

## **Postmodern Youth Leader Icon of Media: Camila**

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### **Abstract**

*Although leadership in social movements was a popular topic in the 1970s, student protests in 2011 known as Chilean Winter might be considered an exception in this regard. During the protests the student leader Camila Vallejo who media introduces to the world, presented as a postmodern mythic hero. In fact, Vallejo as a leader of the movement is the silhouette of the fragmented and complicated social structure of postmodernism. This study aims to understand the role of the media in the process of creating the mythical hero in postmodern era in the case of Vallejo, news texts and comments on the websites of 22 English and Turkish newspapers have been analyzed according to William Mitchell's images analysis tree which includes five dimensions as graphic, optical, perceptual, mental and verbal. It is possible to say that there is not any significant difference between the media discourse of the newspapers and countries.*

**Keywords:** Student movements, image, postmodernism, media, Camila Vallejo

### **Introduction**

Although leadership in social movements was a popular topic in the 1970s and 80s, student protests in 2011 known as Chilean Winter might be considered an exception in this regard. It is a topic which Chilean Winter revitalized. Because 2011 student mobilization in Chile introduced a new media tic leader to the world: Camila Vallejo. Most possibly Vallejo is the most known youth leader since Che Guevara and media has a primary role in this process. During the protests Vallejo has been presented as a postmodern mythic hero. She is a celebrity without any doubt. In fact Vallejo, as a leader of a social movement which is an intersection of the movements including students, youth, feminist, anti-globalization and also includes and excludes all of them at the same time, is silhouette of the fragmented and complicated social structure of postmodernism and postmodern spectacle. This study aims to reveal how Vallejo has been represented in the internet news texts and reader comments related to the protests in May and August 2011 and also election of deputy in November 2013. Internet news of the totally 22 daily newspapers' websites in Turkey and the UK have been examined according to the William T. Mitchell's images family tree in order to understand the mythicizing practices of the news media. It has been tried to explain the mythicizing methods and strategies by analyzing of the news and the comments and the metaphors used in them.

### **1. Leadership in Student Movements**

Leader might be described as the person who can change the current culture by appealing to emotions with his or her charisma. According to the charismatic leadership approach, charisma is a perception of the followers about the leader (Conger and Kanungo, 1998:47). Downton (1973) defines leadership as the capacity to make decisions for the group and states that any theory about leadership should consider the relationship between the leader and followers. But the nature of this relationship is never fully defined and clear. In fact, criteria used for categorization of the leadership types is complex and ambiguous but equality of 'leader=charismatic person' may be provided a useful theoretical premise about the nature of relation between the leadership and personal characteristics. As Todd Gitlin (1980) points out, transformation of the leader to a hero depends on the factors outside of the movement such as historical and environmental conditions and the role of media.

In his book titled *The Whole World is Watching* which he argues the relations between the student movements and media in the case of SDS (Student for Democratic Society), Gitlin (1980:149) writes 'News presentation formats of the media promote the activists to make different activities to be involved in the news and to exaggerate the importance of the symbols, slogans and clothing.' He also points out that the media produces iconic personalities. The student movements have produced iconic personalities with participation of the media. The most famous and well known of these figures is Ernesto 'Che' Guevara. Michael Casey (2009) observed how Che went from being a symbol of resistance to the capitalist system to one of the most marketable brands around the world in his book. He points out that as the major and most known figure of the Cuban Revolution, his stylized visage has become a ubiquitous countercultural symbol of youthful rebellion and global insignia in popular culture (Casey,2009:128). He is still a popular icon today. For example his photograph taken by Alberto Korda, titled *Guerrillero Heroico*, is one of the most famous photograph in the world. His face now is on the lots of items such as t-shirts, stickers, hats, cups, posters, magnets, and etc. as a consumer culture icon. In fact he has been transformed to a cult popular figure by the media. Michael Löwy (1973:7) claims that encouragement of the mass media the 'Che myth' rised and this myth made him a part meta narratives with roles as a 'Red Robin Hood or Don Quixote of communism'. Guevara's image was transformed into that of a nebulous 'rebel', exemplifying teenage angst and insubordination, and was embraced by marketers of a consumer counterculture (DeSoucey and et al.,2008:114). It is possible to say that mass-mediated commercial culture created and profited by his image. His call for revolution has been affected to student groups worldwide since the late 1960s.

Daniel Cohn-Bendit in France, Tariq Ali in Great Britain, Rudi Dutschke in Germany and Mark Rudd in USA may be regarded as the other symbol figures of the student movements. Cohn-Bendit who was one of the leading spokesmen of the May Movement in 1968, was not only the sitting target of the attacks from media but also favorite reporters of thejournalists. According to Lavabre and Rey (1998:29) he was voracious for microphones and cameras. And today many people are saying that we live in a postmodern era, media has Camila and she not only likes the cameras but also computers, ipads and smartphones. Now there are student leaders who can reach alot of people via Internet and their social media accounts instead of the leaders of the past who wait for the microphones. It is clear that communication facilities increased and it is much easier to reach the people compared to the past. In postmodern era, there is no need to travel to meet with someone because there are Skype, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, and etc. but it is more difficult to attract attention of the media. Anyone can reach a journalist from anywhere around the world via the Internet and smartphones. Today, problem of the media and journalists is not to find news or to reach the person who is the subject of news anymore, the problem is to make a selection among the events that flow from the all around the world and to put the word out as soon as possible. It is no longer a problem to be famous, problem is to stay famous in Guy Debord's (1970) *Society of the Spectacle*.

## ***2. The Society of Spectacle, Postmodernism and Postmodern Spectacle***

According to Debord's (1970) first thesis 'The whole life of modern societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles.' And the fourth thesis says 'The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.' Spectacle has a gradually increasing role and importance in our society and media culture. Everything including student and resistance movements might be an image and part of the media spectacle. According to Fiske (1982) mythicized people or things have been converted to the empty and hollow icons in this 'post' world where the change and improvement are emphasized continuously. As a kind of language, 'images are now regarded as the sort of sign that presents a deceptive appearance of naturalness and transparency concealing an opaque, distorting, arbitrary mechanism of representation, a process of ideological mystification.' (Mitchell,1984:504).

As 'a synthesis of language, discourse, and viewing images are not one isolated expressions among many and are certainly not just objects or signs' (Burnett,2004:2). In the postmodernism, image is the source of the truth and 'the image is proof of the reality, and images can be constructed and manipulated' (Harvey,1992:312) especially by the media. And what is postmodernism? Is it possible to define it? Because postmodernism is a term that includes almost everthing and there is not a consensus about the meaning of it. The 'post' is the determinant part of etymology of 'postmodern' word and it means 'after.' So postmodernism is a new stage following the modern era. Dennis McQuail (2005:131) qualifies postmodernism as a late stage of the modern era which was characterized by rapid social change, industrialization, bureaucratic forms of organization and mass political movements.

In his famous work *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* Jameson (1991) signifies five key elements of postmodern society. Firstly postmodernism symbolizes the cultural logic of late capitalism. Secondly and thirdly, postmodern society is characterized by the superficiality and diminishes of the emotions. The fourth element is the loss of historicity in the postmodern world. Fifth and finally, a new technology associated with postmodern society. Postmodernism is characterized by superficial, instant, flighty, emotional cultural forms. There are snap fun, nostalgia, pastiche, collage, mobility and inconsistency in the postmodern cultural aesthetic. Everything is volatile in postmodernism. And in this transiency there is no need to keep the opposing people or power under control. According to Anthony Giddens (1987) in modern state, icons and symbols of resistance were kept under control by pressure but this is not a necessity in postmodern culture. Because possibilities of resistance are collapsed in this society and disobedience symbols are weak, surreal and insignificant concepts. In other words they are transformed to innocuous systemic dissident icons that can not damage the system by mythicizing. In this society an opposing figure lose its dissident characteristics to be an icon. In postmodern society resistance itself has been become a part of the postmodern spectacle. Slavoj Zizek (2000) who argues that postmodern politics of resistance are influenced by aesthetic phenomena, give the examples of from body piercings to spectacular incidents in public spaces like flash mob but he is not sure about the actual efficiency of this aesthetic resistance.

### **3. Postmodern Image, Leadership and Media**

Postmodern spectacle overspreads by the myths and heroes. Barthes (1991:131) writes that 'myth transforms a meaning into form' in other words, myth is always a 'language-robbery' for him. This transformation process to an object of consumption is carried out to the people. So image of a person becomes an object of consumption which is bought and sold. Myth is not a concept or idea, it is a message and everything can be a myth if it has a discourse (Barthes,1977:9) and today the media constructs and feeds that discourse. It is possible the mythicization of the social issues such as environment, labor, production, peace, democracy, rights and also the people who are related these social subjects. In fact creating a hero is the fundamental element of the mythicization. Postmodern mythical hero could be created by constructed icons, images and perception. Pierce (1958:276) defines the icon (eikon in Greek, imago in Latin) as any sign that may represent its object mainly by its similarity. In a wider classification it is an image and a sign. Everything might be transformed to an image or icon by mythicizing. Mircea Eliade (1963:119) describes the myth as 'a leaving reality' and states that the myth constantly need to be produced again and again. In this reproduction process media is one of the main actors. In mythicization process of the events, places or people, media exaggerates some of the features of to that 'thing', makes some of them meaningless or unrecognizable while blending with its own style.

Gitlin (1980:149) points out that like other movements, student movements produced symbolic figures by the media discourse. His answer for the question of 'How is a leader being converted to a celebrity in the news media?' is '...partly by the news system's centuries old search for the dramatically personal. But more specifically, the code of objectivity and balance decrees a search for spokespersons.' And he adds that: 'The all-permeating spectacular cultures insisted that the movement be identified through its celebrities; naturally it attracted personalities who enjoyed performance, who spoke quotably. Media made them celebrities. The movement elevated many leaders; the media selected for celebrity those among them who most closely matched prefabricated images of what an opposition leader should look and sound like: articulate, theatrical, bombastic and knowing and inventive in the ways of packaging messages for their mediability (Gitlin,1980:153-154). Media tells the events as if they are personal stories. Personalizing is the heart of the news making but there are stars of every story and media chooses some of them only. Rojek (2001:16) describes celebrity as 'phenomenon of mass-circulation newspapers, TV, radio and film.' Popular figure or celebrity is a constructed fictive icon and it can be created by mythicizing of the some special characteristics of the person. Media had a bigger role in the process of the making celebrities of Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Rudi Dutschke, Mark Rudd who were students leaders of 1968's, more than their own personalities (Fremion,2001:37). Media mythicized and made them celebrities by telling their life stories which were functioned with dramatic elements and giving place their courageous speeches in the news. Mark Rudd who became famous and a celebrity as the leader Columbia University student uprising in the spring 1968, says that his becoming 'leader/symbol/star' was a bad error but he insisted that it still 'has had some advantages (ability to use my name to draw large audiences, make money etc.)' (Rudd,1969:10).

Kellner (2009:716) writes ‘media increasingly process events, news and information in the form of media spectacle’ and describe the celebrities as ‘mass idols who are venerated and celebrated by the media and celebrity is dependent on both constant media proliferation and the implosion between entertainment, news and politics’.

#### **4. The Chilean Winter and Its Mediatic Leader Camila**

The Chilean Winter is the student mobilizations in Chile in 2011. The New York Times published the article ‘With Kiss-Ins and Dances, Young Chileans Push for Reform’ in August 2011, in which the Chilean student movement was called the ‘Chilean Winter’, in reference to the revolutions in the Middle East, known as the Arab Spring (Cabalin,2012:224). There were several protest movements happened in different countries such as Spain, Tunisia, Egypt, Greece during 2011. It should be remembered as the year of revolutions for some authors (Fuchs,2012:775) but it is possible to say that the most known ones are the Arab Spring and Chilean Winter. From the earliest days of the 2011 mobilizations, the leaders have identified their efforts as el movimiento estudiantil or the student movement (Pollan,2012:80). In early June, student protestors had occupied nearly one hundred schools throughout the country and massive demonstrations later in the month brought together estimates of 100,000 to 200,000 activists (Long,2011). Marches were accompanied by the takeover of more than 200 schools and universities, and the national and international media put attention on the movement. It looks like the Chilean Winter transformed to the sample of postmodern resistance and Camila Vallejo postmodern media icon. Vallejo is one of the leaders who had a great public visibility in the media. As Zizek (2000) points out that the movements have since taken a cannibalistic turn. The protests have become joyful and like a carnival drawing national support and international attention. 2011 student demonstrations, marches, strikes and takeovers of educational establishments were accompanied by flashmobs, kiss-a-thons, viral campaigns, and other artistic activities, where students used both the physical and digital public space actively (Cabalin,2014:28).

Tucker (2010:6) diagnoses this carnivalistic and symbolic forms of resistance as a sample of ‘global trend of the aestheticization of politics that constructs a more democratic, playful, and participatory vision of society...[because it] appeals to emotion, visual styles, and images.’ In Chilean Winter student mobilization, over 2,000 students from the Universidad de Chile dressed up as zombies, and in nearly perfect coordination danced to Michael Jackson’s Thriller, in a symbolic effort to demonstrate the ‘death of education’ in Chile. Clips of the dance were shown on many news networks, and were posted all over YouTube and various social networking sites (Pollan,2010:114). It is the new way to protest. And both a national and international media shone a spotlight on the plight of the students especially the ones who like talking in front of the cameras. The popular student leaders Camila Vallejo, president of the Federation of Students of the University of Chile (Federación de Estudiantes de Chile, FECH), and Giorgio Jackson, president of the Federation of Students of Catholic University (Confederación de Estudiantes de la Universidad Católica, FEUC) during the 2011 movement, became active participants in the public discussion about education (Cabalin,2012:225) and they became popular voices, almost celebrities. Camila, with her full name Camila Antonia Amaranta Vallejo Dowling, is the one of the leader of the Chilean Winter. As president of FECH and main spokesperson of the Confederation of Chilean Students (Confederación de Estudiantes de Chile, CONFECH), she was one of the most prominent leaders of the student protests of 2011 (Goldman,2012). Her name was mentioned in every interview and it is almost impossible to talk about the Chilean Winter without mentioning her. Vallejo, ‘La Camila’ as Chileans refer to her, has become an international media icon.

It is possible to say that first event which Vallejo attracted public attention was the protest dated on Thursday, 18 August 2011. This event was called the ‘March of the Umbrellas’ because participants used them to protect themselves from the elements (Cabalin,2014:26). After this protests, the student movement participants and Camila Vallejo collected the shells from the tear-gas canisters and laid them out in front of La Moneda, the presidential palace, in the shape of a peace sign in the plaza, with Vallejo in the center (Goldman,2012). She gained public attention as the leader and most known face of the 2011 protests and in December she was chosen as ‘Person of the Year’ in an online poll by readers of The Guardian by gaining 78% of the votes (www.theguardian.com). She was also included in the list of ‘100 People Who Mattered’ of Time and ‘150 Fearless Women’ of Newsweek (www.thedailybeast.com). She was ‘the new face of global activism’ (Wilson,2011). By the year 2013 students were transformed into political actors like Camila Vallejo. After Chile’s national elections of 17 November 2013, Vallejo was elected to Congress.

Since Che Guevara, in the 2000s Vallejo is the latest example of the youth/student leaders who transformed to with statement of Giddens (1987) ‘innocuous systemic dissident icon’ by mythicizing in postmodern societies. And in this process role of the media was so important and effective.

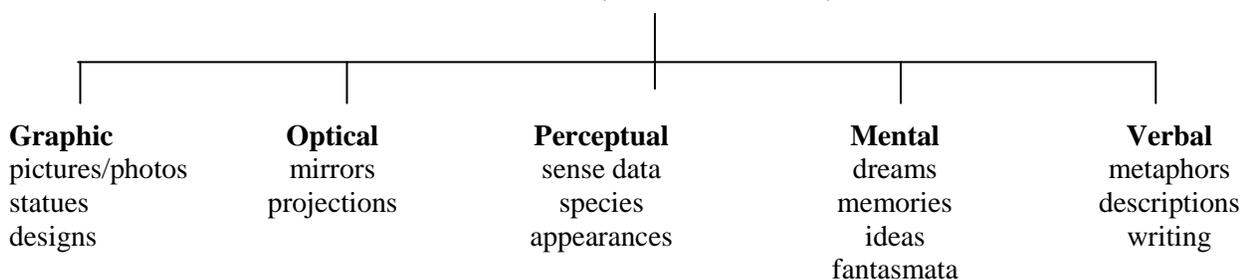
## 5. Method

The study aims to reveal the mythicizing process of Camila Vallejo of the media. For the study, websites of 22 newspapers have been monitored from May 2011, beginning of the movement to the date of general election in November 2013. Newspapers are Akşam, Cumhuriyet, Evrensel, Habertürk, Hürriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Sözcü, Takvim, Taraf, Vatan for Turkey and Daily Express, Daily Mail, Daily Star, Financial Times, Independent, Mirror, Morning Star, Observer, The Guardian, The Telegraph, The Times for UK. Some important dates and events have been selected and followed carefully because the study covers an extended period of time. Selected dates are:

- 18th August 2011 ... Marches of the Umbrellas
- 24th August 2011 ... News of The Guardian (beginning of media attention)
- 17th November 2013 ... General Election in Chile

News texts and also comments have been examined according to the William T. Mitchell’s images (icons) analysis tree. Mitchell (1986:9) describes images as ‘[they] are not just a particular kind of sign, but something like an actor on the historical stage, a presence or character, a family’ and it is possible to construct a family tree which has been shown below.

### IMAGES (Mitchell,1986:13)



Images tree has five branches as graphic, optical, perceptual, mental and verbal. Each branch of this family tree designates a type of imagery that is central to the discourse of some intellectual discipline (Mitchell,1984:505). It is evaluated visual features of the images such as pictures/photos and statues in graphic and optical images. Perceptual images contain appearances and mental images include ideas, told memories and constructed fantasies. Here fantasmata is the conceptualization of Zizek (2009:135) as the framework which has an important role in the functioning of the ideology and organizing of the world consistently. Fantasmata as a part of the society is a new reality construction and an imaginative scenario. Images are constructed by metaphors and descriptions in verbal branch. Mitchell (1986:23) writes that ‘the verbal image (usually glossed as “description”) is the keystone of all language. Accurate, precise descriptions produce images that “come from the verbal expressions” more vividly than the “images which flow from objects” themselves.’ Thus analysis will be started with the verbal images. Study contains websites news texts and comments under them. So there will not be an evaluation under optical images and only photos will be examined among the subtitles of the graphic images.

## 6. Results and Discussion

18 news and 55 comments in Turkish newspapers’ websites and also 11 news and 405 comments in English newspapers’ websites have been examined for the study. Results have been represented according to the images tree branches separately.

### 6.1. Verbal Images

In fact, protest movements in Chile began in May after Education Minister Joaquin Lavin was accused of corruption. In June lots of protest demonstrations were held across the country and by the end of July, nearly 140 schools were occupied in Santiago alone (Guzman-Concha,2012:409) but media did not notice Camila before August.

Article titled ‘Chile’s Commander Camila, the student who can shut down a city’ which was published after Marches of the Umbrellas, on 24 August 2011 in The Guardian attracted attention to Camila. Turkish media recognized Camila when this article was translated into Turkish two days later. Some other articles were published in The Guardian about her such as ‘Latin America’s 23-year-old new revolutionary folk hero’ dated 8 October 2011, ‘Chilean rebel Camila: The problem is bigger’ dated 20 November 2012 and ‘Camila Vallejo: They tried to create caricatures of me’ dated 9 February 2014.

In August 2011, there was news in The Observer and The Telegraph about Vallejo. Headlines of the news were ‘Chilean student leader Camila Vallejo’ and ‘University of Chile student President Camila Vallejo 150,000 marched on side streets’ respectively. In Turkey there was news on six newspapers’ websites. Headlines were as follows: ‘Beautiful student leader who toppled the minister (Akşam)’, ‘Communist beautiful student leader (Habertürk)’, ‘The most beautiful revolutionary commander Camila (Hürriyet)’, ‘Chile on her way (Milliyet)’, ‘Anybody having the side facing Camila? (Takvim)’ and ‘Chile in love with her (Vatan)’. It might be said that there is much news about Camila in Turkey and headlines are more magazinish. Two basic ways of verbal images are descriptions and metaphors. When descriptions in the news texts are examined, it is possible to say that Vallejo has been described with her appearances more than her ideas. Camila has been defined with the sentence ‘She has gathered a cult following around the world’ in The Guardian’s news which made Camila a media spectacle, dated 24 August 2011. There are similar expressions in the news texts of Hürriyet, Milliyet and Vatan in Turkey.

Her beauty and good-looking have also been emphasized in comments below the news. Some comments which are below the news of The Guardian dated 24 August 2011 are follows: ‘Jesus she’s beautiful!’, ‘Hot girl.’, ‘She is a beauty and a joy forever.’, ‘She has the looks, the style, and the background, as well as the courage to rage against injustice.’ There are similar comments below the news dated 11 November 2013 such as ‘Vallejo is a hero and very pretty’ and ‘Young, idealistic and beautiful.’ There is a comment below The Observer’s news dated 18 November 2013 as ‘She is very inspiring to us.’ In Turkey similarly there are comments to Hürriyet’s news dated 26 August 2011 such as ‘I might be a communist for you’, ‘She is so beautiful’, ‘She can gather thousands of people with this beauty’, ‘I am in love with her from now on’, ‘If I was a Chilean, I would be most loyal fan of you.’ And comment for Milliyet’s news is ‘You could revolutionize even Obama with this beauty.’ However there are critical comments, too. For example, there are comments such as ‘Let’s be honest, would we have hundreds of you tube clips and read a full on article if she was a fat black with crap teeth?’ and ‘She wouldn’t be making headlines if she didn’t have a beautiful face’ for The Guardian’s news; ‘It is annoying how people focus on her looks much more than her ideas’ for The Observer’s news and ‘She couldn’t attract attention, if she wasn’t so beautiful’ for Milliyet’s news.

Vallejo has been portrayed as ‘a Botticelli beauty’ in the words of the novelist Goldman in The Guardian’s news dated 8 October 2011 titled ‘Latin America’s 23-year-old new revolutionary folk hero.’ She has been described as ‘The most famous face of the communists’ in Financial Times, as ‘The 23-year-old communist’ and ‘one of the most recognisable face of a student movement’ in Daily Star, as ‘Communist student leader’ in Morning Star, as ‘Beautiful and passionate leader of Chilean 2011 student protests’ in Akşam and ‘the first global leader of generation Y’ and ‘Chile’s hope’ in Hürriyet. It has been stated that Vallejo had been elected to Congress in the news after the general election but names of the other student leaders had not been mentioned most of the news. For example, ‘Camila Vallejo has been elected to Congress alongside three other former university leaders (Daily Star)’, ‘Vallejo and three student leaders in their twenties were elected to congress (Morning Star)’, ‘Leader of the 2011 uprising Camila and other three student leaders were able to be elected to Congress (Akşam)’, ‘Student leader Camila in the parliament (Cumhuriyet)’, ‘The most remarkable figure of the Chilean election Vallejo and her other three friends were elected to Congress (Habertürk)’ and ‘2011 student mobilization leader Camila Vallejo and her three friends were elected deputy in Chile (Takvim, Taraf).’

The basic ways of mythic construction is the using of metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor is using a word out of its dictionary meaning to explain something else (Foss, 2004:19). Metonymy is referring a totality with its part. There are examples of antonomasia, a kind of metonymy and defining someone with the feature of him or her at first glance in the news. For example, Vallejo has been called as ‘communist student leader (The Guardian)’, ‘communist beauty (Akşam, Habertürk)’ and ‘revolutionary beauty (Hürriyet).’ She has been addressed as if she is a family member or acquaintance especially in Turkish news and it simplifies the possession.

The possession might be accepted as a part of the hero worship. For example, in The Guardian ‘Chile’s Commander Camila (24.08.2011)’, in Akşam ‘Commander Camila (26.08.2011)’, in Hürriyet, Milliyet and Vatan ‘Best commander Camila (26.08.2011)’, in Takvim ‘Camila is now deputy (18.11.2013)’ and in Vatan ‘Camila is on the political stage (18.11.2013).’ One of the outstanding things in Camila’s appearance is her nose ring. Camila Vallejo has been described as ‘Not since the days of Zapatistas’ Subcomandante Marcos has Latin America been so charmed by a rebel leader. This time, there is no mask, no pipe, and no gun, just a silver nose ring’ in The Guardian’s news dated 24 August and as ‘...with her silver nose ring and impassioned references to Karl Marx and Fidel Castro...’ in the news dated 18 November 2013. There are expressions like ‘...wears a silver nose ring and studies geography’ in the Observer’s news dated 18 November 2013. She has been described as ‘beauty with a nose ring (Habertürk, Vatan)’ and ‘with her mark, a silver nose ring (Akşam, Hürriyet, Milliyet, Vatan)’ in the news dated 26 August 2011.

Nose ring is a sample of ideogram which Mitchell (1986) defines as a symbol represents something without saying its name. He writes ‘The meaning of the picture does not declare itself by a simple and direct reference to the object it depicts. It may depict an idea, a person, a sound image, or a thing.’ (Mitchell,1986:28). An object might be the icon or symbol of a worldview, a mentality or a culture. So while making a connotative reading of an object we need to evaluate the role and place of it in the historical and social repertoires, and also if it symbolizes a particular idea or not. As Fiske (1982:91) points out fundamentally ‘denotation is what is photographed, connotation is how it is photographed.’ According to Coward and Ellis (1977:55) a sign appears as the articulation of a second concept in fact an ideological concept completely in connotation. Today in popular cultural production nose ring of Camila has been turned to a trendy image such as Charlie Chaplin’s bowler hat or Che Guevara’s black starry cap. It is possible to say that Vallejo who has been called as ‘popular social media icon (The Guardian)’, has been increased her popularity according to the information given in the news. For example number of her Twitter followers increased to 748,000 from 300,000 in two years. It is stated that she becomes a celebrity with the expressions of ‘world’s most famous student leader has gained a rock-star status’ and ‘megastar of the international left’ in and according to the news of The Guardian’s dated 18 November 2013 ‘...in the Chilean capital, Santiago, art galleries sell oil painting of her while chalked messages of support decorate streets.’

## **6.2. Perceptual Images**

Perceptions and appearance has been come forward in perceptual images. In fact Vallejo became famous through her appearance and she is aware of that. According to the news of The Guardian dated 24 August 2011 she said ‘You have to recognize that beauty can be a hook. It can be a compliment, they come to listen to me because of my appearance, but then I explain the ideas.’ Her words have been included in the news of Hürriyet, Milliyet and Habertürk dated 26 August 2011. Vallejo has been compared to the leaders of the 1968 with the expression of ‘Paris 1968 has its celebrity protestors, handsome faces that brought hundreds of thousands into the streets, photogenic young men like Daniel Cohn-Bendit’ in the news of The Guardian dated 8 October 2011. Also her youth ness has been emphasized by indicating her age in almost all the news.

## **6.3. Mental Images**

Memories, personal comments and fantasmata are located under mental images. There is no any memory in the news but there are fantasmata and mythical image especially in comparisons of Vallejo with Che Guevara. For example, The Guardian’s news dated 8 October 2011 has been included the sentence as ‘Vallejo’s charismatic leadership has led commentators to make the obligatory comparisons to other Latin American leftist icons like Che Guevara.’ Comparisons with Che has been seen in the comments below the news like ‘She is new Che (08.10.2011)’ and ‘Camila could be the twenty-first century Che Guevara (08.10.2011)’ in The Guardian and ‘The new Che! (26.08.2011)’ in the comments of Hürriyet web news. Bolivian vice-president Alvaro Garcia Linera’s words included in The Guardian’s news dated 24 August 2011 as ‘We are all in love with her’ have been so effective for creating fantasmata and hero. Linera’s words have been included in the news of Observer, Akşam, Habertürk, Hürriyet, Milliyet and Vatan. There are several personal comments of the reporter about Camila in the news of The Guardian dated 8 October 2011 such as ‘an eloquent and attractive young woman who exudes self-confidence and style’ and ‘when she speaks, her hands fly about, like birds snatching invisible prey.’ Her Mexico visit has been phrased with vibrant words such as ‘When she visited Mexico, crowds stood in the rain to see her. Some of them cried, handing her flowers’ in same news text.

#### 6.4. Graphic Images

Photographs, a branch of graphic images, contribute being kept fresh of the icons in the mind. Photos have been used almost in all the news except three ones. Vallejo has been seen while kneeling within a peace sing made of spent teargas shells on the most preferred one. This photo has been used in the news of The Guardian, Akşam, Habertürk and Hürriyet. The photograph which has a connotation with Marches of the Umbrellas dated 18 August and Camila with a colorful umbrella has been used in The Guardian, Habertürk and Milliyet. Whatsoever the main subject is the movement in some news it might be said that using the photos of Vallejo contributes to mythicizing process. Personalization has been constantly used in the news. Camila's photos which were taken during the protests are quite photogenic and focused on her face and her symbol, nose ring, has been seen easily on them.

Additionally it might be mentioned two groups of photographs one of them is the photo which was taken while she was speaking at a meeting in 2011 and the other one is the photo which was taken during parliamentary oath in 2013. These photos are portraits generally and have been used in the news of Daily Mail, Daily Star, Observer, Telegraph in UK and also Akşam, Evrensel, Hürriyet, Milliyet, Sözcü, Taraf and Vatan in Turkey. There is an eye-catching detail at the photos used on the websites news of Akşam, Hürriyet, Sözcü and Vatan. Camila has been seen as her left fist in the air. In his book *Mythologies* Roland Barthes (1991:195) interprets perception of the myth over the photograph of a black soldier who salutes French flag and proposes that soldier and photographic image create the denotative sign together. He argues that this photograph turns to a connotative sign and door range to ideological statement like colonialism and nationalism. During the process of understanding meaning of a photograph as Christine Geraghty (2000:365) writes 'we relate what we see in it, the visual signs, to a wider set of understanding. Some of these may be signified directly from what is in the photograph, other depend on the cultural knowledge that can be activated by the photograph.' In Turkey and also in a wide part of the world, a photograph of someone whose left fist in the air connotes 'political left' and 'communism'. This act which was frequently seen in the protests in Turkey before 1980, the year of military coup, makes a negative reference to armed conflict involving deaths before 1980.

#### Conclusion

In the light of all the popular movements that happened in 2011 (Arab Spring, London Riots, Occupy Wall Street, etc.) it might be said that in postmodern era protest becomes to a performance or a media spectacle. Spectacle needs a star for spotlight and that star should be suitable for transformation to a celebrity with his/her appearance. Media polishes him or her. It is possible to say that Chilean student uprising that was devoid of the world's attention because of the Arab Spring has been attracted attention due to a young and beautiful woman, Camila Vallejo who was turned to a popular cultural icon by media. Nevertheless Camila, who is a media tic phenomenon not only in Spanish-speaking countries but also in the whole world, has been turned to a postmodern object of desire. The postmodern spectacle society represents her as if she is only an image by isolating the meaning just like other things. Because of the news, world and people consider and interpret Camila Vallejo whose number of Twitter followers competes with pop stars, as a kind of show star or a popular cultural icon, not a revolutionary student leader.

This study aims to understand the role of the media in the process of creating the mythical hero in postmodern era in the case of Camila Vallejo, news texts and comments on the websites of totally 22 English and Turkish newspapers have been analyzed. It is possible to say that there is not any significant difference between the media discourse of the newspapers and countries. Some limitations of the study should also be mentioned. Primarily due to linguistic limitations English and Turkish newspapers could only have been compared. However a comparison in Chilean media might reveal interesting and significant results. One of the reasons choice of UK for comparison is linguistic limitation and another reason is beginning of the news in Turkish media about Camila Vallejo was the news of The Guardian dated 24 August 2011. Besides sample has been limited to specific dates because of the wide scope of the research time and also only websites of the newspapers have been preferred as research medium for the study. Other mass communication means like television might provide an interesting platform and a starting point for future studies.

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