Borderline policies: The media as a tool for dialogue on migration

Carlos Alberto Aguilar Cáceres | carlos.aguilar.contact@gmail.com

Plaza San Marcos #598, Fraccionamiento Rincón de los Arcos. Irapuato,

Guanajuato, México. C.P. 36633

Abstract: *The photography of Aylan Kurdi is used as a case study to analyze the repercussions it had. The approaches used for it rely on the fields of communication, semiotics, politics and psychology. The process of otherness and the violence exerted by closed borders politics are addressed and deconstructed. Media is proposed as a tool in dialogues surrounding international human mobility.*

Keywords: *Unaccompanied minor, Aylan Kurdi, refugee, migration, policies, terrorism, violence.*

Políticas de frontera: Los medios como herramienta para el diálogo sobre la migración

Resumen: *Se utiliza la fotografía de Aylan Kurdi usada para un caso de estudio, con el objetivo de analizar sus repercusiones. El texto se apoya la comunicación, la semiótica, la política y la psicología. Se deconstruyen los procesos de otredad y la violencia ejercida por las políticas de fronteras cerradas. Los medios son propuestos como herramienta de diálogo para la migración.*

Palabras clave: *Menores sin compañía, Aylan Kurdi, refugiados, migración, políticas, terrorismo, violencia.*

About the author: Master MIM student (class 2016-2018) with a B.A. in Communication and Digital Media. Formation includes studies in México, Australia, Catalunya/Spain, Italy and France; as well as four years volunteering with TECHO (www.techo.org) as a firm believer that poverty may and must be overcome.

1. Introduction: The impact of a widely spread image[1]

A photograph can be a powerful vessel for communication; especially during extremely violent situations, photographs can "act as tattoo-images: «some images can make an impact on the viewer's sensibility as if leaving an imprint on their memory» (…)" (de- Andrés, 2016: 30). In 2015, the photograph of Aylan Kurdi (a 3 year old Syrian boy, whose dead body was photographed washed away by the sea) made a significant impact on the acceptance of refugees' influx towards European countries, as Patrick Kingsley states in his Guardian article in September 2016: "Two days after Alan's death, Germany agreed to admit thousands of refugees who had been stranded in Hungary. The move encouraged the leaders of central and eastern Europe to create a humanitarian corridor from northern Greece to southern Bavaria, while Canada promised to resettle 25,000 Syrians." (Kingsley, 2016: online news). The immediate proposals and promises were ambitious. There was something about the image that triggered these discourses.

Therefore, the interest of this text is not only to explore the effects of the mentioned picture in both the media and public policies; but also to propose a

---

[1] *Turkish News Agency. A Turkish gendarme prepared to carry body of Aylan Kurdi, 3, who drowned off Turkey's coast on Wednesday. New York Times, 3 September 2015. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/04/world/europe/syria-boy-drowning.html?_r=0 [Date of query: 29/10/2016]*

new way of analyzing the situation through a psychological and discursive approach. Hence, the following questions are raised: How was this case generally perceived in the Mediterranean? How

This text is the result of the course "Research, Communication and Development in the Mediterranean", taught by professor Teresa Velázquez for the Master MIM. The original assignment was to create a research proposal in groups around the subject: "Communication for Social Change". The drafted proposal includes a research methodology to delve into the analysis of the proposed model. The following document is written based on the theoretical framework used for the project, and has gone through modifications in order to be published. The original team was conformed by Alina Maggiore, Clara Polina, Natalia Pinheiro and Carlos Aguilar. I immensely thank my teammates for allowing me to develop my part of the work into the present article.

Was the fear of immigrants constructed through the media? Can this fear be used to have some insight on the narratives and policies of different host countries?

2. Objectives

This paper is the base for a research proposal, which will ideally have the following objectives:

1) To analyze the way migration policies are depicted in the European media with higher reach.

2) To compare the results of the media discourses with the adapted Moghaddam's theory (Staircase to terrorism).

3. Hypothesis

A) The lack of recognition of the human status of refugees by the media may is correlated to harsh migration policies.

B) The psychological path that takes a person to commit a terrorist attack according to Moghaddam; is the same logic under which migratory policies are created.

4. Methodology

First, a set of countries to be considered must be established. These countries will ideally be within the European boarders with the Mediterranean, or will have a significant historical role (Such as Germany).

Once the list of countries is made, the media landscape of each nation will be analyzed. This can be made through International Organizations' Reports (Such as the United Nations sub-organizations) or the own country's media reports on the subject.

After the media outlets have been identified, a content analysis () will be performed to describe how have migration policies been covered. A content analysis is "used to study a broad range of 'texts' from transcripts of interviews and discussions in clinical and social research to the narrative and form of films, TV programs and the editorial and advertising content of newspapers and magazines." (Macnamara, 2007: p. 1). Through the reading of these texts, different elements will be assessed, such as; the voice that the people migrating have; the voice that policy makers are given; the voices that are reflected on the media by society in general; the tone of the news; the language employed.

When the profiles of the migration policies through the media are obtained, each country's profile will be compared to the inversed Moghaddam theory. This, with the intention of shedding some light on how inhumane the current migration policies can be. Pointing out how using the "fear" of terrorists entering a country might be a paradox. When what might be really happening is that the migration policies are comparable to terrorism methods and tactics.

Along this text, a general explanation of the effects of Aylan Kurdi's photography will be offered, taking the reader along the path that helped to adapt the Staircase to Terrorism theory.

## 5. Communication and social change: The change in the narrative

Given the international impact of the image (as it will be described along the text), the focus for this case-study will be the photograph's influence on virtual media outlets and on the government's political responses to refugees' influx to Europe. However, the research proposes to delve into a broader spectrum given that migration is a global process. Approaches from the psychological, communication, political and semiotic fields will be used to inquire into the complex dynamic that the image –circulated through social and mass traditional media- went through in order to become such a powerful detonator for social change. According to Tufte et al (2014), social change:

"(…) is understood as a process of transformation in the way society is organized, within institutions, and in the distribution of power within various social and political institutions. For behaviors to change on a large scale, certain harmful cultural practices, societal norms and structural inequalities have to be taken into consideration. Social approaches, thus, tend to focus on the community as the unit of change (…)" (Tufte et al, 2014: 13).

In reference to images as social detonators, it is important to point out that it is possible to speak of "nucleus-images that can generate more information in a concentric way, and which 'are able in themselves to influence states of opinion in a decisive way'". (de- Andrés, 2016: 30). Specifically, the image of Aylan Kurdi (taken by the Turkish photographer Nilüfer Demir) is a photograph that can be categorized as "refugee photography", where the products of this sector are "often used to convey precariousness, misery and urgency" (Lenette, 2016: 1). However, the reading on the production and meaning of this particular picture is determinant. This image helped to shift the way people perceived this massive human influx, using the term refugee instead of immigrant (de- Andrés, 2016: 31). In the article of de-Andrés (2016), titled "The Transformative Image. The Power of a Photograph for Social Change: The Death of Aylan", two graphs can be found explaining the following: 1) The photograph of Aylan Kurdi was a triggering image, 2) The image became representative of the refugee influx, and 3) The word refugee became a more popular key word than refugee in the associated searches:
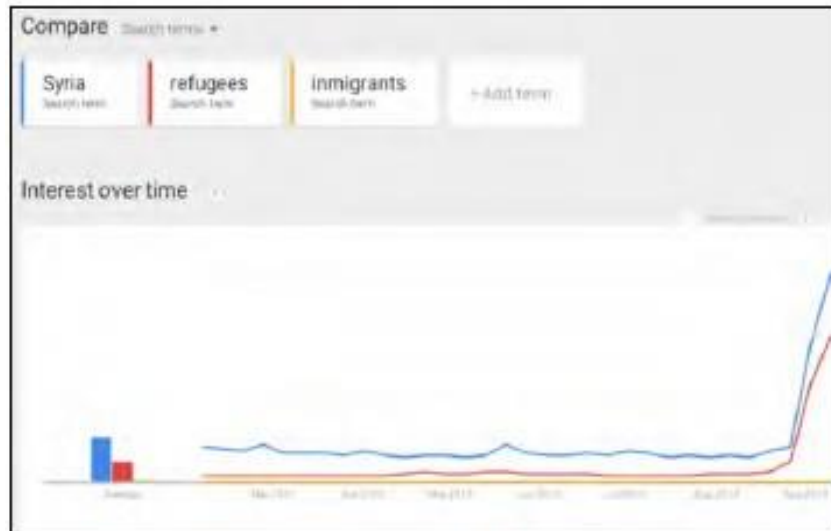
Graph 1. Evolution of the number of headlines (Google Trends) with terms such as «Syria», «refugees» and «immigrants» in 2015 (09-12-2015) (http://goo.gl/HLPUe4).
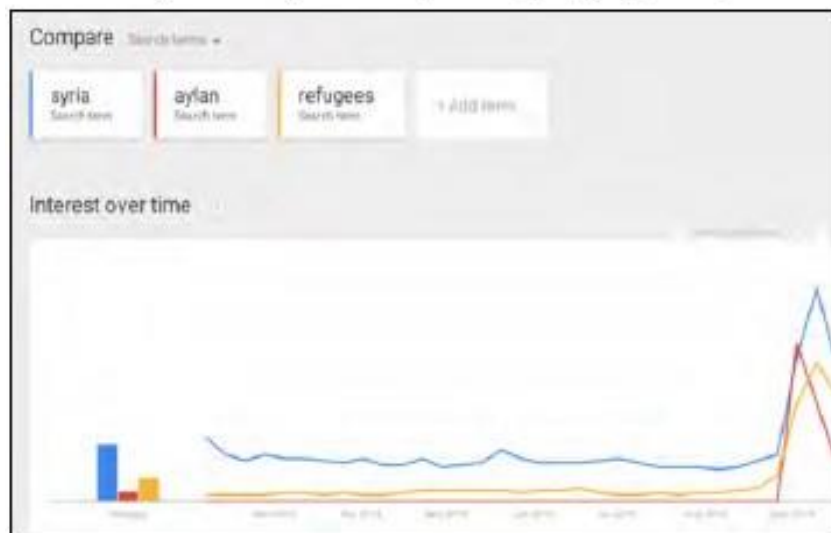
Graph 2. Evolution of the number of headlines (Google Trends) with images labelled «Syria», «Aylan» and «Refugees» in 2015 (09-21-2015) (http://goo.gl/kzz92l).

Figure 1. Evolution of number of headlines. Image retrieved from de-Andrés, 2016: 31 [Date of query: 25/05/2016]

"The photograph of the young boy acted as a triggering image. It appeared in the majority of international media outlets in a torrent of front pages and leading news stories (…), and Syria fast began trending on Google searches (…). This was communication by image. (…) [it] demonstrates how an image quickly came to define Syria and the refugee drama. (…) the name of Aylan that describes the image places him beyond the concept of refugee. The media treatment of the image raised this person above the category to which he was assigned. The human focus of that image with a

name dragged the Syrian exodus out of anonymity." (de-Andrés, 2016: 31) (Braces added)

It is worth noting how the media served as a catalyst to both reinterpret a recurring theme and to create an icon that was widely spread. On the other hand, according to de-Andrés' et al interpretation, the fact that the photograph was shot with a feminine view may have had an influence on the final product, which might have made it even more effective to serve as a trigger: "We could say that it is a feminine view- not only because the photo was taken by a woman (…) but by someone who has been brought up to care for others rather than explore the world." (de-Andrés, 2016: 33). This serves to a reflective nature, which aided the process of re-appropriating the image in order to turn it into an icon. A vast iconographic analysis can be found within the same article:

"In the foreground, we see the image of the boy's body, dead and alone, which is what causes the initial impact on us. (…) he is lying face down in the wet sand on the shore, the sea is calm and the waves barely lap against his face. Although he is face down, we can just see one side of his face. The boy's clothes are intact, the warm red of the T-shirt, the new shoes do not conform to the stereotype of a «poor» non-Caucasian boy whose clothes are ripped and torn. (...) The paradox of the image of life despite being one of death. (…) The photo is a low angle shot that softens the dichotomy from top to bottom and is thus hierarchical. The low angle provides emphasis and subjectivity. (…) Who are we? Someone on land, residing in that yearned-for destination of Europe. (…) This also creates an inside/outside situation (…) meaning otherness." (de-Andrés, 2016: 32).

It is this otherness that allows us to assimilate the refugee influx in a new manner. It makes the viewer question the differences between those who are trying to "get in" and those already "inside". After that, an iconological analysis is presented, where it is stated that, "(…) a process of transformation and social change requires change in the social discourse." (de-Andrés, 2016: 33).

According to Foucault's "The Archeology of knowledge & discourse on language", the subject "(…) uses instrumental intermediaries that modify the scale of the information, shift the subject in relation to the average or immediate perceptual level, ensure his movement from a superficial to a deep level, make him circulate in the interior space of the body (…)" (Foucault, 1972: 52) This may be applied to the photograph of Aylan Kurdi. It is the image that makes the subject shift amongst the different levels of perceptual situations; thus, generating new information networks. A factor that may have played a key role in the shift of discourse can be read on the alteration   of stereotypes derived from Christian iconography (Lenette, 2016: 2). A recurrent image in the Christian imaginary is the one of "Madonna and child", used to "(…) convey vulnerability and precariousness through images of starving mothers with young children." (Lenette, 2016: 2). The idea of an unaccompanied minor may come to the mind of the observer. But what we actually see in the image is an unprotected child, that at first glance doesn't have any visual disruption (such as torn clothes or visible injuries), but that shows death after a brief examination (de- Andrés, 2016: 34) and might remind us of all the vulnerable children left alone.

It must be noted, that a photograph shows only a fragment of reality. According to Richard Willem van Schaik, Entman defines framing as follows: "To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (Willem, 2015: p. 12) This may lead the reader to question if the body of Aylan Kurdi was found on that exact spot, or if it was placed there for the purpose of the photography; or if there were initially more bodies around his. However, the initial speculations around the subject and the research regarding the composition of this photography are proposed to be investigated separately.

5.1.   The digital world: A viral image as a disrupting "shout"

The term "shouting in communication", coined by Museveni, refers to disrupting the "agenda-setting role of media. (…) What [it] chooses to report, or not to report, often determines what we believe as being salient in the world" (UNICEF, 2005: 8). This photograph, as it has been mentioned above, had the power to shift the way discourse surrounding people feeling from their countries. Nilüfer's photograph of Aylan called massive attention to media outlets all over the world (de-Andrés, 2016: 34). It helped to create a massive "shout" that disrupted the agendas of these outlets. However, it is important to remark that even when social media has brought up new forms of organization, it doesn't always mean that what is said online is replicated in the physical world.

In the text "The social affirmation of social media as a motivator of collective action", Kende et al. (2016) explain how social media interaction is not always paired by social mobilization: "(…) although it is clear that online and offline collective action engagements are strongly connected, the transfer from online participation to offline is affected by many factors, such as societal ones." (Kende et al., 2016: 453). It must be reminded that this photograph was not a miraculous trigger, but an image that carried the weight of a recurring social event.

Social media may be understood as digital platforms that enable interaction amongst its human users. Even though this interaction happens in a virtual reality, it feeds from our physical world and of how we experience it. Our use of social media enables us to replicate content and interact with it in different ways, depending on the platform we're using. (Kende et al., 2016: 453-454) Social media may enhance social mobilization. This happens mostly when the use of social media implies social affirmation. Meaning that social value may be reassured through digital interaction: "The online expression of individual's group identity, and gaining social capital can increase online, and potentially offline, political participation" (Kende et al., 2016: 453). These interfaces allow people to have a sense of belonging. It validates their ideas gives them a sense of belonging. And at the same time, it compels them to

adopt norms generalized by their group: "(…) the public expression of identity and identity- relevant norms affirm a group's identification which consequently leads to behavior, which becomes normative to the group (…) Therefore, it can increase the willingness to engage in collective action (…)" (Kende et al., 2016: 454). The fact that this image debunks a stereotype and gently vanishes the psychological barrier implied within the concept of otherness, makes the viewers of the image think of Aylan as someone familiar to their group (de-Andrés, 2016: 34), hence, prompting mobilization.

However, this major impact wouldn't have been achieved without an adequate framing (what was shown in the picture), prosumers (people who consumed the content and created new narratives using it as a starting point), network power (the connections that made possible the replication of the image through standardization of inclusiveness, rejecting the idea of migrants and adopting the term refugee) and mass-self communication (messages from many to many allowing a dynamic dialogue) (Castells, 2009: 1-60). The way the picture was taken from a newspaper to social media, and replicated and even imitated by graphic designers, helped the promotion of a message that reached several audiences (de-Andrés, 2016: 35). Even though a few lines of text may have been needed to point out what was happening and where, the image of a dead child on the beach was explicit enough to have an impact on the masses. (Lenette, 2016):

2). Without social media, the image by itself would have probably taken longer to reach global audiences in the scale it did.

In recent years, social media has played a key role for social change in different situations. Kende et al. (2016) use the term of interactivity to describe the "(…) active engagement with social media as opposed to being a passive observer." (Kende et al., 2016: 454). When a situation has a high level of online activity but a low level of physical actions, the term slacktivism may be applied.

"The term 'slacktivism', a combination of the words 'slacker' and 'activism', has increasingly been used to describe the disconnect between awareness and action through the use of social media. This illustrates a

departure from 'traditional' conceptualizations of activism. (…) Knibbs (2013) characterizes slacktivism as "feel-good back patting" through watching or "liking" commentary of social issues without any action. It requires minimal time and effort, often without mobilization and/or demonstrable effect in solving a social issue." (Kende et al., 2016: 81)

The phenomenon of Aylan's image escapes this term nonetheless. Even when the image was shared, liked, commented on and redesigned and re-signified several times, it had a visible immediate impact on the public sphere (de-Andrés, 2016: 34) and the policies of European countries "European leaders appeared to have been shocked into forming more compassionate policies, while previously hostile media outlets took a more conciliatory tone." (Kingsley, 2016: online news). The virtual activity was followed by actions in the physical world.

The disrupting image that composes the axis of this research may provoke the reader to question why a single photograph was able to achieve this impact when, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), between January and August of 2015 (the year the photo was shot), 2,656 people had already died trying to cross the Mediterranean (BBC Mundo, 2016: online article).
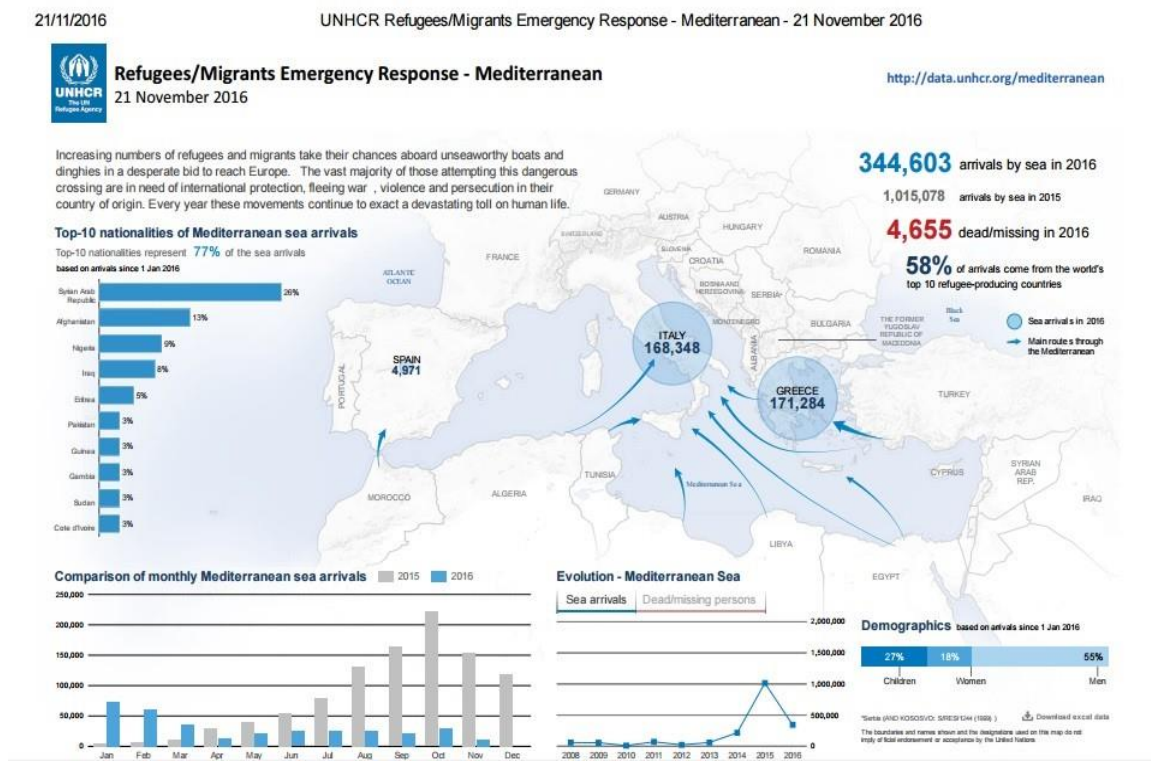
Although the iconographic and iconological analyses of the image have been made above, a social factor needs to be addressed: political correctness.

5.2. Cyber-Political correctness: When the shout becomes muffled

In her paper "The new instantaneity: how social media are helping us privilege the (politically) correct over the true", Herzogenrath-Amelung exposes how immediate reactions on social media attack politically incorrect expressions, burying the situations instead of promoting dialogue for change. The author exemplifies her argument with the following example:

"Leading immunologist and Nobel-prize winner Tim Hunt was relatively unknown outside the science world until a conference in Korea in 2015 where he was asked to speak about women in science: 'The trouble with girls in the lab is that you fall in love with them', he said, 'they fall in love with you – you criticize them and then they cry' (…) No one, it seems, challenged hunt directly about his remarks. Instead the audience took to Twitter to launch what became a veritable 'social media storm'. (…) University College London, where Hunt was employed, responded promptly and decisively. Hunt's wife, herself an eminent scientist, was told her husband should resign if he did not want to be fired." (Herzogenrath- Amelung, 2016: 1081-1082).

What the author explains based on Heidegger's premise of how when talking about the truth, is that an "object needs to reveal itself to us as what it is – only then can it be judged" (Herzogenrath-Amelung, 2016: 1081). Meaning that it is necessary for an expression to be listened to and not automatically shut down by prejudices of political correctness. The author proceeds to claim that even though Hunt's comment was extremely inappropriate, what would have actually been more desirable was to address the misogyny that exists in the scientific world through a dialogue involving the Nobel Prize winner, rather than exiling him and to sweeping the affair under the carpet.

(Herzogenrath-Amelung, 2016: 1082). If issues in the public sphere are dealt with by shutting them down, it is hard to understand what caused them and they're likely to keep occurring.

These kind of massive outbursts that trigger actions to promote "wellness and correctness" into the world, may not always be effective. In the frame of the mournful anniversary of Aylan's death, his father has told BBC Mundo during an interview how little he thought that has happened after his painful loss. Even though there was an immediate massive response and the shift of paradigm, concerning the people fleeing from Syria, which changed from immigrant to refugee, the father of late Aylan notes: "(…) 'al principio todo mundo se mostró ansioso por ayudar a los refugiados. Pero eso no duró ni un mes. (…) De hecho, la situación empeoró. La guerra se está intensificando y cada vez más gente está dejando el país'" (BBC Mundo, 2016: online news). Showing how the impact of the photo was big, but quickly faded away (in the perception of Aylan's father).

Figure 3. UNHCR. REPORT 2016. Aljazeera, 2 September 2016. Available:
http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2016/08/alan-kurdi-changed-death-160831173922096.html [Date of query:24/05/2017].

Which takes us back to Herzogenrath-Amelung's explanation of how the quick-fix solutions that political correctness pushed by social media aren't always the best:

"However, a problem that I would like to raise is the under-examined nature of the link between social media and change: the term 'social media' is in

itself deeply ideological in that it claims certain inherently positive qualities – user-centered community-building (...)- for these media that it denies to older media forms. Furthermore, it automatically seems to imply that any change brought about by these media must also be social and hence good. The idea that social media constitute extremely powerful mechanism for bringing about social change first gained currency during the series of uprisings referred to as the Arab Spring (…) Since then, thankfully, a growing body of research has tempered this enthusiasm, suggesting that while social media might have facilitated this uprisings, it was still the commitment of people on the ground that really counted. Activists around the world might be using social media to communicate, help mobilize, coordinate – but it turns out email is just as effective here as Facebook, Twitter and so on (...)." (Herzogenrath-Amelung, 2016: 1086-1087)

Even when the disrupting picture provoked massive mobilization, one year after the tragic situation, little has changed and the root causes of the crisis have not been addressed (Regencia et al, 2016: online news). The groups of people fleeing their countries keep facing political barriers that threat and end their lives. The quick empathy triggered may be understood because the image portrayed a "boy who can be clearly identified by anybody in the West as «one of us» (which questions the hypocrisy of a society that needs «mobilizing» images of this nature to provoke a reaction)." (de-Andrés, 2016: 34). So even when it may be proved that a fixed can trigger social mobilization, it is important to "reflect on the underlying causes of a tragedy that centers on one single «exemplifying» case of the cruel destiny of hundreds of thousands of refugees." (de-Andrés, 2016: 35) Or in line with Herzogenrath-Amelung's line of reasoning, it would be important to promote a dialogue for change rather than trying to offer quick-fix solutions, which makes us move our research from being mainly on the communication field to keeping communication factors while adding a strong psychological scope.

6. Psychological framework: The lens of a camera as a lens of introspection

In their text "The Appeal of Experience; The Dismay of Images: Cultural Appropriations of Suffering in Our Times" by Kleinman & Kleinman published in 2016, the authors explain how "Images of suffering are appropriated to appeal emotionally and morally both to global audiences and to local populations. (…) those images have become an important part of the media (…) As 'infotainment' (…) they are taken up into processes of global marketing and business competition" (Kleinman, 2016: 1). It must be said that the picture of Aylan prompted actions to aide the refugee influx from a Western capacity, but this was probably because of the way the image was presented, which has already been described before. Kleinman & Kleinman (2016) argue that "There is no single way to suffer; there is no timeless or spaceless universal shape to suffering. There are communities in which suffering is devalued and others in which it is endowed with the utmost significance." (Kleinman, 2016: 2) Going back to the image of an abandoned child, it is worth it to analyze who defines that he was suffering and worth of such a huge amount of compassion that prompted quick and massive mobilization.

Right after Nilüfer's creation met the media outlets, a "political bombshell" was thrown into the Western societies and the Middle East. (Barnard, 2015). The shout (UNICEF, 2005: 8) disrupting the agendas of national European media outlets was strong. Even when no national journals in Germany of France (except for "Le Monde") published the picture (de- Andrés, 2016: 34), the social interaction (Kende et al., 2016: 463) generated in social media pushed politicians to do something about the refugee influx. As it has been described, the sense of proximity to a child that might have been "one of us" to the eyes of Western countries may have provoked this. However, this research intends to further examine the psychological aspects of massive and systematic violence against a specific group.

6.1. Borderlines and Terrorism: Acts of extreme violence

Although at a first glance it may be shocking to place the death of refugees in the Mediterranean in a comparative analysis against terrorism, it is important to reflect on how terrorism can be conceived.

In his paper "Staircase to terrorism: A psychological Exploration", Fathali M. Moghaddam defines terrorism as "politically motivated violence, perpetrated by individuals, groups, or state-sponsored agents, intended to instill feeling of terror and helplessness in a population in order to influence decision making and to change behavior" (Moghaddam, 2005: 161). To justify the use of this theory, it is important to bring back how media has previously portrayed refugees as immigrants (referred within the communication and semiotics framework), and how they used to be seen as a danger for the Eurocentric welfare. In order for this research to delve into how a picture may have triggered a shift in narratives and political change, it is important to keep in mind that before this peak of attention and empathy towards the refugees, there existed (and still exists) a complex system that portrayed that group in a negative way; media and internet searches used the word immigrant (de-Andrés, 2016: 31) and the topics of conversation were mostly around how the influx of foreign people could damage the well being of people in the receiving countries.

Moghaddam's staircase model describes five "floors" that people go through in order to enroll into terrorism:

"On the ground floor, perceptions of fairness and feelings of relative deprivation dominate. Those who reach the first floor seek ways in which to improve their situation and achieve greater justice. But if they don't (…) they are more likely to keep climbing (…) Individuals who reach the second floor but still perceive grave injustices experience anger and frustration, and in some circumstances they are influenced by leaders to displace their aggression onto an "enemy" (…) the third floor is a gradual engagement with the morality of terrorism organizations; these individuals now begin to see terrorism as a justified strategy (…) Recruitment to terrorist

organizations takes place on the fourth floor, where potential terrorists learn to categorize the world more rigidly into "us-versus-them" and to see the terrorist organization as legitimate (…) On the last floor –the fifth- specific individuals are selected and trained to sidestep inhibitory mechanisms that could prevent them from injuring and killing both others and themselves." (Moghaddam, 2005: 162).

Considering Moghaddam's definition of terrorism as politically motivated violence perpetrated by groups, the proposal of this research[2] (within the psychological field) is to organize the European societies with violent policies towards refugees as follows:

Moghaddam's definition	Adaptation
1) Perceptions of fairness and feelings of relative deprivation. Attempt to improve a situation and achieve a greater justice.	Generalized hate discourse in the media against people portrayed as immigrants.
2) Anger displacement and identification of an "enemy".	Identification of people fleeing their home countries as "dangerous immigrants".
3) Gradual engagement with the morality of terrorism organizations. Terrorism as a justified strategy.	Public policies and a discourse against "immigrants" accepted as a viable strategy to keep the danger outside the receiving countries.
4) Recruitment. "Us-Versus-Them".	More specific construction of the "immigrants" images through media outlets (news highlighting "violent" acts by "immigrants". / Justification of public policies to proceed against immigrants. / People joining institutions morally or physically to reinforce such policies).

---

[2] *This is where the future research proposal would find its foundations in order to ascertain the required data on perception/dialogues on social media, statistics and narratives.*

| 5) Sidestep of inhibitory mechanism that could prevent recruited people from harming others. | Groups and institutions who lobby or create policies to block immigrants influx, letting them unprotected to extremely dangerous scenarios. |

Figure 4. Table based on Moghaddam's staircase model, adapted for purposes of this research (Part 1).

Since this kind of analysis may be only understood when there are two or more groups that enter in conflict when a differentiation is made, it is pertinent for this research to propose how Aylan Kurdi's picture may have triggered a "reverse" process of the staircase model. As it has been explained above through de-Andrés' text, it is arguable to go into the ethical depth of how this image –which could easily resemble a Caucasian child- triggered so many emotions and reactions of empathy and action to treat immigrants as refugees and seek to aide them in their journey. Therefore, a reverse analysis through the staircase model is proposed as follows:

Moghaddam's definition	Adaptation for a reverse analysis
5) Sidestep of inhibitory mechanism that could prevent recruited people from harming others.	Image of Aylan Kurdi reactivating inhibitory mechanisms –both individual and collective. Realization of harm being made to others.
4) Recruitment. "Us-Versus-Them".	Fading of "Us-Versus-Them" concept. Comprehensive approach to the influx of refugees.
3) Gradual engagement with the morality of terrorism organizations. Terrorism as a justified strategy.	Politically motivated violence no longer seen as acceptable or as a justified strategy.
2) Anger displacement and identification of an "enemy".	"Immigrants" are no longer seen as enemies but as "refugees" fleeing a dangerous situation, and not being a danger themselves.

1) Perceptions of fairness and feelings of relative deprivation. Attempt to improve a situation and achieve a greater justice.	People in receiving countries looking actively to improve both their situation and the situation of refugees, perceiving the deprivation to which the latter are exposed.

Figure 4.1 Table based on Moghaddam's staircase model, adapted for purposes of this research (Part 2).

Within this line of thinking, the psychological impact of a dead child whose image was able to trigger a new discourse –fed by individuals exposed to it- it is easy to trace the connection that individual and collective change may have brought towards public policies, such as the European policies: "In late September 2015, they created a system that would nominally see 120,000 refugees relocated from Greece and Italy to other European countries – a relatively modest number that was nevertheless hailed as a watershed moment for European migration policy." (Kingsley, 2016: online). The open policies that were promoted have multiple factors behind them, and this might just be one of them.

7. Further discussion

Public policies currently have a top-down logic, where receiving countries are the ones who set the rules for the influx (Castles, 2004: 13). However, a more horizontal and participatory approach is desired: "Migration management should be understood as a cooperative process in which all participants have a voice, including the governments and civil societies (…) above all the migrants themselves." (Castles, 2004: 13) With this scope, the research should explore whether the actions triggered by the photograph of Aylan Kurdi promoted such dialogue, or if there was still a top down approach.

The case of the photograph of Aylan Kurdi is now an iconic case of how images may have an impact big enough to change narratives and prompt public policies. However, it is worth it to explore the reach of these effects and their origins. What role does the media play in the construction of this dialogue? Who are the actors? Do they have a voice? Are they only being analyzed or are they given an opportunity to express themselves? Are the theories used to

understand radical violence valid tools to explore closed borders policies? It may be concluded that a phenomenon as complex as migration and asylum seekers may find use in specific media narratives. That given the proper circumstances, the "shouts" of audiovisual products may be an effective trigger for social change. And that both the causes and solutions for this situation must be dialogued with every actor involved. It may be of aide to deconstruct the components of the actors that are portrayed by the media, in order to reflect upon guidelines for future conversations surrounding mobility. The questions remain open and active to promote the much needed dialogue.

8. Conclusions

It may be concluded that triggering images help us better understand complex situations. Not only because of what they portray, but because of the reasons behind them that make us react. Although the image of Aylan Kurdi depicts and ongoing situation, replicating the image is not desirable and probably wont have as much of an impact. Therefore, it is proposed that parting from what the dark picture has taught us, we find new ways to prevent more dead people washed ashore.

A way to do this is to take on the proposed research, in order to make people understand how terribly wrong and aggressive migration policies truly are. If the hypothesis were proved, new academic material would be available for NGO's and Civil Society in general. This would give more arguments to push policy makers towards more welcoming systems and better thought speeches when it come to people on the move.

9. References:

Castles, S. (2004). "The Factors that Make and Unmake Migration Policies". International Migration Review, Vol. 38 (3): 852-884.

Castles, S./ de Haas, H./ Miller, M. (2014): The Age of Migration: International Population.

Movements in the Modern World (Fifth Edition). New York: Guilford Press. Castells, M. (2009). Communication Power. New York: Oxford University Press.

de Andrés, S. and Eloísa Nós-Aldás and Agustín García-Matilla (2016). "The Transformative Image. The Power of a Photograph for Social Change: The Death of Aylan." Comunicar, n° 47, vol. 24. 29-

Foucault, M. (1972). The archaeology of knowledge and the discourse on language. New York: Pantheon Books.

Glenn, C. (2015). Activism or 'Slacktivism'?: Digital Media and Organizing for Social Change. New York: Routledge.

Herzogenrath-Amelung, H. (2016). "The new instantaneity: how social media are helping us privilege the (politically) correct over the true", Media, Culture & Society, Vol. 38 (7), 1080-1089.

Kende, A. et al. (2016). The social affirmation use of social media as a motivator for collective action. Groningen: University of Groningen Press.

Kleinman, A./ Kleinman, J. (1996). "The Appeal of Experience; The Dismay of Images: Cultural Appropriations of Suffering in Our Times." Daedalus, vol. 125, no. 1, 1–23. Available at www.jstor.org/stable/20027351. Date of last query: 06/11/16.

Lenette, Caroline (2016). "Writing With Light: An Iconographic-Iconologic Approach to Refugee Photography". In: Forum: Qualitative Social Research Sozialforschung. Volume 17, No. 2, Art 8, (22 pages). Available at: http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/2436/3953.   Date of last query: 13/11/16.

Macnamara, J. (2007) "Media content analysis: Its uses; benefits and best practice methodology". Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal. Sydney. University of Technology of Sydney.

Moghaddam, F.M. (2005). "The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration". American Psychologist, Vol. 60, No. 2, 161-169.

Tufte, T. (2015) Comunicación para el cambio social: La participación y el empoderamiento como base para el desarrollo mundial. Barcelona: Icaria.

UNICEF (2005). Strategic Communication - for Behavior and Social Change in South Asia (working paper). Kathmandu, UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia. http://forskning.ruc.dk/site/en/publications/comunicacion-para-el-cambio-social(edb20f41-4905-46da-9427-c7505bbf2a52).html

Wilkins, K.G./ Tufte, T./ Obregon, R. (2014). The Handbook of Development Communication and Social Change. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Willem, R. (2015) Visual representations of (Syrian) refugees in European newspapers. Sweden: Malmo University.

9.1. Online Sources

Kingsley, Patrick. (2016) "Death of Alan Kurdi: one year on, compassion towards refugees fades." The Guardian, 2 September, 2016. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/01/alan- kurdi-death-one-year-on-compassion-towards-refugees-fades. [Date of query: 5/12/2016]

Redacción BBC Mundo. (2016) "Un año después de la muerte de Alan Kurdi (y de la foto que conmovió al mundo), ¿qué cambió con los refugiados en el Mediterráneo?." BBC Mundo, 2 septiembre 2016. Available: http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-internacional-37248600 [Date of query: 29/10/2016]

UNHCR (2016). Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response - Mediterranean. Available on: http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php. [Date of query: 31/10/16].

UNHCR (2016), Report 2016. Aljazeera, 2 September 2016. Available: http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2016/08/alan-kurdi-changed-death-160831173922096.html [Date of query: 29/10/2016].