and fighting with guns.

On the other hand, Kurdish feminist movement or Kurdish women's movement also provides this change. The movement was started to appear in 1980s and established in 1990s as third wave of feminism. They revolted against their oppression by husbands, and started to make their voices heard by writing in journals, magazines and attending foundations and cultural houses (Çaha 435). Kurdish political

movement oppressed the progress of Kurdish women's movement, because they want to emphasize their Kurdish identity, not being women (439). Furthermore, while the Kurdish movement was developed in PKK, the Kurdish feminist movement seems to be established in society (Diner and Toktaş 50). In those years, the movement was influenced and motivated by Turkish feminism in terms of being existing as a woman and having struggle for their certain interest (447). After 1980, it was clearly seen that Kurdish women make their participation to Kurdish women movement visible in public by attending street meetings, various political parties, organizations, protest actively, experiencing mass arrest and custody as their Kurdish women to make their voice hear (Diner and Toktaş 48). As a result of Kurdish feminist movement, women today, have claimed their rights, tackled their language, which has still rejected to speak freely in society, strived their culture and identity, so they created their own personality, independency and consciousness (438). At the present time, the reaction of society to the Kurdish women is feeling of shock and pride (Marcus 138). This reaction influenced also other Kurdish organizations in Middle East. Especially, the YPJ unit has accepted that there is a feminist movement in itself in spite of the fact that it is not their fundamental mission. (Dirik 2014)

2.5 Turkish Warrior Women

During the Ottoman Empire until First World War, the previous form of state in Turkey, any examples of considerable Turkish warrior women in literature review could not be found. However, before Ottoman Empire the existence of female soldiers in Seljuq Empire and Anatolian Beylics has been known (Çelik 144). When the Ottoman Empire was affected harshly by First World War, women faced the

brunt of the war and their gender roles changes as a consequence of the war (Akın 12). Ottoman women mostly started to work during the war rather than going to the war, because they replaced with their men's role after men went to fight. This situation was seen in all ethno-religious communities. They started to work as housemaids, dishwashers and charwomen. They sometimes sold their goods like furniture to earn money (16-17). The Ottoman women's first contact with army of is when they were called as voluntarily labor battalions for First World War. This first contact was reflected in the press as that 'our women finally attend in military service (Toprak 219). When men went to the army to fight, women were both in frontline and hinterland, as working in the place of men, collecting help, carrying supplies for frontline, going to the munition as caregiver to look after the injured fighters, and also taking care of their family (Çelik 148-152).

By the collapse of Ottoman Empire in 19th century, the 'heroine' women started to emerge; they were commonly entitled as 'Kara Fatma' or 'Black Fatma', Kurdish name 'Fataras' or 'Fata Reş' (Çelik 151). From the written documents, there were at least three Kara Fatmas. The most recognized Kurdish Kara Fatmas were the one in 1806, the one in Crimean War, and the one in Russian Ottoman war in 1877-1878. Although all Western press documents showed that she is Kurdish, some historical documents claimed that Kara Fatma in Crimean War is Turkish (Kutluata 33). However, it can be said that Kara Fatma was more related to Kurdish society. As Bayrak (113) states Kara Fatma has become Kurdish women's symbol of freedom and power of struggle, so it has also become the role model for Kurdish women guerilla. Moreover, Hür (2016) claims that there was a Turkification operation of

Kurdish Kara Fatmas. They were represented as Turkish women by underlying not Kurdish, especially when serving to external media.

Apart from Kara Fatmas, there were significant warrior women, such as Nene Hatun, Münevver Saime or Soldier Saime, Gördesli Makbule, Kılavuz Hatice, Halide Edip, Little Nezahat or Turk Jan Dark, and Tayyar Rahmiye. They were known as heroes of national struggle. Most of them were awarded by military (Çelik 171-174). It could be clear that women were used for many roles. However, it is known from the literature search that they were voluntary for their new roles.

2.6 Conceptual Framework: Orientalism, Myth, and Commodification

Before the chapter about media representations of the Kurdish women, the conceptual framework should be understood. In Western literature, the role of Kurdish women is mostly placed and explained in orientalism. Orientalism is explained by Edward Said ("*Orientalism*" 11) in 1978 "as a Western style for dominating restructuring, and having authority over the Orient". In one side there is a reality of the East, in other side there is a representation of misunderstanding the reality. Orientalism is a Eurocentric perspective that cannot help to understand the enormous picture, just causes controlling non-Western culture and creating stereotypes in it. (48) In other words, Orientalism is a notion of the East that is linked to 'opposite of the West' and the 'other' (Springborg 751) According to Said ("*Orientalism*" 10), Asia and Middle East are accepted as Orient, but Middle East should be taken into consideration for this study.

The Kurdish woman is a sample of the Orientalist perspective's stereotypes.

Although the above sources point the pressures on Kurdish women, according to orientalist sources, Kurdish women was recognized as 'free, warrior and leader' especially in and after 17th century (Çağlayan 71). These orientalist sources were mostly written by Western observers. Two of them, Galleti and Alakom (cited in Çağlayan 71) states that Kurdish women are more free and stronger than the other neighbor Muslim countries in Middle East. The other observer, Nikitin (cited in Çağlayan 72) likens Kurdish people to Western people rather than Muslim people. The other Orientalist observer Alakom (cited in Çağlayan 72) emphasizes matriarchy in family, by reason of calling girls as their mothers' name instead of fathers. He also gives the most famous warrior as Orientalist symbol that is Fatma Reş. This Kurdish woman became famous by leading her tribe and fighting for Ottoman Empire with her 300 cavaliers (Alakom cited in Çağlayan 73). Consequently, the stories about 'free, warrior women' have the impacts of Orientalism. Some of them could be real, but according to Bruinessen (103 cited in Çağlayan 73) it depends on their family's social status. Unfortunately, the reality of women under pressure hides behind the myth of freedom. This myth is used for construction of Kurdish identity for the movement. It is noticed that civilization could exist with the place of women in society and the success of women in society. (Çağlayan 74) Although Kurdish women reached their freedom partially under favour of the ideas of Öcalan, Kurdish movement, Kurdish feminism and the change in the Kurdish groups, the myths, which are the outcomes of Orientalism, have still been continued. In this instance, Kurdish women have become myths in Western media, like Kobane Angel, Beauty of Diren, Peshmerga Princess of Narin Afrin, and Canadian-Israeli Peshmerga woman. They will be mentioned in the chapter about warrior women in media.

To understand myth creation in the conceptual framework of the study, Roland Barthes' mythologies should also be looked at. Myth creation is useful to understand the specified less functional objects and more metaphoric fantasies (Huppatz 85). According to Barthes (95 cited Huppatz 88), in consumer culture, objects can no more stay as neutral. They have latent meanings or connotation, so become 'metaphoric vehicles'. Barthes advocates that the reality is conveyed through a 'language, ideology and convention' by being assimilated deliberately or undeliberately. He explained this process with sign systems or semiotics by accepting all objects are signs and objects are now artifacts. According to semiotics, signs have both denotative and connotative meaning. When denotation or signifier is what signalizes in the world, connotation or signified is what interprets in terms of socio-cultural and personal background. So as myth, signs can produce particular significations in order to abstract concepts in terms of cultural values and norms (cited Huppatz 88-89). Moreover, when we think about the content and form of the speech, the form of the speech is myth. That's why; myth is designated by the way of message told, not the content of the message. Therefore, according to Barthes, the language is significant to determine myth (110 cited in Boer 216).

On the other hand, the other theoretical approach to be looked at is commodification. According to Oxford Reference Dictionary (Harcup 2014), commodification in media studies is explained that the process of turning products in media or journalism into commodities to be bought or sold instead of producing the product 'for the benefit of a society and its citizens'. So this process of turning, in other words commodification causes to vulgarize journalism. The news about Kurdish women becomes the product

and if the news deviates from its aim of transmitting the true news to public and manipulates the news, the product or the representation of Kurdish women is commodified. In this way, by manipulating the reality on news makes widely read, so it helps the publisher to sell his product. Here, it is not only selling the commodities but also selling the ways of looking. Furthermore, the statement of Theodor Adorno from Frankfurt School also supports the theory. He states that representation and narrative are used in 'aesthetic techniques' regardless of what is really being represented or described, so the techniques fail to produce the real product (cited in Huyssen 18). However, the effects of commodification serve the purpose of culture industry by abolishing the truth (Horkheimer and Adorno 135 cited in Gunster 61).

The all mentioned theoretical approaches are actually useful to understand the consumer culture. The Western media may serve for the consumer culture. So, it can be said that the guerrilla women in Kobane have been used for the consumer culture by having the perspective of orientalism, commodifying the news for manipulation, and providing latent meanings as myth. All of these ways are for selling the news widely and popularizing the product. As a result of these approaches, Kurdish women have been represented like myth or 'novel phenomenon', so the reality and reason of their fight has been neglected. Moreover, their struggle was not news but its representation cause to misunderstand as a new trend (Dirik 2014).

2.7 Warrior Women in Media

The representation of warrior women in media is a very broad subject. It can include films, advertisements, magazines, etc. Regarding the subject of this study, the

literature of warrior women in only news should be reviewed. While researching the representation of warrior women in media, this paragraph has in order of the general representation of women in media as soldiers and ordinary people, guerrilla women in media, and the representation of warrior women in Kobane.

The scholars (Harp et al.) studied on the presentation of women in news about war. According to the article, war and its news are linked to men, because it is seen as male territory. Women are only mentioned as subordinate standing, like supportive mother or wife to their men, even though there is a considerable amount of women. They gave an example the women who were fighting in US army. Their headcount is one out of seven soldiers in US army in Iraq and it was recorded as the highest number in those years (Wertheimer, 2005 cited in Harp et al., 2011:203). However, women were not mentioned in the debates and news on war in a long time (Harp et al. 204). The statement of Barker-Plummer and Boaz (372) supports this case of women by pointing that women in war news are just used for an object by not giving voice. According to scholars, the victim or sufferer women are more preferred to represent in the media instead of the warrior women of the war or conflict. They also give an example of Iraq War about this case. The media preferred to focus on the drama of soldiers' mothers. So they concluded the topic with the masculinist narrative limits in media coverages, because war news have mostly been written or controlled by male authority (372) Therefore, the war news have a masculine perspective and if it is necessary to talk about soldiers, just male soldiers can be enough to publish.

Apart from the women soldiers in media representation, the women combatants or guerrillas in media should be researched individually. It could be different in feeling

or notion for female soldiers and for female guerrillas from the viewpoint of transmitter and receiver of media, in other words, writer and audience. That's why, in this paragraph, the representation of guerrilla women in Western media will be studied generally. After that, the representation of Kurdish women in Kobane will be reviewed. According to Kannan (2010), the female violence is mostly viewed as abnormal in media discourse and the violence is induced by mental illness or adulteration. She explained the reason of this case in terms of tendency to represent women as 'life givers', 'nurturers', and 'homemakers', so women's these roles might be seen normal, so the other roles can be 'abberant'. Nacos (436) points that because of this different role of women, most people respond to the actions of guerrilla women with 'shock and horror'. This outcome is made up by the stereotypes of media, because the possible differences in encouragement, cruelty or ideological enthusiasm between male and female guerrillas have not proved. However, Nacos (448) remarks that the guerrilla group can use the outcome as an advantage by influencing their target societies, but it is not acceptable for activist and scholar Dirik (2014), especially for representation Kurdish women in Kobane.

Before the representation of Kurdish women in Western media, the famous myths about them should be mentioned; Kobane Angel, Beauty of Diren, Peshmerga Princess of Narin Afrin, and Canadian-Israeli Peshmerga woman. Firstly, Rehana is called as 'the Angel of Kobane' and she has drawn attention of media by sharing thousand of her picture all over the world (Del Re, 90). In the picture, she is beautiful and smiling, wearing combat gear and carrying a rifle. It was written in many Western newspapers that she had killed more than 100 a hundred ISIL fighters on her own (Dirik 2014). When it is researched on online newspapers, some of these

Western media are International Business Times, BBC, Daily Mail, Mirror, and etc. The most notably is that BBC (#BBCtrending 2014) makes her a trending topic. International media pays attention this myth and makes her 'a symbol of the Kurdish women's resistance against the IS (Del Re, 90). Secondly, Diren, also known as Ceylan Özalp, has become the other myth. She has been known with her brave explanations in BBC report even though she is 19 years old (Gatehouse 2014). According to the rumors, she has killed herself when she was surrounded by IS forces not to be taken captured. However, this baseless news was denied and she was reported as still alive. Although the news was not real, she has also taken attention on social media (Mezzofiore 2014). Thirdly, Narin Afrin, also known as Maysa Abdo, is 40 years old and the leader of YPJ (Bulut 2014). Platt (2014) reports in International Business Times that she has had the international reputation due to her 'bravery and intelligence'. According to his report, he has been known as 'humanist and realist...and very courageous'. Lastly, the other myth's woman, Canadian-Israeli women joining Kobane has been reported as 'extraordinary' because of her different nationality (Del Re 91). Consequently, some of these myths may not be real but they have the real impact on causing international notice of media.

Apart from the myths, the Kurdish fighters in Kobane have been represented by Western media as 'taking the same risks and facing the same dangers' with men and being successful in defending the city in BBC (Gatehouse 2014) 'gaining increased prominence' in Business Insider (Bender 2014), frightening ISIS forces due to killed by a woman in The Wall Street of Journal (Jászberényi 2014), 'fighting as equals alongside the male Kurdish forces for the future of their country' and being not scared and worried to be killed on the frontline in The Telegraph (Williams 2015),

dying while defending the city, so being proud of their family and environment in The Guardian (Mahmood 2015). While female fighters are represented in these news media, their beauty, attractiveness, and heroism are also mentioned. On the other hand, there is a dissatisfied side of these representations; ‘Western fascination with ‘badass’ Kurdish women’ in Al Jazeera (Dirik 2014) and ‘Western media is obsessed with Kurdish female fighters battling ISIS’ (Rabar 2014), but both of the writers are Kurdish, so they can be the other side.

In conclusion, the mentioned representation in Western media has an attempt to sensationalism. Some myth became the symbol, and according to Del Re (90), the symbol was used to manipulate the public opinion and make sensationalism (91). Furthermore, as Dirik (2014) states that these manipulations cause to ignore the reality of the guerrilla women’s fight and their ideologies. She also claims that these women are used for PR purposes of Kurdish guerrilla group to gain over the Western public opinion by selecting and representing mostly attractive, young and beautiful guerrillas, so exoticising them (Dirik 2014) It could be said that female fighters have become the product of conflict, have still been an object, not subject. They are the victims of orientalism and commodification.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this study, discourse analysis as a qualitative research was chosen with the aim of focusing on the ideology in the texts of magazine journals. Discourse analysis is about the study on the systematic linguistic order that includes specific rules,

terminology and speech (Tonkiss 100 cited in Çomu and Halaiqa 43). According to Ferdinand de Saussure (cited in Çomu and Halaiqa 44), while the start point of the discourse concept is language, language does not reflect the real world and the meanings are structured in cultures based on the discourse theories' endpoint. Furthermore, according to Teun A. Van Dijk (13 cited in Çomu and Halaiqa 45), the reproduction of ideologies makes discourse significant. Discourse is an activity of communication that includes interaction, written text, signs, typographic order, images, and interpretation based on the speech.

In media discourses, one of way of framing the analysis is Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis of linguistic tools as 'transitivity in syntax, lexical structure, modality, and speech actors'. He prefers this analysis especially on international news or publications. (Van Dijk 359) He accepts the summary of the main aims of critical discourse analysis which is summed up by Fairclough and Wodak (271-80 cited in Van Dijk 353) as addressing social problems, investigating discursive power relations, knowing that discourse constitutes society and culture, does ideological work, is historical and a form of social action, approving mediated link between text and society, accepting discourse analysis as interpretative and explanatory.

Moreover, as Michel Foucault saying due to the discourse cannot be thought without power relations, this study needs to look at the political context (1987 cited in Çomu and Halaiqa 45). To support this idea, Dijk's statement can be also mentioned here. He states that specific discourse forms are necessary to control the power in society (Teun A. Van Dijk 2010 13 cited in Çomu and Halaiqa 46). So, these relationships will be taken into consideration while carrying out discourse analysis on this study.

3.2 Data Collection

The five fashion magazines articles in Elle, Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan and Teen Vogue are chosen to analyze the representation Kurdish female fighters of YPJ in Kobane to defend the city against the jihadist group. Most of these magazines are being sold in worldwide, but their origins are in Western countries. All of them are almost including same topics, like fashion, beauty, health, entertainment, and etc.

The collection of data is done by using the Internet, so the issues of these magazines are online version. While searching on the Internet, all of the famous Western fashion magazines are scanned in terms of this study's subject. Only four magazines have represented the subject, so they are selected to analyze. However, two articles are written in same editor but in different magazines; Marie Claire and Cosmopolitan. Although the main texts are almost same, but there are some differences, so it is decided to analyze both of them.

3.3 Method

In this study, Teun A. Van Dijk's model of discourse analysis is selected to analyze this study. Özer tabulates the model of Van Dijk's discourse analysis as the following (92-93 cited in Çomu and Halaiqa 49):

Macrostructure

Thematic Structure

Heading

Introduction

Subheading

The first sentence of the main text (If no subheading)

Photos

Schematic Structure

Case

The representation of main event

Results

Context information

Interpretation

News Sources

Victims of the event's interpretation

Microstructure

Syntactic Analysis

Passive / active sentences

Simple / complicated sentences

Territorial Cohesion

Causal relation

Functional relation

Reference relation

The Choice of Words

Rhetoric of News

Photos

Credible information

In macrostructure, the heading and subheading help to understand the main prominent topic. Photo is analyzed for whether there is a integrity with the main event and whether it support the topic. Schematic structure provides the analysis on the representation of main event, results and context information. Context information is about the social and political view of the events. The last factor in macrostructure, interpretation, is for looking at the news sources and interpretations of the victims or people who experience the event.

In microstructure, syntactic analysis is to look for the passive, active, simple and complicated sentences in the text to understand the ideological nature of the text. In terms of the territorial cohesion, the relation of causal, functional and reference in consecutive sentences. The choice of words is about the lexical analysis to examine the denotation and connotation. As looking at the choice of words, fundamental belief and ideology could be revealed.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Discourse Analysis of ELLE Article written by Toranian

After ISIS attacked Kobane in 15 September 2014, the Paris edition of fashion magazine, ELLE, it issued an article by the journalist Valérie Toranian about female fighters in Kobane in one week later, 26 September 2014.

When it is looked on the level of macrostructure in critical discourse analysis at the fashion magazine has a heading of “Resist!”. In this heading, there is an action language. According to Oxford Dictionary ("Resist" 2016), when the verb is used without an object, it means ‘struggle or fight back when attacked’. So, this language indicates the support of the action and the wish of the struggle. It could be said that the writer of the magazine supports the female fighters in Kobane to fight and most probably also their struggle. Because of no subheading, the first sentence of the article is “Tekoshin is Kurdish, she is 27 and is fighting in the mountains of northern Iraq, alongside her brothers in arms (PKK) to dislodge the barbarians Daesh, the Islamic State that spread terror in Iraq and Syria”. According to thematic structure analysis, the prominent topic of the article is while encouraging to one side, representing the other side as barbarian and terrorist. Giving an example of female fighter with age is an attempt to remark to being young. There is only one photo under the heading and it is 45 years old female fighter of the PKK, called Nugeen. She is in khaki colored, Kurdish traditional uniform, which is dressed in everyday life and also in guerrilla organization and in same colored vest. The scarf is worn like hairband. The puffy pants is surrounded by colorful fabric belt. She shoulders the

rifle and she looks like a guerilla. So, there is integrity with photo and the topic of the magazine.

In schematic structure, there is a representation of the main story, background information, and context information, but not results. Context information should be about events' social and political aspects, so they are mentioned as "their struggle is the freedom of women", "distinguished Presidents Obama and Holland, we must support the resistance in Iraq but also in Syria", and "they deserve doubling the aid of democracies". When it is looked at the last factor of macrostructure, interpretation, the two sources, L'Orient-Le Jour and The Washington Post are given as references at the end of the article, but there is no voice or quotation of women while mentioning their case and courage.

When it is looked at the stylistic aspect in microstructure, syntactic analysis could not be done because of being written in French. Although there is a translation of English, it is not preferred to analyze.

The compatibility among the sentences in terms of causality, functional and referencing relationship is analyzed. The reason of the Kurdish women being in Kobane is well explained, but functional and referencing relationship among the sentences does not appear. According to the selection of word, only 'Kurdish women' is used as a choice of word to refer women, so it looks so neutral.

Furthermore, the rhetoric aspects in the analysis are photo, credible information and eyewitnesses. Only photo is used and seems credible, but there is no any mention

about her in the main text. The famous myth, which is mentioned in literature review in this study, appears in the article as “A phenomenal figure even panic jihadists who think they will go to hell if they are killed by a woman”. On the other hand while mentioning the young female fighter, “By far, nothing distinguishes her male companions: same uniform, same muscular and seasoned silhouette, even assault rifle” is written. Both citations from the magazine are likely used to exaggerate the women’s power by mentioning the myth and equal muscle force with men’s. There is no any expression of eyewitness or main actors. Moreover, there are some rhetoric statements like “the long and chaotic battle for freedom around the world is just beginning”, “it is the honor of the entire free world not to forget” and “the march of women will never stop”. They are like fantastic expression when using hyperbolic adjectives for the conflict in Kobane, saying the honor of the all world, and using the word ‘march’ to make a figure of speech.

4.1.2 Discourse Analysis of Marie Claire Article written by Griffin

Strategic Visual Content Editor, Elizabeth Griffin wrote an article both on Marie Claire in 30th September 2014 and Cosmopolitan in 3 October 2014. Although the two articles are almost same, both of them are analyzed because of some differences. Cosmopolitan will be analyzed in the next chapter.

Griffin wrote the heading as “These remarkable women are fighting ISIS. It’s time you know who they are”. From the heading, the Kurdish female fighters are called as remarkable, in other words, ‘unusual or special and therefore surprising and worth mentioning’ in Cambridge Dictionary ("Remarkable" 2016). There is a usage in

opposite meaning of usual or ordinary, so these female are not usual, because of fighting ISIS. That's why, the audience should know about them and the time is now when they start to fight. However, these women's unit is not new formed, they have been for many years (Dirik 2014).

On the other hand, the subheading is Editor's Note as "The efforts of the YPJ are remarkable but Marie Claire does not condone the use of child soldiers in any capacity. This article has been edited to reflect that". According to Van Dijk's discourse analysis model in macrostructure, the thematic structure's prominent topic is firstly that these women are not usual and they must be known, secondly that, irrelevant from the heading, the women's struggle are unusual, but they are not approved by the magazine if they are children. Therefore, the admiration is to some extent.

The last point of the thematic structure, visual materials, is used in the text. There are ten photos of YPJ women. All of them wear like soldiers, not in traditional khaki outfits like the women in ELLE magazine. The background of photos is white, so women can draw attention as focus point. Six of them are carrying rifles, but one them has the bigger and heavier gun, called rocket gun. Two women have smile, three ones have neutral face, but other ones have really hard look. All of these photos are relevant to the text, but maybe the background brings into doubt that it is a studio shoot.

When it is looked at the schematic the main event is explained as who are these women, why are they, what have they done, but giving the result of the conflict just

as being successful and evacuation of Yazidi refugees. According to the context information, there is social and political support for the women, saying as ‘...suggesting the forces could be an effective ally to the West’.

According to interpretation factor of in macrostructure, news sources and women’s interviews are used to interpret the event. The photographer Erin Trieb made the interviews, and Marie Claire published her experiences and interview. As news sources, BBC, The Washington Post, Huffington Post, other article from Marie Claire, Financial Times, The Guardian, Newsweek, and Erien Trieb’s own website are used as hypertexts. The amount and selection of the sources seems satisfying for 1394 words included main text.

On the other hand, microstructure of the analysis, there are some passive sentence; “YPJ and YPG were deemed extraordinary successful in the battle”, “both the YPJ and YPG have also been credited with helping the US”, “this sentiment...is echoed by all members of the YPJ”, “the women are indeed seen as just as strong, disciplined, and committed as their male counterparts”, “they are also wholly celebrated by their community”, “they are seen as potentially more of a threat to ISIS than male soldiers”, the “women...are dedicated to protecting their people”, “several women... have been injured and some have been captured by ISIS”. According Van Dijk’s critical discourse analysis, these passive structures indicate that there is disbelief, or no testifying and just transferring others’ thoughts or experience.

In analysis of accordance in sentences, there is causal link in representing the main theme as writing “an all women, all-volunteer Kurdish military faction in Syria that

formed in 2012 to defend the Kurdish population against the deadly attacks lead by Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad, the al-Nusra Front (an al-Qaeda affiliate), and ISIS". Furthermore, according to the reference link, the concepts, which are YPJ, YPG, are explained well in the text. As functional link, there is also accordance between the sentences. When it is looked at the choice of words, women are referred 'YPJ', 'soldiers', 'YPJ members', 'YPJ soldiers', 'military' and 'the force'. So, they are emphasized as soldiers.

Lastly, according to the rhetoric aspect, there are some exaggerative expressions like, 'the YPJ, and ... the YPG were deemed "extraordinarily successful" in the battle to squash the growing ISIS militant force' and 'we asked Trieb to share with us her experience (and photographs) of the YPJ and the harrowing words these women fighters wanted the rest of the world to hear'. From the expressions, the words of 'extraordinary', 'squash' and 'harrowing' could make dramatize the events and situations. According to the description in Cambridge dictionary, the word of 'squash' ("Squash" 2016) is used as figurative meaning and 'harrowing' ("Harrowing") is 'making you feel extremely frightened or upset' so there is again exaggeration because of the word 'extremely'.

When it is looked at the consideration in rhetoric way, the same myth is mentioned, as "The saying among many Syrian Kurds is that ISIS is more terrified of being killed by women because if they are, they will not go to heaven". So, it does not seem to be credible. On the other hand, using photographs and expressions of YPJ women and the experiences of photographer are makes the text more credible. However, one photo can throw suspicion on whether it is real or not. The photo of Shavin Bachouk,

who is written as 26 years old under the shot, but she seems much older. In spite of that the women can age earlier than average women because of the stressful life in war conditions and the days being in mountainside.

4.1.3 Discourse Analysis of Cosmopolitan Article written by Griffin

Elizabeth Griffin's same article was published also in Cosmopolitan in 3 October 2014, but the word count of this article is less than Marie Claire's by 519. In this chapter, only different factors will be analyzed. It means that the rest of the factors, which are not analyzed here, are completely same with the other magazine in terms of macro and microstructure.

In terms of the thematic structure, the heading is "These Remarkable Women Are Fighting ISIS" and subheading is "The YJP is an all-women, all-volunteer Kurdish military faction in Syria". The photos are the same with the writer's article in Marie Claire, but only one photo, which is the shot of 18 years old girl looking at the camera with hard look, is extra. So, the thematic structure's prominent topic indicates being unusual of these women and being willing to be in this 'military'.

In terms of the schematic structure of the analysis, the main event is represented but its results and context information. In other article on Marie Claire, the results are given as the success and evacuation of the refuges, and political aspect is given as the support for the thought of being ally to the West. But in this article, they are not mentioned. According to interpretation part, only two sources are used, like Huffington Post and Erin Trieb's web site and there is an extra section of the

interview with Trieb. The section is about “despite the toughness of the YPJ, there's another side to the group”, which is written in the text. She said the younger girls in YPJ were more like American teenagers, and they were always joking. It might be said that the daily life in YPJ is reflected as different from Marie Claire.

4.1.4 Discourse Analysis of Marie Claire Article written by Pearl

The other article in Marie Claire was written by Diana Pearl in 2 September 2014 by the amount of 323 words. In terms of the thematic structure, the heading is “These women are fighting back in the Middle East”, and the subheading is “Taking on terrorist group ISIS is a lofty challenge—but these women may be up to it”. So, the outstanding topic from the headings is that although the group is strong, the women are going back to fight. There is a correlation in the headings. Only one photo under the subheading is used and photographing many people, like ordinary men, women and children. It is not a clear picture, because it is hard to specify or guess who they are. So, it might be said that there is not a clear correlation between photo and the article.

According to the schematic structure, the main event is a group of 11 women who are preparing to fight back to ISIS. There is no any result of this event. They are just leaving their home and are going to the Kurdish group. In terms of the context information, the situation is emphasized as international problem by saying “international authorities are starting to pay attention”. If it is looked at the interpretation factor, only one source, The Telegraph, is used. The sayings of two women of the group are included in the text about their feelings and experiences.

In microstructure's syntactic analysis, there are not any passive or complicated sentences to construe for possible implication. When it is looked at the territorial cohesion, in causal relationship analysis, the women's reason of want to fight back against ISIS of the group is explained in the next sentences. Because of their experiences and lost, they want to fight. In terms of functional relation, the general expressions are explained in the following sentences. They are about who ISIS is, what it does, and how authorities pay attention to the case, as stated "International authorities are starting to pay attention. President Obama recently gave the signal to begin airstrikes over Iraq and Syria to retaliate against ISIS". However, 'Kurdish resistance army' is not explained in the next sentences. So, it is not clear where this group of women would go to fight back against ISIS. In the analysis of reference relation, there is no concept to analyze.

According to rhetorical analysis, the photo and the women's expressions are not so powerful to prove the main event, because the photo does not clarify much and expressions are about mostly their anger and bad experiences because of war. The interview is quoted from The Telegraph, so the sources are only used for the women's sayings.

4.1.5 Discourse Analysis of Teen Vogue Article by Webster

The digital writer, in her own naming, Emma Sarran Webster wrote in 14 December 2015 by 208 words. The heading of the text is "ISIS's biggest Fear is being killed by girls" and the subheading is "Why an all-female unit scares the hell - quite literally -

out of the Islamic State”. As visual material, there is no photo, only a Youtube video under the subheading. The video is named as “ISIS is afraid of girls” and the subscriber is INSIDER, but the shots are from CNN, because CNN is written as a source during the video. According to thematic structure, all of the factors indicate the outstanding topic as the famous myth about ISIS’s fear. Moreover, there is an exaggeration of this fear by using the expression of ‘the hell – quite literally- out of...’

In terms of the schematic structure, the main event is represented as the ISIS’s fear from the YPJ women, and the result is given by stating, “has successfully driven ISIS out of Kobani and Al-Houl, Syrian towns previously controlled by the terrorist organization”. For context information, the magazine does not indicate its own social and political view but includes the INSIDER’s thought of unit’s being successful, so this inclusion could be understood as a support for the women. When viewed from the analysis of interpretation, there are four hypertext news sources in the text; NBC News, CNN, INSIDER, and the other article in Teen Vogue. The two women’s feelings and experiences as victims about the conflict are used for an interview.

According to microstructure, when considered from the syntactic view, there is no significant passive and complicated sentence to analyze. All sentences are clear to understand and have no implication.

In compliance with causable link, functional relation, and relationship in reference in the context information, the general information about the female unit and the reason of their gathering are explained in the first paragraph. The myth is tried to support by

the women's sayings, "...they believe if someone from Daesh is killed by a girl, a Kurdish girl, they won't go to heaven. So they're afraid of girls".

When looking at the choice of words, the group is called as 'rebel militia group' and 'female unit'. The first description has never used in the other magazines in this study. It could be for emphasizing the women's scaring the ISIS in the text.

The myth could be throw suspicion about whether it is real or not although it is also said by the female fighters in the video. Teen Vogue also tries to add on the myth to more exaggerate or draw more attention with its own words by saying "they may be more of a threat to the terrorists than the male fighters are". The text is mostly written by the sayings of the CNN video. Because of the credible source, the text of Teen Vogue could also be thought as credible.

4.2 Evaluation of Findings

The magazine ELLE is supporting the struggle of Kurdish female fighters in Kobane. While they represented the women as fighters, the opponent group is represented as barbarian and terrorist. The writer indicates her political or social view as saying "their struggle is the freedom of women", so it is likely putting emphasis on their previous situation of subordination. Women's subordination, in other words being suppressed objects, is handled in Said's orientation ("*Covering Islam*" 147). That's why; it might be interpreted as the magazine's having the orientalist perspective. Furthermore, the famous myth is included in the article. It could be an attempt to shape the women as the figure of metaphoric fantasies (Huppatz 85). The emphasis

on equality in muscle strength between men and women, which is physically not true, is also mentioned. Consequently, there is an exaggeration of the women's power by mentioning the myth and equal muscle force with men's.

The Marie Claire article, which is written by Griffin, makes exaggerations while describing the women. There is an attempt to represent the female unit as new. The editor seems to admire these women but is to some extent in her social responsibility about child soldiers. Moreover, the article has a different word choice from the other magazines as representing women as 'soldiers'. It could be because of women's costumes. They are dressed like the other soldiers, instead of wearing traditional costumes. So, the editor also sees them as soldiers. Moreover, the magazine suggests that the group could be an effective ally to the West, so there is support for their struggle even the possible disbelief on some points because of the passive sentences in the main text. Because of the usage of some words and mentioning the famous myth, there is again an exaggeration of these women. All of this evaluation is same as Griffin's same article in Cosmopolitan.

The other article in Marie Claire by Pearl also emphasize that the case is an international problem, so international authorities are starting to pay attention. There is an attempt to draw attention to the conflict. The support of the authorities is tried to represent by giving an example of US.

Lastly, the magazine of Teen Vogue mentioned widely about the famous myth in heading, subheading, main text, and the video. It is represented with inflated words to exaggerate the women's so called threat. The support for the women in magazine

could be understood in the paragraphs while mentioning the success of the unit. So it could be said that Teen Vogue also support for this fight against jihadist group.

According to general evaluation of the five articles of the fashion magazines, the photos do not symbolize the typical women in fashion magazines in unusual way. They are not models, actresses or celebrity figures. They do not wear fashionable clothes rather than wearing their traditional uniform and scarves. The topics of fashion magazines usually include new trends, beauty, fashion, entertainment, health, and etc. However, the Kurdish female fighters in Kobane are not one of these topics. If we have to put in one topic, it might be new trend. Moreover, it becomes a trend topic in BBC ("#BBCtrending" 2014) Moreover, for all visual materials, except Diana Pearl's article; there is no photo of men. It looks like only women fighting in the city. It could be an attempt for insisting on women's power or suffering from patriarchy society, which is one of the images in orientalist view.

From all the fashion magazines, there is support for these women to fight against the ISIS. Moreover, magazines indicate or imply the calling for international support. To promote it, most of them mention about the support of US. However, to draw international attention, there are some exaggerations in lexical way and myth creation. Although it is not certain whether the story about ISIS's fear from being killed by Kurdish female fighters because of going hell is true or not, it is approved to represent on their articles. However, it serves their purpose to sell their product, because it has been read widely and mentioned in many sources. On the other hand, these women have been used as the product of the cultural industry, so they have become the victims of commodification. As Dirik (2014) states they are used for the

purposes of PR in order to influence positively the Western public opinion.

Furthermore, two magazines, Elle and Marie Claire are trying to give the information about the subordination of the women in Kurdish society before their participation in the unit, because it is clearly underlined that there is now equality between men and women in the Kurdish group. However, this attempt of giving messages about subordination has increased in fashion magazines (Lindner 413).

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The conflict in Kobane has drawn international attention in media. The jihadist group, ISIS, started to attack the cities in Syria. The group is a threat because of their aim by trying to establish caliphate firstly in Syria and then in worldwide. Their infamous acts are firstly draw media's attention, and then the defense of Kurdish forces took more attention, especially with the female fighters. The jihadist group is the enemy of US and its coalition countries and the enemy of Kurdish organization. According to some scholars, US and the European countries' support is based on 'my enemy's enemy is my friend'. Therefore, US and the other countries supported the organization with military trainings, airstrikes against ISIS, and sending weapons. Although the Kurdish organization in Syria is linked to another Kurdish organization, PKK that is listed as 'terrorist' by US, the coalition partners have still supported. US sees the organization in Syria as its ally, not as 'terrorist' in order to justify their intervention in Syria. That's why, the Western media has represented the organization as an ally correspondingly this support. Furthermore, the representation of these women in Western media is a war tactic. (Flanagin 2013)

Peshmerga was included also in Literature Review to understand the difference between them and YPG, because most of sources and news indicated or confused that they are same force. The support of Peshmerga is also significant for unification of Kurdish organizations, because their relationship is changeable, according to political conjuncture. That's why; the relationships among the organizations were examined.

The warrior women was researched in general in terms of West in order to understand the compare with Kurdish female fighters, because they are also represented as warriors in Western media. The significant point is that there were famous warrior women called Amazons in history, and Kurdish women have been also called like that. So, the similarity between them has been drawn. The other comparison is done with women in Western guerrilla organizations. They were different from Kurdish female fighters of being listed as 'terrorist' and doing suicide attacks, but they are seen as dangerous and successful and brave like Kurdish women. Last the comparison is made with Turkish warrior women, because of Kurds living in the same land of Turkey for years and fighting together in the same front in history. While mentioning the famous Turkish warrior women in wars of liberation, some of them are not certain whether they are Turkish or Kurdish. Moreover, there is claim about Turkification of all these warriors. However, it is the fact that Kurdish women had fought in these wars. They were again represented as brave and powerful.

The roles of women in Kurdish movement were looked at historical and social background. The Kurdish movement had made a radical change on their equality in society. This change has reflected on the Kurdish organization and the guerrilla groups although the change in mind has developed not easy. The generation of

women's feminist movement appeared based on the freedom for women from the men. It came into existence in both society and other Kurdish organizations, so the female units are formed separately.

Before the looking at the representation of Kurdish warrior women, the conceptual framework in orientalism, myth and commodification were studied. Orientalism is an image or view structured by West. So, it helps to understand the Western perspective in Kurdish women in media. Myth creation is for making metaphoric objects in consumer culture. It helps to understand these women became the objects while they were used as mythification. Commodification is a result of the again consumer culture. Media is in the culture industry, so the women are used as a product to turn into a commodity to be sold.

In research methodology, the discourse analysis was made on 4 popular fashion magazines' articles. The fashion magazine was chosen to study, because giving this kind of news, which is not about fashion or beauty, is not familiar. That's why; the representation of Kurdish female fighters is studied on the magazines. The fashion magazines were published before the support of US and other European countries to Kurdish fighters. It could be evaluated that all of these fashion magazines supported Kurdish side, but especially female unit. There was an emphasis to support them and an attempt to indicate reasonable results to intervene the conflict. Therefore, the article most probably laid emphasis on women's power, myths, exaggerations, and scaring ISIS to draw international interest. As stated by a writer previously, it should be done in terms of the war tactic.

In conclusion, Western media could sell their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and ideologies about Kurdish female fighters in Kobane to justify their support and their intervention in the city by way of generating myths, looking at in orientalist view, and commodifying women to remark international public opinion.

5.2 Limitations of the research

The possible problems mentioned by Çomu and Halaiqa in studying in new media can also be seen in this study (33). The amount of the results in magazine news and shares in social networks about the representation of Kobane women can be changed and more results can be accessible. Herewith, the outcome of this study could be different with the more results (Mitra and Cohen cited in Çomu and Halaiqa 33). But only five articles of fashion magazines is accessed.

While all fashion magazines are written in English, ELLE caused limited research in this study. ELLE is originally written in French. That's why; while Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis was studied, some structural factors could not be done. There is an almost one-to-one translation, but any risk of possible mistake was avoided. For example, the sentence structure as active or passive voice in syntactic analysis was not done.

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