Media Representation in Refugee Crises: A Comparative Analysis of Ukrainian and Palestinian
Refugee Coverage in News Publications

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ABSTRACT

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Mennatallah Nayel

This thesis examines the representation of Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees across three news outlets: *CBC News, The New York Times,* and *Al Jazeera.* Through a qualitative content analysis (QCA), the research draws on Stuart Hall's representation theory and Johan Galtung's peace journalism framework. While past studies documented how journalism has represented refugees fleeing war (Ajana et at., 2024; Greenbank, 2015; El-Nawawy & Elmasry, 2023; Hoffman & Hameleers, 2024; Elsamni, 2016), this research is motivated by a notable shift in 2022 when opinions positively changed in response to Ukrainians seeking refuge (Kapetanovic, 2022). The research also addresses the relative absence of scholarly attention to Palestinian refugees in news media. This is reflected in the analyzed sample articles where findings revealed significant disparities in news media representation. Ukrainian refugees were humanized through personal narratives, professional identities, and active agency in their lives and communities whereas Palestinian refugees were predominantly represented through statistics, collective representation, and limited agency. The study reveals a pattern of differential representation where Ukrainian refugees were depicted as educated contributors to society, in contrast to Palestinian refugees who were often framed as victims without individuality.

Additionally, the thesis highlights how the overall journalistic coverage of marginalized asylum seekers and refugees could be improved. It is important to note that the goal of this research is not to discredit the reporting on Ukrainian refugees. Instead, this thesis seeks to highlight the positive impacts such reporting may have had on the community while raising questions regarding the unequal coverage that communities in similar circumstances received. By identifying possible disparities in refugee representation, the research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of media representation and its effects.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis is interested in how the overall journalism coverage of refugees could be improved. Media representation plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception and responses to global humanitarian crises (Matulić & Škokić 2024; Stawicki 2009; Hoffmann and Hameleers 2024), therefore, this research examines the media representation of Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees across three news outlets: *CBC News, The New York Times,* and *Al Jazeera*. Through a qualitative content analysis (QCA), results found patterns in how both Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees are represented.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that around 5.2 million refugees and migrants arrived in Europe from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other countries by the end of 2016 ("Refugee Crisis in Europe," 2025). This influx of refugees was followed by a surge of anti-immigration and refugee sentiments, reaching its pinnacle during the 2015-2016 refugee crisis (Safdar & Strickland, 2016). These sentiments included a rise in hate crimes against refugees ("Germany hate crime," 2017) and anti-immigration protests (Angerer, 2016). Although there have been several refugee crises in Europe in recent history, for example Romanians in 1989 (Higgins, 2023) and Hungarians in 1956 (UNHCR, 2006), none shook the world quite like when Russia launched a war on Ukraine in 2022, resulting in yet another refugee crisis ("The UN and the war on Ukraine," 2025). The Russia-Ukraine war has displaced 3.7 million Ukrainians internally and 6.9 million globally as of February 2025 ("Ukraine Emergency", 2025). Following the global displacement of Ukrainians, European countries that previously employed restrictive immigration policies were receptive and welcoming towards them (Kapetanovic 2022). Studies find (see chapter 2) that media representation plays a role in

shaping public perception and political discourse (Matulić & Škokić, 2024; Hoffmann & Hameleers, 2024; Alsultany, 2012). The contrast in the governmental support of Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees raises critical questions regarding the role of media in upholding existing power structures (Hall, 1997).

Following the influx of 13.5 million displaced Syrians, and the negative reactions to it (Khalid & Mortensen, 2022), several countries known for their governmental and public's opposition to receiving more refugees were receptive to welcoming Ukrainian refugees. In an Al Jazeera article, Agnes Callamard, Amnesty International's secretary-general is quoted saying "In 2022, we had the fantastic example of how the world came to support and show solidarity with the Ukrainian people. But we did not have a similar kind of support and solidarity for the Palestinian people, the people of Ethiopia, Myanmar, and the Democratic Republic of Congo" (Siddiqui, 2023). This comment forms a rationale for the comparative content analysis of journalism coverage on Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees presented in this thesis, with the goal of exploring if these differences and/or similarities exist in the three selected journalism news outlets (CBC News, The New York Times, and Al Jazeera).

Through a QCA of 300 news articles published during the initial periods of the Ukrainian and Gaza wars, this research addresses three questions: (1) Are Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees represented differently in selected journalism news outlets? (2) If there is a disparity in coverage, what are the frames used to present these refugees? (3) Do the frames used in different journalism news outlets draw on peace journalism? The findings offer valuable insights into journalistic practices and their broader implications for refugee representation in news media landscapes. The research findings are then interpreted and discussed through the theoretical

lenses of Stuart Hall's representation theory (1973) and Johan Galtun's peace journalism model (2013) to create a more comprehensive understanding of how these outlets succeeded or fell short in their coverage of refugee experiences.

It is critical to recognize that journalism and journalists are not a monolith. Journalism cannot be thought of as a cohesive whole, rather, it is a field that significantly varies in practices and perspectives across different regions, publications, and even individual journalists. Nevertheless, it is still possible to identify and discuss patterns, biases, and systematic factors that influence the representation of human subjects. This thesis covers existing research and literature next, before the methodology and results are presented in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Definitions

This thesis defines refugees as per the UNHCR and based on the Convention criteria: "According to the 1951 Convention, in order for a person to be recognized as a refugee under international law, their fear of persecution must be linked to one or more of the following five grounds: race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion" (UNHCR Canada, 2023). Asylum seekers are defined as "people who have fled their country of origin and seek protection in another country…Many asylum-seekers are forced to travel without documents or travel authorizations due to the circumstances of their flight. Not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee is initially an asylum-seeker" (UNHCR Canada, 2023). In addition, resettled or sponsored refugees are "people who have fled their country of origin and become refugees in a second country before being offered residence in a third country if they meet a number of criteria. In Canada, they are either assisted by the federal government or privately sponsored by groups of citizens. Resettled or sponsored individuals arrive in the country with permanent resident status." (UNHCR Canada, 2023).

2.2. Journalistic coverage of Palestinian/other refugees

The present scholarly research on Palestinian refugee representation in the news media is limited. This section combines existing research on Palestinian refugees as well as other groups of refugees or refugees of color in general. Scholar Yakubu Ozohu-Suleiman's (2014) research "War journalism on Israel/Palestine: Does contra-flow really make a difference?" examines discrepancies in reporting through Johan Galtung's peace journalism model by analyzing and comparing 1200 stories by Al Jazeera English and Press TV (classified as alternative perspective

networks) to BBC World and CNN International (classified as dominant perspective networks). Ozohu-Suleiman's research developed four categories: "(1) Occurrence of war/peace journalism'; (2) 'Approach to peace journalism'; (3) 'Approach to war journalism'; and (4) 'Use of war journalism languages'," (Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014, p.92). The research analyzed the approaches to war journalism using frames adopted from the peace journalism model (Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014, p.93). Through manual and computer-aided coding, Ozohu-Suleiman's findings showed that dominant perspective publications employed frames indicating war journalism: 'zero-sum' (focus on winning, likened to a sports game), 'two-party-oriented' (one party's gain causes the other party loss), and 'partisan' (biased to one side) frames. In contrast, the alternative perspective publications utilized 'reactive' (waiting to report once war and violence occurs), 'partisan', and 'visible effects of war' (the reporting of casualties, death, and destruction) frames (Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014, p.95). The research also found that the dominant perspective publications employed frames indicating peace journalism: 'proactive' (reporting before war begins), and 'win-win' (solution-oriented approach), and agreement-oriented (reporting of possible agreements that could lead to solutions) (Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014, p.95). Alternative perspectives, however, used 'proactive', 'multi-party', (sources multiple parties involved) and 'people-oriented' (uses normal members of society as sources) approaches, (Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014, p.96). The research's language analysis found that all publications had high usage of demonizing language, with the most featured term being 'terrorist' (Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014, p.96). Ozohu-Suleiman (2014) also uses Neil J. Kressel's 1987 research on bias in media regarding Israel-Palestine, which found that early pro-Arab critics argued that U.S. media presented unbalanced coverage that was unfavorable to the Palestinian state, with the frequent

inclusion of what they perceived as false narratives such as "Palestinians are terrorists," and "the Arab-Israeli conflict stems from Arab anti-Judaism" (Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014, p.87).

Although Kressel's research was published in 1987, the dialogue regarding Arabs, and individuals of color from war-torn countries in general, persists. For example, Emma Kapetanovic's (2022) bachelor's thesis from Malmo University, "White & Welcome? A critical discourse analysis of the media representations of the Ukrainian refugees in Denmark," argues that after facing the humanitarian crisis in 2015, caused by an influx of Syrian refugees, "European countries were often filled with racist and xenophobic rhetoric about refugees and migrants from mainly African and Middle Eastern countries" (Kapetanovic , 2022, p.4). However, Kapetanovic notes that Denmark is one of the more restrictive countries in the world regarding immigration laws, but was extremely receptive to receiving refugees from Ukraine, writing "Denmark has implemented a special law to accommodate Ukrainian refugees by offering them fast access to the society, the labour market, education and social benefits" (Kapetanovic, 2022, p.4). Kapetanovic (2022) highlights that the media representation of non-European refugees in 2015, which took place during the height of the Syrian refugee crisis, was problem oriented and resulted in asylum seekers and refugees being associated with "illegality, terrorism and crime, questioning the asylum seekers' claims and sympathy" (p.7). The coverage also highlighted the idea of polarization between incoming refugees and the countries they were fleeing to. The language used to describe incoming asylum seekers included "flood," "tide," and "flow" which Kapetanovic argues signals a threat to the host country (pp.7-8). When discussing Ukrainian refugees, news articles used "words like the Danes have space in their heart (hjerterum) and can accommodate in their homes (husrum)" (Kapetanovic, 2022, p.26).

Kapetanovic explains and argues that this "softer and appealing" language can evoke sympathy (2022, p.26).

Language usage in the west regarding refugees has long been an issue (Greenbank, 2015; Kapetanovic, 2022; Ajana et at., 2024). Asylum Access, a non-profit organization that advocates for refugee rights, released a press statement in 2022 regarding the language usage when reporting on Ukrainian refugees, "The terms used to describe non-European refugees reflect a racist European and American policy that only extends human rights protections to certain groups of people to the exclusion of others, making the death and suffering of Middle-Eastern, African and Asian refugees more expected and therefore tolerated" (Asylum Access, 2022). Asylum Access also notes that using dehumanizing language and categorizing refugees depending on color, race, ethnicity, and religion can lead to discriminatory policies. They explain that refugees from Ukraine are portrayed as "neighbors," whereas other refugees are portrayed as "invaders" (Asylum Access, 2022).

Melanie Stawicki's "Framing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: A study of frames used by three American newspapers," reveals how journalism can influence public understanding of political and humanitarian issues. Stawicki's (2009) comparative analysis of three U.S. newspapers (The New York Times, Christian Science Monitor, and St. Louis Post Dispatch) presents how different journalistic approaches, resources, and practices led to different framing patterns. The study identified frames used in the news coverage of Israel and Palestine (Stawicki, 2009, p.9) which shifted between 2000 and 2002. In 2000, the "Israeli government's quest for security," was prevalent, however, in 2002 the frame shifted to "Israelis as military strong bullies" (Stawicki,

2009, p.67). This change occurred despite expectations that post-9/11 coverage would be more sympathetic to Israeli security concerns. The research suggests this change was caused by Israeli media censorship and aggression towards journalists during the 2002 Ramallah siege. Stawicki (2009) wrote that The Christian Science Monitor, which described its reporting as "solution-minded journalism," was "most in line with peace journalism and conflict resolution practices" (Stawicki, 2009, p.69). The St. Louis Post-Dispatch was found to mostly report on bombings and military action: "There was focus on the drama and violence of the breaking news, the death toll and most of the sources were official government sources" (Stawicki, 2009, p.70). The New York Times used multiple frames, a balance between Palestinian and Israeli perspectives as well as a complex conflict frame, a frame that presents the war as a complex amalgamation of historical and political events rather than isolated incidents (Stawicki, 2009, p.70).

These various media frames also appear in other works. For example, Emily Greenbank's (2015) "Othering and voice: How media framing denies refugees integration opportunities" presents a critical discourse analysis of New Zealand's news media. The study examines three New Zealand based newspapers: The New Zealand Herald, The Dominion Post (now named The Post), and The Press. Greenbank discusses how language can create a negative environment and impact other refugees, affecting their "access to self determination and full involvement in society" (Greenbank, 2015, p.4). The study's findings argue the media that was examined consistently positions refugees outside the "ingroup," othering them from their new society (Greenbank, 2015, p.18). The research also presents findings that refugees were often represented through expert perspectives rather than their own personal perspectives. Refugee voices were limited to relating emotions. Greenbank writes that refugee voices "could all be

described as serving affective functions, i.e. fuelled by emotion rather than facts. The task of conveying factual information – statistics regarding the camp – is given to non-refugee voices such as medical staff" (p.13). This othering not only reinforces discrimination, but it also has a direct impact on refugees' social and economic integration. Specifically, within the context of employment, there are significant systemic barriers already present and perpetuated by potential employers, which Greenbank (2015) links to media representation. The study suggests the need for a new approach to media framing where refugee viewpoints are included when reporting on them. Greenbank (2015) argues this would "minimise the barriers that these groups face to gaining access to satisfactory employment, and thus full and successful integration into New Zealand communities" (Greenbank, 2015, p.19).

Some research provides insight on whether Greenback's arguments vary depending on the country of origin. For example, Hoffmann and Hameleers' (2024) research comparatively looks at the different media representation of Syrian and Ukrainian refugees in four European countries: Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland. Hoffmann and Hameleers used inductive and deductive automated content analysis to show uneven frames in the representations of Syrian and Ukrainian refugees in newspaper reporting. Their research focuses on how media portrayal causes a difference in both the public and political perceptions towards the experiences of refugees and immigration. The study found discrepancies in refugee framing in how Syrian and Ukrainian refugees were portrayed. "Negative attitudes toward Syrian refugees are indeed associated with negative media framing - several studies observed an increase in negative media framing of Syrian refugees in recent years, for example by portraying them as security threats" (Hoffman & Hameleers, 2024, p. 1686).

While Hoffmann and Hameleers' (2024) study highlights how mainstream media frames refugee experiences differently based on nationality, as discussed above, this representation often occurs without refugee input. "The Routledge handbook of refugee narratives," edited by Evyn Lê Espiritu Gandhi and Vinh Nguyen (2023) discusses how refugees narrate their own stories through various media including literature and film. The narratives are not just anecdotes but a tool for challenging the way in which refugees are viewed by society (Gandhi & Nguyen, 2023, p.4). They offer alternative perspectives on displacement, identity, and belonging that counter common stereotypical views of refugee experiences. Despite the presence of refugee narratives and their attempt to "humanize refugees as a way to counter negative stereotypes or argue for their inclusion in an imagined community of rights-bearing humans," this tactic also becomes part of a larger conversation regarding how we view refugees (Gandhi & Nguyen, 2023, p. 40). The handbook argues that personal narratives of refugees serve personal expression as well as tools to shape how society views them. The handbook also looks at the implications of refugee narratives. Testimonies from refugees, especially those given in courts or asylum procedures, usually affect the determination of refugee status (Gandhi & Nguyen, 2023, pp. 4-5), with these stories sometimes used to navigate restrictive immigration laws and receive legal recognition (Gandhi & Nguyen, 2023, p. 490). This is noted in UNHCR's journalism guide, "sharing refugee stories is not without consequences, both for the refugee's claim and potentially for loved ones back in their country of origin, due to the circulation of information online and via social media networks" (p.13).

The roles of right-wing media have also been studied for their coverage of refugees. Palmgren, Åkerlund, and Viklund (2023) conducted an analysis of refugee representation in Swedish alternative media. The research focuses on the connection between Islamophobia and the coverage of refugees while linking media representations to cultural prejudice and refugee experiences. Palmgren, Åkerlund, and Viklund (2023) use three news publications for this research: Samnytt, Nordfront, and Nya Tider, which they refer to as "the most prominent far-right Swedish alternative news sites" (Palmgren, et al., 2023). Swedish alternative media is defined as "digital far-right outlets which disseminate anti-immigration, reactive, and news-like content presented as an alternative to mainstream news media" (Palmgren, et al., 2023). The research explores large differences in the media framing of different refugee groups regarding the ways in which Islamophobia impacts the understanding of who is considered a "legitimate" refugee. The results demonstrated that in Sweden, the alternative media presented Ukrainian refugees as more deserving and culturally acceptable in comparison to all other refugees migrating from predominantly Muslim countries: "The analyses of these articles show how alternative media rely heavily on Islamophobic tropes and put substantial focus on comparing Muslim and Ukrainian immigrants" (Palmgren et al., 2023).

These differences also appear in oAndrea Lawlor and Erin Tolley's research "Deciding who's legitimate: News media framing of immigrants and refugees" which shows how news coverage can represent economic immigrants and refugees differently. Using an automated content analysis over a decade, Lawlor and Tolley (2017) write that "refugees were accorded attention on a more episodic basis, with an emphasis on mass or irregular arrivals…when refugees were the subjects, the tone of coverage was more negative than it was for immigration" (Lawlor &

Tolley, 2017, p.985). The study also shows that Canadian media coverage on refugees mostly addresses incidents of mass arrivals, or an ongoing international crises, but often from a perspective of the financial burdens of welcoming refugees. Lawlor and Tolly (2017) suggest that media portrays refugees as "queue jumpers" or "net drains on the economy" regularly (Lawlor & Tolley, 2017, p.972), giving examples of misinformation such as the Toronto Star's misleading claim that refugees receive more benefits than elderly citizens.

Patterns of reporting on refugees can also be found in research on CNN's online news. Elsamni's (2016) research examined how CNN framed Arab refugees and asylum seekers in its online news coverage during January 2016. Elsamni's (2016) work points out a pattern of reporting called the "responsibility frame", which occurred in 65% of the articles. This frame refers to assigning responsibility, or blame, for the Arab refugee crisis. For example, holding former Syrian president Bashar Al Assad responsible for torturing Syrians or German Chancellor Angela Merkel taking blame for accepting Arab refugees (Elsamni, 2016, p.70). Additionally, Elsamni (2016) found that Arab refugees were presented through security frames more than humanitarian frames with 50% of the articles portraying them as potential threats (p.63). This inability to humanize Arab refugees also connects to personal representation as there was a "lack of voices and photos of the Arab refugees and asylum seekers in the coverage" (Elsamni, 2016, p.76). Within this research, the human interest frame encompasses five distinct aspects: Personal adjectives, effect on people, human example, visual information, and private lives. Amongst the human interest frame, private lives, which entails presenting personal experiences or private accounts, appeared the least frequently in CNN's coverage.

Christopher P. Campbell's book (2016) "The Routledge Companion to Media and Race,"

identifies three myths that persist in American journalism: the myth of difference, the myth of

assimilation, and the myth of marginality. The myth of difference argues that people of color are

portrayed differently than white people. Television news perpetuates stereotypes of people of

color, including both positive (e.g. great athletes) and negative stereotypes (e.g. violent

criminals). This often leads to stereotypical reporting based on cultural differences rather than

shared experiences (Campbell p.15). The myth of assimilation, Campbell uses the example of the

narrative of African Americans succeeding against racism, despite it existing in many

communities, and having integrated themselves in white society. Campbell argues that this

disparity is the result of a bias toward "racial-harmony" news stories instead of truthful

reporting. The myth of marginality argues that "people of color are ignored and therefore less

significant and marginalized in news coverage" (Campbell p.15). Campbell cites Evelyn

Alsultany's work (2012), "Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and representation after 9/11,"

which examines television, film, news and pop culture for stereotypical representations of Arabs

and Muslims. It presents findings on the effects 9/11 had on Arabs and Muslims both in media

and day-to-day life. Alsultany writes "xenophobia and outright racism flourished on the

airwaves; the pundits of FOX News were always a reliable source of antagonism. At the same

time, a slew of TV dramas clashed in on the salacious possibilities of Arab or Muslim terrorist

threats and assured viewers with depictions of the U.S. government's heroic efforts to combat

this new, pulse-quickening terrorism" (Alsultany, 2012, p.2).

Alsultany (2012) highlights how the media and reality mirrored one another by providing

examples of how various forms of media (television, film, news, and pop culture) spoke

of/represented Arabs and Muslims. Alsultany (2012) adds: "A range of media…have since September 11 engaged in debates on which measures were appropriate or justifiable in securing the nation – from racial profiling at airports to wiretapping telephones to indefinitely detaining or deporting Arab or Muslim men" (Alsultany, 2022, p.15). The author also provided examples of racism and abuse of Arabs and Muslims post-9/11, writing "work-place discrimination, bias incidents, and airline discrimination targeting Arab and Muslim Americans increased exponentially. According to the FBI, hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims multiplied by 1,600 percent from 2000 to 2001" (Alsultany, 2022, p.4).

These are only a few examples of how journalism covers Palestinians, which this project seeks to further examine in the context of three specific journalism outlets.

2.3. Journalistic coverage of Ukrainian refugees

The dialogue regarding refugees has drastically changed since Ukraine's humanitarian crisis, which began in February 2022 when Russia invaded Ukraine (Ukraine refugee crisis, 2025). Moustafa Bayoumi, writer and journalist, wrote an opinion piece for *The Guardian* discussing this change in tone and racist dialogue that accompanied the coverage of Ukrainian refugees. Bayoumi (2022) cites multiple instances, including, CBS News correspondent Charlie D'Agata saying Ukraine "isn't a place, with all due respect, like Iraq or Afghanistan, that has seen conflict ranging for decades. This is a relatively civilized, relatively European – I have to choose those words carefully, too – city, one where you wouldn't expect that, or hope that it's going to happen" (Bayoumi, 2022). Similarly, David Sakvarelidze, Ukraine's Deputy Chief Prosecutor, said in an interview with BBC, "It's very emotional for me because I see European people with

blue eyes and blond hair … being killed every day." The BBC host then responded with understanding to this statement (Bayoumi, 2022).

This contrast and disparity in coverage is also found in research studies. For example, "'It Could Have Been Us': media frames and the coverage of Ukrainian, Afghan and Syrian refugee crises" by Ajana, Connell, and Liddle (2024) presents a critical discourse analysis of UK news coverage. The study examined the Ukrainian, Syrian, and Afghan refugee crises and documented discrepancies in media framing of refugees. While humanitarian and moral frameworks dominated the coverage, the study still found disparities in the way different refugee groups were represented, "while the resource frame was evident in the coverage of the Afghan and Syrian refugee crises, this frame was non-existent in the sampled articles covering the Ukrainian refugee crises which, by and large, favoured a humanitarian frame instead," the authors note (Ajana, et at., 2024, p.34). The resource frame refers to the portrayal of refugees through economic costs and resources that they may consume. For example, several BBC articles discuss the "burdens that civil society will have to shoulder in taking them" (Ajana, et at., 2024, p.31).

EuroMesco, a network of research centers in the Euro-mediterranean area, published the policy brief "The refugee crisis' double standards: Media framing and the proliferation of positive and negative narratives during the Ukrainian and Syrian crises," by Matías Ibañez Sales (2023). The research also argues that news media has a tendency to favor Ukrainian refugees over other refugees due to their closeness and similarity to other European countries. "Media coverage gradually helped push and frame a positive narrative on the need to protect Ukrainian refugees because they were similar to Europeans, behaved like Europeans, and had cultural and

democratic values close to those of Europeans" (Sales, 2023, p. 3). To counter media biases, Sales suggests methods of altering media representations of refugees: "Media newsrooms should train correspondents, reporters and journalists on the cultural and political nuances of the regions and contexts they are reporting on, eliminating Orientalist approaches," as well as create a more diverse environment of journalists (Sales, 2023, p.8).

The findings above are important for their potential impact on public perception of refugee experiences. Matulić and Škokić's (2024) work on "Media discourses of the Ukrainian refugees during the war in Ukraine" examined this point through an analysis of media discourses about Ukrainian refugees. Their study examined how BBC, CNN, and Al Jazeera framed Ukrainian refugees amidst a dire humanitarian crisis. Matulić and Škokić (2024) emphasized that the media can influence and shape public perception on refugee experiences through media discourses that reflect societal attitudes toward displacement, international solidarity, and the humanitarian aspect of war. The findings detail how Ukrainian refugees were represented during a critical period of displacement: "All three media sources use positive examples (e.g. level of education of Ukrainian refugees) which counteracts any negative perceptions and stereotypes" (Matulić & Škokić, 2024, p. 13). Furthermore, the media publications underlined the reasons why Ukrainian refugees were forced to flee their homes, as well as ways in which the public and organizations could participate in aid, advocating public tolerance and compassion.

Many journalism examples show that solidarity with Ukrainians is not warranted by their humanity, rather, by their race and social class (Bayoumi, 2022). These examples show their support by mentioning trivial details regarding Ukrainian refugees, such as, "[w]e're talking

about Europeans leaving in cars that look like ours to save their lives" and "[l]ooking at them, the way they are dressed, these are prosperous…middle-class people" (Bayoumi 2022). These terms contrast with what is described in Section 2b above, where studies highlight metaphors such as "flood", "tide", and "flow" that were used to describe asylum seeker's arrival (Kapetanovic, 2022, p. 8).

As reported by *Al Jazeera* staff, media and public figures have been accused of double standards for expressing surprise at how a conflict like Ukraine's could happen in such a "civilized" country ("Al Jazeera staff", 2022). The publication quoted multiple interactions by journalists, including an *Al Jazeera English* presenter, Peter Dobbie, quoted as describing Ukrainian refugees as "prosperous, middle class people" ("Al Jazeera staff", 2022). While seemingly positive in its intent, it inadvertently conveys the idea that refugees from other regions are not prosperous and that middle-class individuals are more deserving of safety and peace. For example, Malaka Gharib (2020) wrote for *National Public Radio* (NPR): "Media coverage doesn't merely create public awareness, says Martin Scott, a senior lecturer in media and international development at the University of East Anglia. It can have an impact on the world's response" (Gharib, 2020). Themes in the different usage of language when describing Ukrainian refugees, while comparing them to refugees of color, could be detected very early on in the reporting of the war (see "Double standards," 2022).

Daniel Iberi and Raudhat Sayeeda Saddam's "Media framing of refugees," analyzed 23 videos from Al Jazeera English, ABC News, CBS News, France 24, TRT World, BBC News, Sky News, CNN, and Deutsche Welle on Ukrainian and African refugees. Their findings identify two

main framing mechanisms in the 23 videos: human interest and security frames. The human interest frame was predominantly used for Ukrainian refugees, whereas the security frame was primarily used for African migrants. Ukrainian refugees were portrayed sympathetically, as "innocent children" and "helpless victims of war," evoking empathy (Iberi & Saddam, 2023, pp. 56-57). African refugees on the other hand were portrayed as security risks with an emphasis on security forces' presence (Iberi & Saddam, 2023, pp. 57).

The depiction of the Russia-Ukraine war reflects an ongoing pattern to portray European crises as extraordinary and unimaginable, with the war frequently described as "Europe's first major land war in decades" (Iberi & Saddam, 2023, pp. 57). Iberi and Saddam (2023) note that this sense of shock towards the war signifies that wars do not belong in Europe "while implicitly signifying that conflicts usually happen in other countries 'of a different sort'" (Iberi & Saddam, 2023, pp. 57). This framing not only affects public perceptions of refugees, but also maintains biases in humanitarian priorities, portraying Ukrainian refugees as relatable and deserving while ignoring the struggle of African refugees as a matter of control and security (Iberi & Saddam, 2023, pp. 57). Iberi and Saddam write that "[t]he way media talks about conflicts have the potential to impact those who are already most directly affected by war, refugees" (Iberi & Saddam, 2023, pp. 59). This is a common and recurring theme this literature review chapter.

Despite Russia's launch of a military invasion of Ukraine in 2022, less than three years ago, there are a number of research studies on the news coverage of Ukrainian refugees (see Ajana et at., 2024; Kapetanovic, 2022; Iberi & Saddam, 2023). Mohammed el-Nawawy and Mohamad Hamas Elmasry's research article (2023) "Worthy and Unworthy Refugees: Framing the

Ukrainian and Syrian Refugee Crises in Elite American Newspapers" has examined coverage of Ukrainian and Syrian refugees in a quantitative content analysis guided by framing theory (el-Nawawy & Elmasry, 2023). Their research reported that newspapers were more sympathetic to Ukrainian refugees than to Syrian refugees. The research found that "the newspapers had a much higher tendency to humanize Ukrainian refugees than Syrian refugees" (el-Nawawy and Elmasry, 2023, p.15) as border control, terrorism, and employment issues were common topics when discussing Syrians (el-Nawawy and Elmasry, 2023, p.11). According to their findings, Syrian refugees were portrayed as threats and aggressors, with more references to terrorism than in articles covering Ukrainian refugees (el-Nawawy and Elmasry, 2023, p.12).

Other work by Alexandru D. Moise, James Dennison and Hanspeter Kriesi (2023) surveyed European citizens at different points of the war and found that anti-immigration sentiments were more present in the majority of countries when discussing countries of color (p. 365). Moise et al. (2023) note that attitudes towards Ukraine cause a shift of attitudes with other refugees due to "cognitive dissonance, greater awareness, and empathy spill-over" (Moise et al., p.373), however, as the war continues, "we see a slight waning of support for Ukrainian refugees" (p. 365). This is important because it underscores the need for ongoing research to understand how media framing and political events shape public perceptions of refugees. In summary, this chapter provided a context needed to further research on Ukrainian and Palestinian refugee representation in news media.

3. METHODS: A QCA of Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees in three news outlets

3.1. Research questions

This thesis explores three research questions (RQs): **(1)** Are Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees represented differently in selected journalism news outlets? **(2)** If there is a disparity in coverage, what are the frames used to represent these refugees? **(3)** Do the frames used in different journalism news outlets draw on peace journalism?

3.2. Theoretical Approach to the Thesis Focus

This research is interested in the content journalists produce as related to the idea that Ukrainians seeking refuge were represented in a positive light (Kapetanovic, 2022) that may contrast how other refugees are described in comparable content. This presents an opportunity to highlight how the overall journalism coverage of marginalized asylum seekers and refugees could be improved. Theoretically, this interest was approached by drawing on Stuart Hall's concept of representation (Hall, 1997). Christopher P. Campbell's (2017) chapter on Stuart Hall and the "Politics of Signification," explains Hall's usage of the term: "Hall used the term representation to describe the complex ways in which the mass media not only present images, but how they are actually engaged in re-presenting images that have multiple meanings, especially when it comes to meanings about race" (Campbell 11). Hall's thoughts on representation can aid journalists in understanding the complexity involved in this process. He emphasises that representations are not simply reflections of reality, but are created through a variety of cultural, social, and political processes (Hall, 1997, p.3). Journalists can use this knowledge to critically examine how their own reporting influences public views and work towards more nuanced and accurate depictions.

This theoretical focus on representation extends to the issue of stereotyping of refugees. Hall (1997) explains that "[s]tereotypes get hold of the few 'simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized' characteristics about a person, reduces everything about that person to those traits" (p.258). In doing so, stereotyping creates a sense of othering, "it sends into a symbolic exile all of Them – 'the Others' – who are in some way different" (Hall p.258). Hall (1997) also emphasizes that stereotyping occurs when there are unequal power imbalances, writing "[p]ower is usually directed against the subordinate or excluded group" (Hall 258), which includes fitting society into the powerful party's own views and beliefs (Hall 259). These concepts have recently been expressed in a guide by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2023) for reporting on refugees, asylum, and forced displacement. This guide seeks to highlight common misconceptions in reporting on refugees and argues it is "critical to realize that when journalists get it wrong, people suffer directly. Therefore, information must be rigorously fact-checked and cross-verified, sources' credibility thoroughly researched, and attention paid to the language and context in which it is presented" (UNHCR, 2025).

To further enrich the study of this topic, the concept of peace-oriented journalism (Galtung & Fischer 2013) has also informed analysis of the data (see methods below), as it represents alternative approaches to journalism coverage. Peace journalism, as depicted in Johan Galtung and Dietrich Fischer's book "Johan Galtung : pioneer of peace research" (2013), emphasizes understanding the underlying causes of conflict and focusing on positive solutions rather than sensationalizing violence. Adopting peace journalism in refugee coverage could be a way in

which journalism can aid the public in understanding and advocating for policies that address the systemic factors that result in forced migration.

Initially proposed by Johan Galtung, the teaching of peace journalism focuses on reporting on war and conflict using a structure that encourages peace. Galtung distinguishes between the "low road," which often highlights the violent aspects of war and prioritizes winning, and the "high road," which emphasizes opportunities for non-violent progress (Galtung & Fischer, 2013, p.96-97). His approach involves tasks such as defining the conflict, exploring its roots, seeking alternative solutions, understanding the impacts of violence, and supporting peace efforts.

3.3.   Qualitative content analysis (QCA)

This thesis employed a qualitative content analysis (QCA) (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Schreier, 2012) to examine the comparative media coverage of Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees across three news outlets. Qualitative content analysis is a suitable methodology as it aims to facilitate the analysis of journalistic content through the examination of linguistic patterns, thematic elements, and narrative framing used in reporting on these two refugee groups. As described by Schreier (2012), QCA in this context is useful when a researcher wants to ascribe meaning to textual material through the assignment of parts to coded categories, while also maintaining the flexibility as researchers to use both existing theories and new patterns found in the data. QCA also reduces data volume while focusing on the systematic description of content. Schreier (2012) writes: "Meaning is something that we, the recipients, attribute to the words that we hear or read, to the images that we see. This is a complex process in which we bring together our perception of the material with our own individual background: what we know about a topic, the situation in which we encounter it, how we feel at the time, and much more. Meaning is not a

given, but we construct meaning" (p.3). However, as Schreier (2012) notes, the use of QCA in this manner only provides a surface level (descriptive) analysis and cannot directly explain or theorize on the reasonings behind a journalists choices. Overall, the use of QCA involves four steps: (1) selecting research questions and proposing a hypothesis, (2) selecting textual material, (3) building a coding frame, and (4) segmenting and analyzing the textual material to present and interpret the findings.

3.4. Hypotheses

Hsieh & Shannon (2005) break down qualitative content analysis approaches into three types: conventional, directed, and summative. The conventional approach starts with no predetermined beliefs or notions about the outcome. The directed approach uses existing theories and research to lead the research process. The summative approach records the use of specific words and the context in which they are used. This thesis employed a directed approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Schreier, 2012) due to existing research finding a disparity in Ukrainian refugee representation compared to other refugee groups (Ajana 2024), and proposed to test the following hypotheses via QCA:

H1: Ukrainian refugees are represented sympathetically.

H2: Palestinian refugees follow a different framing than Ukrainian refugees.

H3: The coverage of both Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees does not include the elements of peace journalism.

3.5. Selected material

The thesis analyzed coverage from three media outlets: *CBC News*, *The New York Times*, and *Al Jazeera*. These varied media outlets were selected to obtain a well-rounded international view on the topic. The decision to include *CBC News* in this study stems from its role as Canada's national public broadcaster ("CBC Mandate", 2019). While the research primarily adopts an international perspective, incorporating *CBC News* is crucial given the study's context in Canada, a country notable for its significant support for refugees. According to *The New York Times*, they have surpassed two million international subscribers and over 10 million subscribers in total ("The New York Times Passes", 2024). The publication credits this international growth due to its coverage in Europe and the Middle East ("The New York Times Passes", 2024). The choice to use *Al Jazeera* was to provide a non-western perspective for this research. The news network also claims to be one of the most influential international news networks, available in 150 countries and territories ("Al Jazeera About Us", 2023).

Every publication adheres to a style guide. To aid in the understanding of the articles before completing the QCA and coding, each style guide for the three included media outlets was examined. Al Jazeera's "Editorial Standards" guidebook emphasizes accuracy as the fundamental value of their reporting (Al Jazeera Media Network, n.d.). The guidebook explores what accuracy entails in news media and expresses that it includes verification through multiple sources, fact-checking, and precision in language. The guidebook states the difference between "rebels and fighters", "kidnapped and hostage", "executed and killed", "fundamentalist and extremist" (p.54). It also details their practices on representation, specifically regarding children, people with disabilities, religious minorities, and victims of violence or disasters (e.g., Children are usually eager to appear on television and tend to exaggerate or invent stories. Coverage should not involve details of their lives without prior permission from their parents or guardians,

p. 112). CBC's standards encourage "accessible, articulate everyday speech," as well as a tone that does not "gratuitously offend audience sensitivities" ("Journalistic standards and practices", n.d.) The CBC guideline promotes inclusive language, avoiding the mentions of ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexual orientation unless directly relevant to the story. The publication does not specify practices of representation, however, the guideline states that CBC avoids generalizations, stereotypes, and any language that could cause prejudice. The New York Times Manual of Style and Usage is the official guide of the publication, however, it focuses more on definitions of words and when to use them, for example:

> "Minority. Whether used as a noun or as an adjective, the word means group by definition. Its use to mean individuals (she hired three minorities) is personnel jargon. Make it minority applicants or minority candidates. And minority group(s) is often redundant. Members of minorities, while accurate, may be wooden; in any event, specific ethnic identifications, when relevant, are more useful. Also see African-American, black; Asian-American; ethnicity; Hispanic; Latino; Native American" (Siegal & Connolly 2015).

The style guide does not include a definition for "refugee" or "asylum seeker".

News coverage on Ukrainians and Palestinians was collected and analyzed from separate three-month periods. For the Ukrainian refugee sample, the research collected news articles from February 25 – May 25, 2022. For the Palestinian refugee sample, articles were collected starting October 8, 2023 – January 8, 2024. These time periods represent the Ukraine and Gaza wars gaining international coverage and attention (Psaropoulos 2022 & Bisset 2024). The project used the databases Eureka, Factiva, and Proquest Central to collect articles from *CBC News*, *New*

York Times, and *Al Jazeera*. The searches "Palestin* AND Refug*" were used within the time frame of October 8, 2023 to January 8, 2024. Similarly, articles on Ukrainian refugees were obtained by searching "Ukrain* AND Refug*" between February 25 and May 25, 2022. The Factiva search of "Ukrain* AND Refug*" generated 5600 results. However, due to a malfunction, only the first 300 articles were accessible. Despite requests, this malfunction was not corrected within the timeframe of this research. Additionally, the majority of 300 articles were "live updates", which provided bullet points of information, often linking to a full-length article. Factiva was the only database that provided results for the search "Ukrain* AND Refug*" specifically sourced from Al Jazeera within the specified timeframe. Therefore, the search terms for the Factiva query were altered to "Ukrain* AND Refug* NOT latest updates NOT latest news". Those terms are what Al Jazeera's "live updates" articles were typically titled and allowed them to be filtered out. The updated search query provided 76 articles as a result.

The total database searches resulted in 3,516 articles (see Table 1 below), a number exceeding the scope of an MA thesis. Therefore, the total sample was reduced through random sampling (Riffe et. al, 1993, pp.133-139) and restricting the timeframe of coverage. The sampling process utilized a random number generator to identify 70 potential articles from each search result set. The selection process aimed to select 30 articles per search that met the specific criteria of the article including the discussion or mention of Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees. This inclusion criteria was utilized by first giving each randomly selected article an initial read-through to prioritize those articles with a human refugee component, gradually including articles with varying degrees of refugee focus. It is important to note that in-depth refugee coverage was limited across some of the searches, with many articles discussing refugees briefly or as a secondary element. These samples were only included if needed, but articles with a greater focus

on refugees were prioritized. This is a significant consideration throughout the analysis presented

in Chapter 4 as the thesis aimed to examine refugee representation, but the lack of representation

was also noted. If the first set of 70 randomly selected articles failed to produce 30 suitable

articles meeting the inclusion criteria, the random sampling process was repeated by generating a

new set of 70 numbers. This new set of 70 articles was then examined for inclusion in the

sample.

In total, the thesis involved the examination of: 30 articles from *CBC News* on Ukrainian

refugees, 60 from *CBC News* on Palestinian refugees, 60 articles from *The New York Times* on

Ukrainian refugees, 60 from *The New York Times* on Palestinian refugees, 30 articles from *Al

Jazeera* on Ukrainian refugees, 60 from *Al Jazeera* on Palestinian refugees, for a total 120

articles on Ukrainian refugees and 180 articles on Palestinian refugees.

Table 1. Database Search Results for Refugee Coverage Across Publications

Database	**Search Terms**	**Publication**	**Result Number**
Factiva	Gaza OR Palestin* AND Refug*	The New York Times	211
		Al Jazeera	862
		CBC	53
	Ukrain* AND Refug* NOT latest updates NOT latest news	The New York Times	352
		Al Jazeera	76
		CBC	0
Eureka	Gaza OR Palestin* AND Refug*	The New York Times	0
		Al Jazeera	660
		CBC	274
	Ukrain* AND Refug*	The New York Times	0
		Al Jazeera	0
		CBC	787

Proquest Central	Gaza OR Palestin* AND Refug*	The New York Times	97
		Al Jazeera	0
		CBC	0
	Ukrain* AND Refug*	The New York Times	144
		Al Jazeera	0 (Oct. 23)
		CBC	0 (Oct. 23)

3.6.   Coding frame and data analysis

The analysis of the articles involved the development of a coding frame (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Schreier, 2012). Schreier (2012) describes coding frames as central to QCA as the development of "a systematic description of your material, by assigning segments of the material to the categories of your coding frame" (p.58). A coding frame involves the use of main categories, which are the "aspects on which you want to focus your analysis" (Schreier, 2012, Chapter 4), in this case, guided by the above RQs and hypotheses. The coding frame for this project included the analysis of each article for how many times an article referred to refugees, the language used to refer to refugees, how many and what sources are used, the main themes of the article, and whether peace journalism elements (Galtung & Fischer, 2013) are present. The presence of peace journalism was analyzed through the following grading system out of 5:

Table 2: Peace Journalism Assessment Criteria for Refugee Coverage

Criteria	**Key assessment questions**
Solution-oriented focus	• Does the article explore potential resolutions or peace initiatives? • Are there discussions of reconstruction, reconciliation, or integration efforts?

	• Does it highlight successful examples of refugee integration or community support?
Humanization	• Are refugees portrayed as individuals with personal stories, names, and experiences?
Context	• Does the article provide historical and social context for why people became refugees?
Multiple perspectives	• Includes voices of refugees themselves
	• Presents views from various stakeholders (aid workers, officials, host communities)
Impact focus	• Reports on long-term effects rather than just immediate events

Trial use of the coding frame was done on 5% of the final data set to test the coding frame and to modify it for any shortcomings as to the clarity and usefulness of the analysis categories. As per Schreier (2012), this was done by coding the articles and then recoding the material again in 14 days for comparison. All the selected material was then coded and used to compare any similarity and/or difference in how Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees are framed in each outlet. This comparison paid particular attention to whether the representation of Ukrainian refugees is more sympathetic, as has been hypothesized (see Section 4c). The coding was challenged by my supervisor to resolve any disputes and to produce the QCA presented in Chapter 4.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Overall Summary and Sample Description

The media searches for this thesis returned 3,516 articles from the three examined news outlets, from which, a total 300 articles were randomly selected for qualitative content analysis (QCA) (see Chapter 3). All selected articles contained discussions related to refugees, though the depth and focus of these discussions varied considerably. Each article in the sample dealt with refugees due to the search terms used and the inclusion criteria above.

As an overview, the 300 news articles dealt with topics such as humanitarian crises, forced displacement, policies toward refugees, refugee experiences, and humanitarian aid. A typical example from CBC News is the article "Israel's military has turned its sights on Jenin refugee camp deadly Hamas attacks" (Evans, 2023), which deals with the impact of military action on a refugee population. The news articles from CBC News could be categorized as both international and domestic news with a Canadian perspective. The journalists writing the articles were CBC staff reporters as well as contributions from international news agencies. In contrast, news articles from The New York Times tended to feature more on-the-ground reporting with greater depth and context. An example is "Fearful, Humiliated and Desperate: Gazans Heading South Face Horrors" (Bayoumy et. al, 2023). which provides firsthand accounts from displaced Palestinians. The news articles from the New York Times could be categorized as international news. Lastly, news articles from Al Jazeera were characterized by more direct refugee voices and comparative analysis of refugee treatment, as such in the example "Greece embraces Ukrainians as picture darkens for other refugees" (Fallon, 2022). The articles from each outlet shared

commonality in covering similar global events while differing in sourcing practices, narrative framing, and contextual emphasis. These elements are further explored below.

4.2. Are Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees represented differently in selected journalism news outlets?

Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees are represented differently across the examined news outlets (CBC, The New York Times, and Al Jazeera). Ukrainian refugee coverage often highlighted their careers, educational backgrounds, and community engagement. For example, the article "'I Don't Have the Right to Cry': Ukrainian Women Share Their Stories of Escape" from *The New York Times* lists multiple refugees names, ages, professions, and tells their stories in their own words, for example:

> "Alyona Zub-Zolotarova, 33, account manager at an advertising agency. One child, age 8. Interviewed on March 10. She escaped Irpin, a small city northwest of Kyiv that Russia invaded in early March. They are still fighting…In the beginning, my husband, Alexei, wrote to a group of parents saying anybody who needs food and help can come to our courtyard, and about three families did. We had a lot of potatoes in the basement. So we were preparing food for people, for the territorial defense, for the army, for the hospitals…The most terrible moment was when we left Irpin because that was when the Russians entered. Four shells hit our house. The kindergarten 800 meters from us also was burning. My friends who were about to evacuate, they were killed. They were shot. Three people. They were heading in the direction of the evacuation route on foot. And they were shot on the road…It's a sin for me to complain. I was received by a wonderful Polish family. This family gives me food and a place to sleep and something to eat and

warm socks. But I'm very worried about the people who stayed in Ukraine, who don't have food, who are being shot at." (Tavernise, 2022).

Here it is clear that Ukrainian refugees are represented as educated individuals with established lives that were suddenly disrupted by war. This passage presents multiple common narratives in Ukrainian refugee coverage: Zub-Zolotarova is introduced using her professional identity, an account manager at an advertising agency, which establishes education and intelligence. Additionally, the inclusion of her efforts to feed the territorial defense, army, and hospitals portrays her as an active part of her community during crisis. Incorporating first-person accounts of war experiences and escape as well as expressions of gratitude toward humanitarian aid, host families and countries serves to humanize Zub-Zolotarova.

The representation of Ukrainian refugees extends beyond refugee status due to the personalized narratives as well as the coverage of community mobilization efforts to provide housing and aid (e.g., see "Saving Ukrainian Art, and Helping Artists, One NFT at a Time," Medina, 2022). The media outlets consistently present Ukrainians as multidimensional individuals navigating displacement while maintaining their identities and capabilities. They are presented as valuable members of society worthy of humanitarian aid. This can be seen in a representative example from CBC which writes about a family's journey to safety in Canada who had been supporting Ukrainian troops by cooking meals for 60 people daily:

> "When the war broke out in late February, Anna said her family quickly began
> supporting troops by feeding them. "We cooked meals for 60 people every day," said
> Anna. "We cooked soups, mashed potatoes…. Because they need to eat
> something"…Anna said her mother and father received work visas Sunday, and that

they're planning to get a job at a local bakery. Her family decided to settle in Canada because of its education system, she said. The 18-year-old hopes to attend the University of Ottawa this fall" (Elsiufi 2022)

Al Jazeera's coverage of Ukrainian refugees differed from the other news outlets examined, as it consistently compared Ukrainian refugee experiences with refugees from other regions. Additionally, across all examined publications, reporting frequently interweaves statistical data with political analysis. For example "1 million refugees flee Ukraine in week since Russian invasion," (2022) and "Greece embraces Ukrainians as picture darkens for other refugees" (Fallon, 2022), with the theme of other refugees continually appearing in the articles examined. This passage provides a clear example of these points:

> "As Ukrainian refugees are bussed into Greece to receive a warm welcome by authorities, aid workers and asylum seekers have described to Al Jazeera a far bleaker environment for those seeking shelter having crossed Turkish borders. They say people from other nations are essentially being treated as second-class refugees, and their concerns soared after the mid-March death of a four-year-old Syrian boy, following an alleged pushback….Greek Migration Minister Notis Mitarachi has repeatedly called Ukrainians "real" refugees, while asylum seekers from other countries on the Greek mainland are prevented from claiming asylum. A legislative change last year reduced the ability of refugees on the mainland to register an asylum claim." (Fallon, 2022).

The article critically examines the differential treatment of Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian refugees by referencing the "second-class" treatment of other refugees, the death of a Syrian child, a Greek official referring to Ukrainian refugees as "real" refugees, and a legislative

restriction targeting asylum claims. Al Jazeera's approach juxtaposes *CBC* and *The New York Times'* news coverage by providing critical commentary and differing perspectives. Additionally, other articles in the sample from Al Jazeera focused less on the professional identities of Ukrainian refugees, rather, centering the narratives on retelling their experiences of fleeing the war and adjusting to their new life. The article "The Ukrainian refugees who made it to Australia" by Zoe Osborne (2022), for example, tells the stories of three different refugees and their experiences in leaving Ukraine:

> "She decided to leave the country. Her sister-in-law in Australia asked a friend in Romania to help Olesia and her children."For now, the plan is to bring back some kind of normality to the kids' lives … for both kids to go to school, to do some activities, to get some friends," she said. "For me, I want to get a job so that I can provide for myself … and maybe once the war is over, for everyone to go home. "We had a great life in Ukraine and we never planned to leave – we were happy there – and now everything is kind of gone … We just don't know whether we will be able to go back home and what we will be able to go back to."Millions of people lost their houses, their belongings, everything they had." Now safe in Sydney, Olesia says the world must not stop talking about what is happening in Ukraine" (Osborne, 2022).

This quote shows emotional depth and of refugee personal narrative, with language that represents Olesia as a resilient individual with agency and hope. In contrast, Palestinian refugee representation is more limited in the 180 examined articles in comparison to Ukrainian refugee representation, lacking in the same level and effort of humanization. The most striking difference was that the portrayal of Palestinian refugees often relied on statistics, political statements, and

collective representation rather than individual experiences. For example, in this passage from

The New York Times on the war in Gaza, the article reads:

> "The United Nations estimates that 1.9 million of Gaza's roughly 2.3 million people have
>
> been displaced from their homes, most of them crowding into parts of the south where
>
> they lack basic necessities like food, clean water and sanitation. Aid groups have accused
>
> Israel of seeking to push the Gazans into Egypt, which Israel denies. The Egyptian
>
> government has said it will not accept Palestinian refugees" (Martínez et. al, 2023).

This passage displays the very common theme of representing Palestinians through statistics

while discussing broader political contexts without including Palestinian perspectives, opinions,

and experiences. The contrast with Ukrainian refugee portrayal is notable, especially in the

efforts of humanization. The portrayal of Palestinian refugees with statistics, political statements,

and collective representation is found in other articles as well, such as the CBC article "Food will

run out in days under Israel's total blockade of Gaza, humanitarian experts warn" (Schmunk,

2023):

> "Representatives from the United Nations to refugee councils have said the latest Israeli
>
> siege would be another example of international law being broken by those on both sides
>
> of the conflict, which has left hundreds dead and thousands more injured since
>
> Saturday."It's going to affect everything," Michael Lynk, former United Nations special
>
> rapporteur for the situation of human rights and the Palestinian territory, said of a total
>
> blockade…Experts say a total siege on Gaza will affect access to food, water, electricity,
>
> medical supplies and sewage treatment for the territory's 2.3 million residents"
>
> (Schmunk, 2023).

When Palestinian refugees are included as sources in the sample, it is mainly to share the suffering of war rather than offer political perspectives on matters directly affecting them. This suffering is expressed with words such as "Desperate to quench their thirst", "They are killing us from thirst", and "lack of personal hygiene", language clearly meant to show destitution and humanitarian crisis (Marsi & Amer, 2023). This disparity in representation reflects broader media biases (Hoffman & Hameleers, 2024), with Ukrainian refugees more frequently depicted as active participants capable of valuable contributions, while Palestinian refugees are more frequently framed through victimhood.

4.3. If there is a disparity in coverage, what are the frames used to represent these refugees?

CBC on Palestinian refugees:

The 60 CBC articles analyzed on the representation of Palestinian refugees are framed primarily through a Canadian perspective: Canadian citizens trapped in Gaza, Canadian political responses, Palestinians in Canada, and Canadian advocacy. Two examples are the article "Some Palestinian and Muslim Canadians fearful 'simply for existing' as Israel-Hamas war continues" which writes "As she worries about the security of her loved ones in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian Canadian Dalia El Farra is also concerned about her safety here in Canada" (Rachini, 2023), and "Palestinian Canadians call on Trudeau to push for end of 'indiscriminate bloodshed' in Gaza" which discusses Canadian-Palestinian activism (Jabakhanji, 2023). Both articles demonstrate CBC's tendency to contextualize the Palestinian refugee experience primarily through its relevance to Canadian citizens and politics.

Personal narratives of Palestinian refugees appeared in 41.6% (25 out of 60) of the examined articles. These accounts typically consisted of brief quotations where refugees described the current dangers and hardships they were facing. Despite the presence of personal narratives, their voices were often overshadowed by political discussions and statistics. For example, the article "Amid violence and lack of critical aid, pregnant women in Gaza are at particular risk: UN" by Rhianna Schmunk includes 4 non-refugee sources and 1 Palestinian-refugee source. The only quote used from this refugee source is: "We escaped from danger into death" (Schmunk, 2023).

The presence of extensive and in-depth personal narratives were predominantly concerning Palestinian-Canadians trapped in Gaza, with 8 out of 60 (13.3%) of the analyzed articles being exclusively devoted to this particular demographic. The CBC article "His 1st trip to Gaza in 56 years ended in a harrowing escape to Egypt" (Molina, 2023) extensively covers the journey of a Palestinian-Canadian's escape from Gaza. This type of detailed account was not present with Palestinian refugees in Gaza:

> "That led to a harrowing journey through Gaza: moving from place to place every few days with family, including one time when they were given mere minutes to grab whatever they could carry and run. "I don't have time to to wear shoes, so I [was] running barefoot in the street," he said. "I left seven places from day one until I went to the Rafah border." The horrors of what he's witnessed throughout the conflict continue to haunt him — from rubble from bombed buildings to bodies laying in the streets. "You smell the dead around you. You see the blood," Elbatnigi said…Over five days, he travelled by taxi, making his way through the streets to travel to the border only to find Canadians and permanent residents weren't being allowed out" (Molina, 2023)

This framing functions to focus on a small group of people in Gaza who are legally allowed to cross the Rafah border, while neglecting the broader experience of Gazan refugees who are not afforded the same opportunity of fleeing the war. This focus on a Canadian perspective is a common theme in CBC's reporting with 45% (27 out of 60) of the analyzed articles focusing on Palestinians in Canada when discussing refugees. An example of this frame can be found in the article "Palestinian Winnipeggers anxiously wait to hear from relatives in Gaza, West Bank amid violence" (CBC, 2023):

> "Selena Zeid, 21, is trying to focus on her studies, but the University of Manitoba student says her heart is with family members in the Palestinian territories. "It's very concerning. It's hard, especially with school — exams and everything are coming up," Zeid told CBC News on Wednesday...While she has relatives who live in Gaza, Zeid's aunt and cousin from Winnipeg are in the West Bank. She last spoke with them about a week ago, before the latest outbreak of violence in the region. Zeid says it has been difficult to get in touch with her aunt and cousin, and she hopes they can get back to Canada safely" (CBC, 2023).

When Palestinian refugee voices are included, they are mainly presented through victimhood and a lack of agency. In this context, agency refers to the portrayal of individuals as having the ability to act, make choices, and influence their circumstances rather than being passive recipients of events as seen in Schmunk's article. As described by Salojärvi and Jensen (2021): "agency may be experienced as a 'capacity to make a difference', i.e. to have a form of power. Thus, power is understood as something existing in social interactions and as something constructed in relation to, for example, political, moral, intellectual and cultural issues" (2021). The majority of personal narratives from Palestinian refugees are sourced from news agencies

such as Associated Press and Thomson Reuters (making up 26.67% of the sample articles), which tend to reduce individual experiences to statistics and political statements. This is likely due to CBC's limited international reporting infrastructure. Access into Gaza is restricted and therefore larger news agencies with established war correspondents and foreign reporters are presumably more equipped and prepared to report on the war.

Specifically in the reporting on Gaza within the 60 CBC articles, expert sources dominated the narrative at the expense of refugees perspectives. In the sample, expert sources, usually international aid organization spokespersons, appeared in most articles (73.3%) to provide information on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. This can be seen in the article "Food and other crucial supplies dangerously low in Gaza, say international aid groups" (2023):

> "The United Nations World Food Program (WFP) warned on Thursday that crucial supplies were running dangerously low in the Gaza Strip after Israel imposed a total blockade on the territory following deadly Hamas attacks."It's a dire situation in the Gaza Strip that we're seeing evolve with food and water being in limited supply and quickly running out," said Brian Lander, the deputy head of emergencies at WFP. "WFP is on the ground and is responding and we're providing food to thousands of people that have sought shelter in schools and elsewhere across the territory. But we're going to run out very soon," he told Reuters." (2023)

This article quotes 12 sources (Israeli Energy Minister, Gaza-based official for Doctors Without Borders, Iran's foreign affairs minister, etc.), yet quotes one refugee source once throughout the article: "We can't flee because anywhere you go, you are bombed," one neighbour, Khalil Abu Yahia, said. "You need a miracle to survive here" (2023).

Although expert sources provided valuable analysis and data, their quotes being at the forefront of the reporting, coupled with the relative absence of direct refugee voices, created an imbalance in how refugees in Gaza were being represented. This frame, as identified by Stuart Hall, is "primary definers" (1978, pp.53–77) and it is not uncommon to find critiques of journalism as leaning too heavily on expert sourcing (Greenbank, 2015). Additionally, the overreliance on expert sources results in a collective portrayal of refugees that strips them of personal agency. This effect occurs when statistics and expert quotes group refugee experiences into numbers and generalizations. Without personal narratives from refugees themselves, their personal voices, perspectives, and circumstances are collectivized, creating a generalized representation that fails to acknowledge their humanity and individual realities. For example, a CBC article quotes World Food Program chief economist Arif Husain saying "It is a situation where pretty much everybody in Gaza is hungry" ("Half a million" 2023). Although there is nothing inherently wrong with the quote, the overall article fails to include any interviews from Palestinians actually experiencing hunger. If this was just one example, it may be regarded as insignificant or could be seen as a small point, but as stated above, the CBC sample only sources Palestinian refugees in 25 out of the 60 (41.67%) articles analyzed. This frame of primary definers has the effect of reducing Gaza's population to statistics and broad generalizations.

There are contrasting examples that are instructive and show the potential of the different frames that may be used. Despite the absence of Palestinian refugee sources and the frame of primary definers, CBC published an article that covers a father's reunion in Canada with his two children who were previously living in Gaza, titled "After a decade apart, Burnaby, B.C., father reunites with his children from war-torn Gaza" (Martinson, 2023). The CBC article details the father's

efforts to bring his children to safety. It portrays the father, a Palestinian refugee, with agency through his personal narrative and experiences. It displays the wide range of emotions that the father experienced in this journey: from fear and worry to excitement and relief in the reunion with his children, using language such as "extreme anxiety and fear" and " Fayad has more dreams for his children" (Martinson, 2023). This passage shows that a Canadian perspective does not necessarily have to hinder refugee representation through personal narratives:

> "Unable to offer them any comfort or protection in person, Fayad devoted the first weeks of the war to emailing and calling anyone he could think of — immigration officials, his MP, newsrooms — to try to raise awareness of his situation…Fayad fled Gaza a decade ago after working for the United Nations. But he didn't have the means to get out of Gaza with his children. So he left on his own, first to Indonesia. When his ex-wife had to leave Gaza a year ago, the children were left in the care of Fayad's brother, who has five children" (Martinson, 2023)

Although this is a good example of how refugees should be reported on and humanized, this type of article on direct experiences proved to be a rarity in CBC's reporting on Palestinians with 7 out of 60 (11.67%) articles including in depth and personal refugee narratives. CBC articles frequently featured political statements from foreign leaders while omitting the voices of Palestinian refugees on politics that directly impact them. Representation of Palestinians as distant subjects of political discussion, rather than active participants of their society, limits the audience's understanding of their lived experiences beyond the war. Less than half of the articles (42%) in the CBC sample included at least 1 Palestinian refugee as a source. While some may argue 42% is a high number overall, this statistic masks a deeper issue: refugee voices were typically relegated to a secondary focus, often used to emotionally emphasize expert statements

using a singular quote. CBC articles were not dedicated to Palestinian refugee narratives, but presented a main interest in reporting on the happenings of the war through official and expert sources.

CBC on Ukrainian Refugees:

In the 30 articles analyzed, CBC's representation of Ukrainian refugeess maintained a Canadian focus, incorporating perspectives from Ukrainian-Canadians, Ukrainian immigrants, Ukrainian communities across Canada, and Canadian efforts of aid, similar to their approach with Palestinian coverage. However, the articles had a substantial amount of Ukrainian refugee sources with 24 out of the 30 articles analyzed (80%) incorporating refugees as sources, as compared to 42% for the Palestinian CBC sample. Another comparative difference in the CBC coverage of Palestinian refugees was that Ukrainian refugees were often represented beyond their refugee status. This was manifested in the following sample article:

> "Olga Bolshova gestures around a small room in Warsaw crammed with three beds, a table and a small fridge. This is a temporary home for her, her husband Sergei and her daughters Ivannka, 15, and seven-year-old Stephania, who fled Kyiv the day Russia invaded Ukraine…As a first step, Olga is volunteering at a women's social action group to help other refugees arriving in Warsaw. "There is no time to grieve. I am here in this moment. I just want to be useful," she said. "If I can go and help Ukrainians I will do that. There is no time for thinking and grieving."…Olga hopes to continue the NGO she founded to help families with children affected by FASD (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder)" (McDiarmid, 2022)

This passage establishes Olga Bolshova as a person with a family structure, naming her husband and children with their specific ages; humanizing them as a family unit rather than anonymous refugees. The article also highlights Bolshova's professional identity through her NGO. This, coupled with the details of her volunteering to help arriving refugees presents her with active agency, portraying her not as a passive recipient of aid, but as a contributing member of society despite her own circumstances. CBC's coverage in the sample often strongly emphasized the agency and community engagement of Ukrainian refugees. Other examples included "Ukrainians fleeing Russian invasion arrive in Edmonton on aid flight" (Snowdon, 2022) and "'I can't believe that we are safe,' says Ukrainian refugee beginning a new life in Manitoba" (Pauls, 2022). In addition, the coverage in the sample regularly featured stories of community support and resilience, highlighting how Ukrainian refugees maintained strong connections to their Ukrainian identity while adapting to their new circumstances, as such in the article titled "Ukraine is my motherland but Saskatoon will be the second home" (Dayal 2022). This example presented the frame of identity preservation. Stories of community support and resilience as linked to identity were not as present in the Palestinian CBC sample.

Ukrainians in the CBC sample were also presented as talented refugees with the frequent mention of their professions. One article quotes a Canadian spokesperson for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe saying:

> "Lviv is the Silicon Valley of this part of Europe. So many talented Ukrainians, many of them having multiple degrees, that sort of thing. They're exactly the type of immigrants we need in Canada right now. Doctors, tens of thousands of people in the medical industry here are extremely qualified" ("Asylum-seeking Ukrainians", 2022).

However, according to a CBC news report in 2024, "It's difficult for international medical graduates (IMGs) to get a residency because there are quotas on how many foreign-trained doctors can get a spot in a system run by medical schools that favour their own graduates" (Tasker 2024). Another 2016 CBC news article reports on Syrian refugees who struggle to continue their work as doctors due to the challenges and expenses of retraining, "one out of 10 refugees who've come from Syria are professionals who are having difficulty finding work in their field, or even obtaining the required credentials," the article reads (Labby 2016). CBC's omission of the systemic challenges that previous refugees faced in the effort of pursuing certain professions adds to the differences in the framing between Ukrainian and other refugees. This portrayal of Ukrainian refugees as "talented Ukrainians" positions them as potential active participants to the Canadian society and economy. In comparison, the Palestinian CBC sample rarely discussed the professional identities of refugees.

The CBC reporting in the sample on Ukrainian refugees made clear efforts to humanize them, frequently mentioning the experiences of mothers, children, and even their pets. For example, one article details the experiences of a 10-year-old with a chronic heart condition, "The fragile 10-year-old became so unsettled that her father risked his life to return to their ninth-floor apartment 90 kilometres south of the capital, Kyiv, to rescue her pet hamster, Lola, to comfort her" (Anna, 2022). The article further describes the young girl filling the silence by playing a piano and quotes, "'I want peace for all Ukraine," the little girl said, shyly'" (Anna, 2022). This suggests that the young girl retains some capacity to act in her current situation. In addition to the personal experiences, the article included statistics and expert sources, creating a balanced news report with factual information as well as humanizing personal representation from refugees.

This is not the only example of a humanizing frame, with for example, another CBC article writing:

> "Galyna Velychko knows first-hand what it's like to uproot one's life and flee for safety. She spent the early days of the Russian invasion debating whether to leave, then made a break for the Polish border as Russian tanks began to descend on neighbouring Bucha, about 30 kilometres west of Kyiv, "It was a really hard decision and she's still experiencing post-traumatic stress. She's crying every day. She's seeing her house in her dreams," said her daughter, Nadiya Butt-Velychko, acting as a translator during the interview…She said the adjustment hasn't been easy and was devastated to learn her community, home and workplace was destroyed. Since landing in Newfoundland, Galyna Velychko began meeting people in Harbour Grace, started to learn English and even landed a job at a grocery store. Her daughter said she was proactive within her first week in Harbour Grace, which allowed her mother to move forward with her life rather than thinking about home" ("Searching for safety", 2022).

This quote presents the complexity of refugeehood by presenting Velychko's emotional vulnerability through her deep connection to her homeland, while also highlighting her resilience and agency in escaping and navigating a new life.

Overall, CBC's coverage of Ukrainian refugees demonstrated a more humanizing representation in comparison to Palestinian refugees, with 80% of articles featuring refugee sources and consistently portraying Ukrainians beyond their refugee status: through family connections, professional identities, and active agency. While maintaining a Canadian focus similar to

Palestinian refugee coverage, CBC's Ukrainian refugee narratives emphasized community engagement and portrayed them as potential contributors to Canadian society. By including personal stories of mothers, children, and even pets, CBC created a multidimensional representation that was largely absent in Palestinian refugee coverage.

The New York Times on Palestinian refugees:

The New York Times' coverage of Palestinian refugees varied in its representational approaches. While some articles used statistical representation and politics to discuss refugees, other articles in the sample provided a deeper and more contextual coverage that humanized Palestinian refugees with 27 out of the 60 (45%) sampled articles including at least one refugee voice. For example, Christina Goldbaum and Hiba Yazbek's (2023) piece on the Jenin refugee camp demonstrated a more refugee focused form of reporting:

> "Life had already become untenable, Ms. Mataheen said. Her daughters-in-law had to ask neighbors for clean water for cooking, and, when the electricity was cut, her sons had to take their phones to a nearby hospital to charge. Her 3-year-old grandson, Mahmoud, began wetting the bed. Her youngest grandson, age 1, could sleep only if cuddled in her arms. 'It was so full of life, so full of energy — now that's gone,' Ms. Mataheen said, describing the neighborhood'" (Goldbaum & Yazbek 2023).

As can be seen in this excerpt, the article uses names, ages, professions, and quotes to narrate their experiences and opinions. There are also examples of resilience and agency in Palestinian refugee representation in the New York Times' sample. In an article about Columbia University protests, a Palestinian refugee student is quoted saying:

"We've said it before, that our voices are louder and more powerful than the money that you receive, Columbia" said Mohsen Mahdawi, 33, a student and a Palestinian refugee. "We won't be silenced."...Deen Haleem, 24, a law student and the son of a Palestinian refugee who is part of the new coalition, said that Columbia's decision to suspend the groups sent a loud message to its students. "To me as a Palestinian, it says that your tragedy doesn't matter," he said. "It says that when your people die, you don't get to speak about it."(Cruz & Fahy 2023)

The article did not heavily focus on refugeehood, therefore, its representation of a Palestinian refugee was not extensive. However, the minimal representation portrayed Palestinian refugees through their opinions and actions. Deeper, contextualized articles, on the other hand, dealt with topics such as death, illnesses, displacement, and trauma. The article "Fearful, Humiliated and Desperate: Gazans Heading South Face Horrors" (Bayoumy et. al, 2023) discusses the difficult experiences of refugees in Gaza through their narratives:

"After weeks of enduring intense airstrikes, smelling corpses and losing their homes and relatives, they speak with numbness about the horrors they've witnessed in their hometowns and on the road south."I had two boys and five girls," said Malak El-Najjar, 52, who used to live in the Mukhabarat area in Gaza City and is now sheltering in Khan Younis. "Two of the girls are dead," killed in an airstrike before they left, she said, aged 18 and 20" (Bayoumy et. al, 2023).

Other New York Times articles adopted an approach similar to CBC's (see pages 36-42). These articles tended to represent refugees primarily through the frame of statistics and official statements, reducing human experiences to informational data. Despite its self-proclaimed

extensive coverage on the Middle East ("The New York Times Passes", 2024), the New York

Times' articles often heavily focused on statistics. For example, in an article titled "What the

scale of displacement in Gaza looks like," the article reads "Up to 1.8 million Gazans — around

80 percent of the population — have been forced to leave their homes since Israel began its

bombardment in response to Hamas's attack on Oct. 7." ("The New York Times Passes", 2024),

and does not include any displaced individuals as sources in the article. Instead, the article

includes expert and official sources:

> "People are sleeping on the streets and sidewalks without any means of protection," said
>
> Yousef Hammash, an advocacy officer for the Norwegian Refugee Council, who fled
>
> from his home in northern Gaza in mid-October to stay with more than 40 relatives in a
>
> two-room home in Khan Younis. "And people in the shelters are trying to convince
>
> themselves that it's a bit more safe than being in the street" (Levitt & Walker, 2023).

The language here is more directed to collective experiences and mass displacement. This is a

common theme in New York Times articles, with 27 out of the 60 articles (45%) including at

least 1 refugee source.

While some articles in The New York Times sample employed a humanizing frame, and others

reduced their experiences to informational data, a third frame, a more uncommon frame in the

New York Times coverage, perpetuated harmful stereotypes and dehumanizing narratives about

Palestinians (Alsultany, 2012). For example, "Called to Serve, Israeli Reservists Wait to

Deploy," by Mark Landler and Adam Sella (2023), included a quote from an Israeli sergeant

saying, "They tell me that they take a kid who is 8 or 9 years old, pack him with an explosive

vest and send him" (Landler & Sella 2023). The publication of this claim portraying refugees in

Gaza as child-sacrificing terrorists, without verification, context, or different perspectives represents a significant journalistic failure. This was an uncommon frame, found in one other article by The New York Times titled "What Does Destroying Gaza Solve?" (2023), columnist Nicholas Kristof employed similar language when discussing Gazan children, speculating whether they had become "terrorists" and embraced "savagery" (2023). The literature has highlighted the damaging role of stereotypes with scholar Evelyn Alsultany writing about media and reality mirroring one another after the attacks of 9/11 (Alsultany, 2012, p.4).

The New York Times on Ukrainian refugees:

The New York Times' coverage of Ukrainian refugees typically maintained a focus on refugee narratives and international aid efforts, as well as political updates. In particular, the sample frequently emphasized the professions of Ukrainian refugees. For example, the article "Painful Stories Emerge From Mariupol, While Combat Rages to the East," introduced a refugee source by mentioning their profession: "Yelena Gibert, a psychologist who reached Ukrainian-held territory with her teenage son" (Schwirtz & Levenson 2022). Other articles mentioned professions such as "veterinarian" (Kramer, 2023), "college instructor" (Arraf, 2022) and "business owner" (Kershner, 2022). This choice to include a refugees' professional identity can be viewed as presenting refugees as relatable individuals with established careers and contributions to society. By including Gibert's profession, she is presented beyond the label of "refugee" and recognized as a skilled professional whose life and career were disrupted by war. In contrast, the New York Times sample rarely mentioned (15%) the professional backgrounds or occupations of Palestinian refugees.

Ukrainian refugee voices were more prominently featured in the New York Times sample as 43 out of the 60 articles (71.7%) analyzed included at least one refugee voice, as compared to 45% for the Palestinian refugees sample in the same news publication. Through their own personal narratives, Ukrainian refugees were represented as active participants in their community, despite being displaced themselves. For example, one article details the efforts of a history teacher conducting online classes for her displaced students:

"Alla Porkhovnyuk now teaches classes remotely to 11- to 13-year-olds after fleeing with her children from the port town of Yuzhne, near Odesa, to stay with relatives in central Ukraine. As well as teaching history, much of her job involves providing reassurance to the children amid fears about the war. 'They often ask when will the war end, when will they return to school?" she said. "I always smile and say that it will be soon — we have to be patient a little longer." (Specia & Varenikova, 2022).

Another example can be found in this passage:

"Lika Spivakovska closed her two art galleries in Kyiv, Ukraine, hours after Russia invaded her country and felt helpless as she traveled across Europe, seeking refuge with her two children…Many of the artists' works had been destroyed; but maybe, she thought, the saved photos of their pieces could be digitized into NFTs. Maybe that would allow poor Ukrainian painters to stay financially afloat through online auctions as the war dragged on…photos of the Ukrainians' art, and the images taken of the damaged paintings and drawings after Russian attacks, could be minted into NFTs and be a part of a show at the Lighthouse museum in San Juan" (Medina, 2022).

This sample article excerpt portrays refugee resilience, which functions to humanize refugees as resourceful individuals adapting to adversity. By reporting on how Spivakovska reimagined art through digital innovation, despite her own displacement, Ukrainian refugees are presented as individuals actively rebuilding their community as well as careers through resourcefulness and determination. Through an artistic perspective of displacement, The New York Times explored how different members of society are able to find some agency and purpose in the war. The article "In Miami, a Ukrainian art show becomes unintentionally timely" (Sokol, 2022) explores the experiences of Ukrainian artists and their perspectives throughout the war, detailing how some of them took refuge in an art gallery:

> "On Saturday evening Kadan was hunkered inside the Kyiv gallery with a small group, preparing for the city-ordered, weekend-long curfew…For Kadan, the role of an artist in this situation was clear: "To be witnesses." But he also knew, as Russian troops bore down on Kyiv, that many artists were swapping their pens and brushes for bottles to fashion Molotov cocktails. "Emotionally, I'm ready. But technically, to be honest, I'm not," he explained. "I've dealt with the reality of war in my art, but I've never held a real weapon in my hands. Maybe I'll throw an empty champagne bottle at the tanks. I don't know'" (Sokol 2022).

While the publication's coverage of Ukrainian refugees featured statistics, official statements, and political analysis, these elements were more frequently accompanied by refugee voices. For example, the article "Blinken Arrives in Poland to Gauge Additional U.S. Aid for Ukraine" (Jakes, 2022) discusses a meeting between American and Ukrainian diplomats, yet incorporates refugee voices:

"Mr. Blinken said the Biden administration was seeking to send at least $2.75 billion in additional humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and to the countries that have taken in its more than one million refugees so far…"We walked to the border, I don't know how many hours," said one 12-year-old girl, Venera Ahmadi, whose family left Kyiv after "we heard bombs" and were staying at a nearby refugee reception center in Korczowa. "I was scared I would die," Venera's older sister, Jasmine Ahmadi, said" (Jakes, 2022).

Overall, the frames present in the New York Times sample on Ukrainian refugees dealt with professional identities, agency and resilience, artistic resilience, and humanization through personal narratives, as compared to the frames of collective representation and primary definers in the Palestinian refugee sample.

Al Jazeera on Palestinian refugees:

Al Jazeera's coverage on Palestinian refugees in the sample of 60 articles was reliant on statistics and political developments with the documentation of death through numbers being prominently featured. Much like CBC and The New York Times, Al Jazeera also excluded Palestinian refugees from political conversations, with 32 of the 60 (53.3%) articles analyzed in the sample including refugee sources. The articles dealt with topics such as displacement, medical crises, and political and military updates. This reporting often took the form of a line such as: "Palestinian health authorities, show that at least 3,324 children have been killed in Gaza" ("More children's deaths" 2023). This frame can be viewed as a statistical representation. Although the inclusion of this information is necessary, it can be argued that this form of reporting causes a depersonalization in the collective representation of Palestinians, specifically when unaccompanied by refugee voices affected by this information. Notably, refugee sources

were excluded from politically focused articles despite it directly impacting their circumstances. However, Al Jazeera is the only publication to source Gazan journalists in its news.

When refugees were included, the sample articles from Al Jazeera showed efforts of humanizing Palestinian refugees, describing the destruction and death they go through. For example, in this article on disease spread in Gaza, the author writes:

> "Waseem Mushtaha's four children have been out of school for almost two weeks. Instead of learning mathematics or geography, they are being taught how to ration water. "Every day I fill a bottle of water for each one and I tell them: Try to manage this," he told Al Jazeera, speaking from the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis. "At the beginning, they struggled, but now they are coping." After Israel issued an evacuation order for 1.1 million Palestinians in the northern part of Gaza, Mushtaha drove his wife and children aged eight to 15 to his aunt's home in Khan Younis, where residents opened their doors to extended family and friends amid Israel's relentless aerial bombardment. As a water and sanitation officer for global non-profit Oxfam, Mushtaha sees the markers of an impending public health catastrophe all around him. (Marsi 2023).

This quote humanizes Palestinian refugees by presenting how a family adapts to crisis, transforming a refugee narrative into a personal story of survival and resilience rather than the victimhood frame commonly found in other Palestinian refugee samples. Efforts to humanize Palestinians mirrored other publications' frameworks with Ukrainian refugees. For example, the article "'I miss my routine': A displaced Gaza mother recalls life before the war" by Aseel Mousa discusses the details of a Gazan mothers life before the war:

"To cope with the worry, Imtithal takes comfort in the memories of her safe, normal routine before the war began. She would wake up at dawn for Fajr prayers. Then, she would wake her younger children, Hammoud, 13, and Nour, 16, to get ready for school…"Then, it's time for my husband and older sons to go to work," she says. "I make their coffee, but my daughter, Aseel, likes fresh juice, so I make that too while we talk about my plans for the day." Once they were all fed, ready to go and, finally, out of the door, it would be Imtithal's "me time". "I go to the gym and spend about two hours exercising with my friends," she says. After that, she would go home to drink something hot with her neighbour, Sarah. Next, Imtithal says, she prepares lunch, spends a bit of time reading books on the sciences of the Quran, and logs on for her religious lessons through an academy that she joins via Zoom" (Mousa, 2023).

In these examples, the use of names, ages, hobbies, family connections, and their efforts of survival humanizes Palestinian refugees while informing readers on the happenings of the war. Beyond statistical reporting, the frame of Palestinian victimhood is very evident in Al Jazeera's sample articles, often detailing personal narratives from refugees. Readers are able to understand the extent of trauma Palestinian refugees are experiencing and how much their lives have changed. In another example, an article on bombings in refugee camps recounts a mother's experience watching her son perform first aid on his friend after an explosion: "I tried to comfort him, but Mohammed kept saying 'Let me go, I want to go with Yousef'" (Amer 2023). This direct writing about Palestinian vulnerability is not present in the other outlets to the same extent, which tended to instead make reference to Canadian perspectives (CBC News) or collective representations (New York Times) more often. The frame of Palestinian vulnerability can therefore be seen as humanizing but limited in political agency.

Despite the representation of vulnerability and suffering, the sample articles from Al Jazeera also conveys resistance and patriotism in Palestinians, mirroring elements found in the examined coverage of Ukrainians in both the CBC and New York Times. For example, the same article referenced above, "Even refugee camps aren't safe from Israeli bombs in Gaza", reads: "I will never leave my home. My children and I are staying here" (Amer 2023). The lack of refugee voices outside of recounting personal experiences emphasized the helplessness of the Palestinian population. By primarily featuring quotes to discuss immediate suffering and basic survival challenges, the sample coverage from Al Jazeera's serves to portray Palestinians as recipients of violence and humanitarian aid without meaningful agency in political conversations affecting their futures. This can be seen in a representative example from Al Jazeera which reads:

> "More than 80 percent's of Gaza's 2.4 million people have been driven from their homes, the UN says, and many now live in cramped shelters or makeshift tents in the far south, in and around the city of Rafah near the Egyptian border…Eylon Levy, the Israeli government spokesperson, has accused the UN of a failure to provide aid to civilians in Gaza. He claimed that Hamas hijacks aid and that the "UNRWA covers up for it", and blamed the UN's logistics for the closure of the Israeli-controlled Karem Abu Salem border crossing (called Kerem Shalom in Israel) this week" ("UN agency says," 2023).

Al Jazeera's approach provides readers with a humanized understanding of Palestinian experiences while simultaneously reinforcing frames of limited agency within political discussions. Though reliant on statistics and expert sources, Al Jazeera makes a more deliberate effort to include refugee sources within its coverage.

<u>Al Jazeera on Ukrainian refugees:</u>

Al Jazeera's reporting on Ukrainian refugees in the sample of 30 articles focused on refugee experiences, political updates, and comparing refugee groups. As a comparator to other outlets, 12 of the 30 Al Jazeera articles on Ukrainian refugees (40%) included at least 1 refugee source, a decline in comparison to the 53.3% of refugee sources in the Palestinian refugee coverage.

The sampled coverage from Al Jazeera often dedicated a section to discuss the disparate treatment between Ukrainian refugees and refugees of color. For example, in a section titled "selective empathy", Al Jazeera writes:

> "Hungary, like Poland, has been accused of selective sympathy given its opposition to any European Union open-door policy that benefits those fleeing conflict, poverty and oppression from beyond the continent…Orban has previously said his people "didn't want any migration" and referred to those seeking help in the EU as "Muslim invaders". Speaking to Al Jazeera on Thursday, he said it was his country's ability to "tell the difference between who is a migrant and who is a refugee" that led to the eastern border staying open" (Coakley, 2022).

In addition, while some articles incorporate sections analyzing this inequity, other articles focus solely on how Ukrainian refugees are more welcome and generally treated better compared to refugees of color from previous refugee crises (Fallon 2022, Popoviciu 2022, Sharma 2022), as well as people of color fleeing Ukraine. These articles make reference to the Syrian refugee crisis and Ukraine's Roma population, presenting an important frame on racial inequality in refugee treatment. An example of this frame is "Greece embraces Ukrainians as picture darkens for other refugees," by Katy Fallon, here with an excerpt:

> "As Ukrainian refugees are bussed into Greece to receive a warm welcome by authorities, aid workers and asylum seekers have described to Al Jazeera a far bleaker environment

for those seeking shelter having crossed Turkish borders. They say people from other nations are essentially being treated as second-class refugees, and their concerns soared after the mid-March death of a four-year-old Syrian boy, following an alleged pushback…Joe Esquire (not his real name), 35, and originally from Congo, said he has noticed a more friendly welcome being put on for Ukrainians. "There is a reality that we find unjust and unjustified, and that is the fact of directly granting asylum papers or residence documents to Ukrainian nationals as soon as they arrive, without any application procedure," he told Al Jazeera." (Fallon, 2022).

The quote addresses systematic inequalities by presenting the differential treatment and reception of different refugee groups, thus, highlighting institutional problems while also discussing the Ukrainian refugee crisis. With this frame, Al Jazeera's sample provided historical context regarding attitudes toward refugees prior to the Ukrainian crisis:

"The 2015 refugee crisis saw the creation of a fear that those coming might be "terrorists" – because we did not know anything about their background. But the more critical perspective is to say it was connected with a lot of anti-Muslim sentiment – Islamophobia that ties all Middle Eastern men to "terrorism" inherently" (Khalid 2022).

The comparative framing of Al Jazeera's sample serves the same function as this research: questioning why race influences humanitarian responses. Such reporting provides essential context that highlights how media representation itself can reinforce or challenge discriminatory practices in refugee policy. Al Jazeera's sample presents Ukrainian news coverage as part of deeper biases and political inequalities. This comparative justice framework often came at the expense of Ukrainian refugee voices with 6 of the 30 (20%) sample articles focused solely on the

unequal treatment and aid between Ukrainian refugees and other refugee groups. However, this dialogue did not dehumanize Ukrainian refugees. For example, the article "What do Syrians think about the welcome for Ukrainian refugees?" (Sharma, 2022) quotes a Syrian refugee saying:

> "Authorities should do better with the Ukrainians because they should have learned something from [the 2015 refugee crisis]. Communities are still welcoming and supportive but I think it is about how politics is playing a role. What politicians are doing and how they're reacting to welcoming newcomers – that may be a bit different than before. The response that Ukrainian refugees have been receiving has been great – and should be the normal human and political reaction to any human tragedy. Going forward, welcoming refugees, regardless of where they're coming from, should be the norm. They should be supported at every step and this is what we should be trying to keep in our minds while pressuring European countries to have a better, more open-minded and supportive role when dealing with migration from places that have horrific wars. Solidarity should be granted to everyone" (Shamra, 2022)

This article uses refugees from a previous crisis (Syrian refugee crisis) to discuss the current one. analyzing the political and humanitarian inequalities. The quote advocates for a universally humanitarian response, transforming a critique of refugee response into a constructive dialogue.

Al Jazeera's articles in the sample also focused on aid efforts from both communities and governments. Some articles provided brief descriptions of new policies and funds dedicated by governments ("UK will pay", 2022), while others focused on community efforts and mobilization towards refugee aid (Roussi, 2022). These articles tended to lack refugee sources,

however, other articles were retellings of the Ukrainian refugees' journeys to safety. For example, "A room of their own: The lives of Ukrainian women refugees," by Amandas Ong (2022), describes the women and children being housed in three holiday homes in Zakopane, a town in Poland. This article uses terms such as "jovial", "warm", and "serene" which lead to a humanization of those included by detailing their lives before and after the war:

> "Sweet-natured and softly spoken, Olha has known hardship for most of her life. The war is merely the latest episode in the series of misfortunes that have plagued her…She is eager to share anecdotes from her life, clicking her tongue impatiently whenever a photo will not load on her phone due to the poor connection in her room. On the table next to the bed, she keeps a small stuffed toy dog, one of the most precious objects she took with her when she fled. "This is a lucky charm from my grandmother," she says." (Ong, 2022).

The theme of Ukrainian refugees feeling connected to their land is also featured in Al Jazeera's articles. Readers can feel their strong sense of patriotism and connection to their country, such as in this example: "Alexandra said she did not want to leave Dnipro in central Ukraine and wanted to pick up a gun and defend "the motherland" (Coakley 2022). Articles present Ukrainians leaving with reluctance, torn between physical safety and emotional ties to their country. For example, one article details the survivor's guilt that Ukrainians who successfully fled the war feel, "I feel ashamed to be here, in this really safe situation, while in Ukraine women have to give birth in bomb shelters," one source says (Hoelzl 2022). This shows how the coverage in the sample from Al Jazeera functioned to humanize Ukrainian refugees through their experiences while simultaneously highlighting their continued connection to their homeland. This theme of a connection to their homeland represents a significant framing approach that portrays Ukrainian

refugees as reluctant asylum seekers rather than immigrants. This framing is consistent with both The CBC and New York Times coverage where their identities remain linked to their pre-war and professional lives.

In summary, while the Al Jazeera sample articles that include refugee voices effectively humanize the Ukrainian subjects through powerful quotes and frames of patriotism, the majority of their coverage still prioritizes political analysis and statistical reporting over firsthand refugee accounts. Articles in the sample that have a political focus tend to emphasize diplomatic developments and quantitative measures of refugee movements without balancing these perspectives with individual stories. Language usage in both samples incorporated efforts to humanize Palestinian and Ukrainian refugees, yet two notable differences were found. First, Palestinian refugee coverage included a greater percentage of refugee sources (53.3% compared to 40% for Ukrainian coverage). Second, Ukrainian refugees were often contextualized within a comparative framework that addressed the differential treatment of refugee groups. This comparative justice framework critiqued refugee politics while maintaining the humanity of Ukrainian refugees.

4.4. Do the frames used in different journalism news outlets draw on peace journalism?

The final section of the results presented in this thesis examined whether CBC News, the New York Times, and Al Jazeera drew on peace journalism (Galtung & Fischer, 2013) in the included sample articles. Peace journalism could serve a vital role in the reporting of wars as it prioritizes solution-oriented over violence-focused coverage. By applying this journalistic theory to refugee

reporting, journalism could potentially aid audiences in their understanding of the systematic factors that contribute to the experiences of refugees. This could potentially lead to conversation regarding more humane and effective public and political responses to refugees. With this strategy, journalism must shift from simply reporting on refugee crises to actively contributing in their resolution by following the peace journalism model.

Sample articles were given a grade based on a grading system of Peace Journalism criteria (see Chapter 3, Methods). Overall, the analysis suggests that across all three news outlets (CBC, The New York Times, and Al Jazeera), samples of both Palestinian and Ukrainian refugees fall short of peace journalism standards. Based on the samples analyzed, and with average scores ranging from 2.2 to 2.6 out of 5, all three outlets display consistent weaknesses in providing historical context, discussing long-term solutions, and exploring futures beyond immediate humanitarian aid and ceasefire calls.

Table 3: Peace Journalism Scores for Refugee Coverage by News Outlet

Publication	Palestine	Ukraine
CBC	2.2/5	2.5/5
The New York Times	2.4/5	2.6/5
Al Jazeera	2.5/5	2.2/5

CBC on Palestinian refugees as related to peace journalism:

The average grade of peace journalism in the sampled CBC articles on Palestinian refugees is 2.2/5. CBC's coverage lacked peace journalism elements as it provided minimal historical context on the emergence of Gaza's refugee camps and Gazan life before the attacks of October 7. Additionally, the CBC sample coverage did not discuss the war's long-term implications on

Gaza's future. There were no discussions of the effects of mass destruction that Gaza faces, the psychological impact of war on survivors, and the possibilities of rebuilding Gaza. CBC's focus in the sample articles was centered primarily on recent events, which also ties into a lack of solution-oriented journalism (Galtung & Fischer, 2013). The sample did not discuss a ceasefire beyond simply reporting on advocates, politicians, and humanitarian organizations calling for a ceasefire. The sample articles did not discuss the long term effects of the war or ways in which Palestinians may move forward once a ceasefire is agreed upon.

CBC on Ukrainian refugees as related to peace journalism:

The average grade of peace journalism in CBC's articles on Ukrainian refugees is 2.5/5. The CBC's reporting on Ukrainians in the sample presented similar limitations to its coverage of Palestinians when examined through the lens of peace journalism. The reporting provided detailed coverage of current events, however, lacked deeper historical context that would aid readers in the understanding of origins and evolution of events that led to the current war. The focus on current occurrences hindered the presence of peace opportunities and conflict resolution (Galtung & Fischer, 2013, p.99). Solution focused coverage was only present during the discussion of refugee assistance. The sole focus on refugee aid and international support represented a response to the consequences of conflict rather than an exploration of resolutions, such as in this excerpt example:

> "He [Prime Minister Justin Trudeau] met with Polish President Andrzej Duda, who praised Canada — and the prime minister in particular — for Canada's offers of assistance, while stating that his country is counting on those promises being kept. The two leaders discussed how to quickly get refugees who want to go to Canada onto flights.

One of the options being considered is some form of airlift. Duda said that proposal is

"still an issue of negotiations" (Brewster, 2022).

The New York Times on Palestinian refugees as related to peace journalism:

The average grade of peace journalism The New York Times sample received on Palestinian

refugees is 2.4/5. The publication's opinion pieces provided more nuanced political analysis and

historical context than the standard news reports. These opinion pieces discussed the politics of

Palestine as well as long-term implications that shape Palestinian refugee experiences (Kristof,

2023). Although, the presence of some historical context was not common, some examples could

be found,

> "The settlements are not a new project; they began to crop up almost immediately after
>
> Israel conquered much of the West Bank in the Six-Day War of 1967. Since then, despite
>
> the fact that most of the world regards the settlements as illegal, the settlements have
>
> steadily expanded and swelled. Under the Oslo Accords of 1993, which gave the
>
> Palestinians limited self-rule, the settlements were set aside as one of the issues to be
>
> resolved in future negotiations" (Schmemann, 2023).

Historical context was not discussed in depth nor was it present in most articles. The

publication's most apparent shortcoming was its lack of solution oriented discussions. The news

articles rarely discussed possible solutions to Palestinian refugees or the ongoing war. Instead,

articles focused on immediate events and political updates with topics such as political meetings

(Entous, 2023), ceasefire updates (Nereim et. al, 2023) and humanitarian aid shortages (Yee &

Bergman). Potential peace pathways were rarely discussed outside the reporting of calls for

ceasefire. The future of refugees and their camps were not a topic of relevance amongst the analyzed articles.

The New York Times on Ukrainian refugees as related to peace journalism:

The average grade of peace journalism in The New York Times sample articles on Ukrainian refugees is 2.6/5. Perhaps the biggest difference in peace journalism between the Ukrainian and Palestinian refugee coverage in The New York Times sample articles was the "humanization" aspect as there are significantly more articles that included Ukrainian refugees (see section The New York Times on Ukrainian refugees above, 71.7% versus an average of 55.27% for the total sample). Another difference was the multiple perspectives presented (e.g. "Fleeing War in Ukraine, They're Met With Employers Offering Paychecks" Alderman & Cohen, 2022) as the articles on Ukrainian refugees often included refugees themselves as well as aid workers and expert sources. This is a valuable form of journalism that blends humanization and personal narrative with facts and expert information, as recommended by Lynch and Galtung (2010), "tell the story from all sides" (p.87) and "A peace journalist will have to give voice to people far outside the narrow circle of 'official sources'" (p.68). This approach created a more comprehensive form of journalism that combines human experience narratives with factual information and expert analysis. In doing so, such reporting is able to develop both emotional understanding of refugee experiences as well as intellectual understanding of war. The shortcomings in the Palestinian sample's peace journalism are also present in Ukraine's coverage. Solution-oriented discussions were not common in the discussion of refugees and the war beyond the reporting of humanitarian aid efforts and political statements.

Al Jazeera on Palestinian refugees as related to peace journalism:

The average grade of peace journalism in Al Jazeera's sample coverage of Palestinian refugees is 2.5/5. The sample of articles from Al Jazeera was able to humanize Palestinian refugees through personal narratives (see section 4c above), however, it did not discuss solutions beyond reporting on ceasefire discussions. The publication excelled in the "multiple-perspective" aspect of peace journalism (Lynch & Galtung, 2010, p.87-91) where it included humanitarian organizations, political, expert, and refugee sources in the sample articles. Al Jazeera also incorporated historical context in its reporting, with the frequent featuring of the background of Palestinian refugee camps as well as recounting the events that lead up to the war in Gaza. While the sample successfully humanized Palestinian refugees across a number of articles (see section 4c above), allowing readers to understand Palestinian refugee experiences from refugees themselves, it demonstrated a weakness in exploring solutions-oriented journalism. Beyond the basic reporting of ceasefire negotiations ("Israel's military says", 2023), the sample articles rarely discussed long-term resolutions and effects of the war. Additionally there were no discussions past immediate events. The conversation of the future of Gaza after a ceasefire was not a prominent topic.

Al Jazeera on Ukrainian refugees as related to peace journalism:

The average grade of peace journalism in Al Jazeera's sample coverage of Ukrainian refugees is 2.2/5, revealing several shortcomings compared to its Palestinian refugee reporting. Al Jazeera's Ukrainian refugee articles in the sample demonstrated an absence of historical context, as was seen in Al Jazeera's sample coverage of Palestinian refugees discussed above. Readers were not provided with a comprehensive explanation of the events that led to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This led to a critical gap in information and the understanding of the war's origins (see "1 million refugees", 2023 as an example), a key part of effective peace reporting (Lynch &

Galtung, p.91). Despite those shortcomings, Al Jazeera's sample effectively humanized

Ukrainians, providing readers an understanding of refugee life and adaptation (see section 4c

above). However, the sample lacked the "multiple perspectives" approach that was clearly

present in its Palestinian coverage. The Ukrainian coverage presented a narrower range of

perspectives, where diverse voices were rarely found in the same article. Additionally, the

publication rarely discussed solutions beyond reporting on humanitarian aid efforts.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Hypothesis 1 and 2

This thesis aimed to analyze and compare news coverage on Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees due to a need for greater critical attention to media disparities in humanitarian crisis reporting (Hoffmann and Hameleers, 2024). While existing research has extensively examined Ukrainian refugee representation in news media, there remains a significant gap in research on Palestinian refugee representation, despite both humanitarian crises receiving global media attention. However, several scholars have noted the tendency of Western media (television, film, news and pop culture) to present refugees from different regions through fundamentally different frames (Iberi & Saddam, 2023) and the writing of journalists such as Moustafa Bayoumi argued "These comments point to a pernicious racism that permeates today's war coverage and seeps into its fabric like a stain that won't go away. The implication is clear: war is a natural state for people of color, while white people naturally gravitate toward peace" (Bayoumi, 2022). The QCA findings presented in Chapter 4 reveal a significant disparity in news coverage between Palestinian and Ukrainian refugees (e.g., Table 4).

Table 4: Refugee Source Presence in Sample Articles

Refugee group	CBC	NYT	Al Jazeera
Ukrainian	80%	71.7%	40%
Palestinian	41.6%	45%	53.3%

Hypothesis 1: Ukrainian refugees are represented sympathetically.

Hypothesis 1 was supported by the analysis presented in Chapter 4. In the sample examined, Ukrainian refugees are more frequently represented through personal narratives in comparison to

Palestinian refugees, which were primarily represented through political developments and

expert sources (see pages 31 to 61). Additionally, the presence of Palestinian refugee personal

narratives were limited to the retelling of their experiences, however, their voices were notably

absent in discussions of political opinions or developments.

Ukrainian refugee voices, however, were more prevalent and not limited to discussing the

violence and terror they endured. Ukrainian refugees often commented on their host country

circumstances and voiced their political opinions through expressions of patriotism. This

supported Greenbank's research (Greenbank, 2015; see chapter 2), where they discuss that

refugees were often represented through expert perspectives rather than their own personal

perspectives (p.13).

Table 5: Key differences between Ukrainian and Palestinian refugee representation

Representational Elements	Palestinian refugees	Ukrainian refugees
Personal narratives	Limited to quotes on suffering	Extensive, detailed accounts of experiences
Professional identity	Rarely mentioned	Frequently mentioned (e.g., teachers, artists, veterinarians)
Agency	Portrayed as passive victims	Portrayed as active participants in community with agency
Humanization efforts	Limited, collective representation	Extensive, family details and personal stories
Political voice	Excluded from political discussions	Often excluded, brief opinions are present
Community context	Limited reporting on community structures, efforts, and mobilization	Strong focus on community resilience, support, and mobilization

Hypothesis 2: Palestinian refugees follow a different framing than Ukrainian refugees.

Hypothesis 2 was supported by the analysis presented in Chapter 4. The lack of agency in Palestinian representation was, to a certain extent, an accurate representation. Palestinians trapped in Gaza have very little agency with loss of jobs (79.7% unemployment in Gaza according to a 2024 United Nations report) and no way of escaping. However, Palestinian refugees exist outside of Gaza too, and opportunities for agency were still present. For example, Mauricio Morales' Al Jazeera piece "'A place to fly' - Jenin Freedom Theatre stands defiant amid Israeli raids" recounts the Jenin refugee camp's efforts to keep a theatre open as a source of escape for the youth of the camp (Morales, 2023). The article describes the mental turmoil that both children and adults in the Jenin refugee camp experience, as well as how they use art to heal. The article also discusses the issues that the theater faces as a result of military presence and interference. Instead of relying on professional sources, it examines these issues through the experiences and perspectives of the Palestinian refugees who operate the theatre. It is a clear example of how future coverage could incorporate Palestinian voices by highlighting their resilience and creative responses to trauma.

By presenting Palestinians as active agents in their own narratives, creating art, building community, and preserving culture, news media can provide a more humanizing representation that acknowledges both the struggles and strength of the Palestinian refugee experience. The above article also employs the frame resilience through art. Articles that utilize this frame offer readers a more nuanced understanding of refugee experiences by exploring the political aspect of their art. Unlike articles focused on statistics or political developments, the artistic resilience

frame presents refugees as active agents of their culture. However, this is an uncommon frame in the Palestinian refugee sample.

As stated previously (see chapter 4), Palestinian agency is also an uncommon occurrence. The agency of Palestinians could have been present through personal thought and opinion, however, more often than not, Palestinian refugee voices were limited to recount their horrific experiences in the war, employing a victimhood frame (see Chapter 4, page 36). Refugee voices *should* be used to recount their experiences, however, they should not be limited to that. Refugee opinions on the politics and war that affect them should be valued. Palestinians were not represented with intelligence, these conversations were often deferred to expert sources. As Greenbank argues, "This prosody is intensified by the disparity in the amount of space refugees and non-refugees are granted to speak about matters related to refugees. This kind of representation depicts refugees as incapable of self-determination and denies them the agency to frame their own experiences as autonomous human beings" (2014, pp.6-7).

Although the sample articles did not find that Ukrainian refugees were at the forefront of political discussions, they were afforded the right to speak out against the Russian government. For example, one article included a quote from an escaping kindergarten teacher saying: "All of this is because of Putin. I fear him and I am angry at him" (Kramer et. al 2022), while another example included a woman seeking shelter in a subway: "she was seething with anger at the man who started the war, President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia. "I don't want to swear," she said. "I just hate that man with all my soul. Look how much pain he brought us" (Kramer, 2022). The frame of patriotism and national identity was prominent in Ukrainian refugee coverage

across the sample articles. Ukrainian refugees were quoted expressing their emotional ties and unwavering support of their homeland, despite their physical displacement. The articles often highlighted their desire to return and expressed feeling guilt for leaving while others remained. Although there is room for improvement on political engagement with refugees, the emphasis on the Ukrainian connection to their land is a political statement that Palestinians were not presented through as frequently.

Personal thought and opinion on political developments for both refugee groups were replaced with expert sources, employing the "primary definers" frame (Hall, 1978, pp.53-77). Despite the lack of political involvement, Ukrainian refugees were represented through a humanizing frame, portrayed not only as displaced individuals, but as valuable members of society with jobs, families, friends, and pets. The sample articles on Ukrainian refugees often included these relatable and humanizing details that were absent in the Palestinian refugee sample.

A common frame in the Palestinian refugee sample was the victimhood frame, which presented them through a displacement lens, rarely mentioning their pre-war lives and accomplishments. Additionally, the statistical and collective framing further diminishes their individuality and humanizing representations by aggregating Palestinian experiences into data. Both representational frameworks extended to the limited agency frame, which presented Palestinian refugees as recipients of violence and humanitarian aid, while omitting potential stories of community efforts and survival strategies. This disparity between Ukrainian and other refugee groups was noted by Al Jazeera in the sample articles on Ukrainian refugees. A comparative

justice framework was employed in 20% of the analyzed articles discussing the political and public disparities between Ukrainian refugees and refugee crises preceding it.

5.2. Stuart Hall's Representation Theory

Although research on Palestinian refugee representation is scarce, the literature review in Chapter 2 shows a clear disparity in how Ukrainian refugees were represented compared to other refugee groups. As seen in El-Nawawy and Elmasry's (2023) research, Ukrainian refugees were represented with more sympathy and humanization compared to Syrian refugees. This is also seen in the analysis of how Ukrainian refugees were humanized; through the constant mention of their jobs, hobbies, children, and pets, as well as personal narratives and patriotism. In contrast, Palestinian refugee representation lacked these humanizing elements. These differences can be interpreted through Stuart Hall's theory of representation where his 1973 paper "Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse" discusses the concept of "preferred readings," which argues that messages from media to audiences are not simply received and absorbed as the media intended, but are filtered through the audiences' personal and cultural experiences (p.9). When analyzing the results through this theory, readers are more equipped to identify with Ukrainian experiences as they are constantly reminded of Ukrainian life before the war (see pages 43-53). Meanwhile, Palestinian refugees in the sample are not afforded individual agency or relatable narratives, instead, were predominantly portrayed through a lens of political developments and violence. These points are worthy of further study to better explore and understand how readers may interpret such results.

Hall's (1997) later work discusses the concept of "the spectacle of the other" where minority groups are represented using frames that use and maintain existing power structures (p.259). The

portrayal of Palestinian refugees exemplifies this concept. They appear primarily as subjects of political developments rather than as individuals with complex lives and diverse perspectives (see pages 36-46). This representational pattern reinforces a power dynamic found in previous research which identifies refugees of color as objects to be discussed rather than subjects with agency (Elsamni, 2016).

Following Hall's concepts of representation in media, these representational differences between Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees do not reflect neutral journalistic choices, but can become an active part in the shaping of the "preferred readings" (Hall, 1973, p.9). The unequal portrayal can construct public perceptions and cause political implications. This is important as the guide from UNHCR for reporting on refugees, asylum, and forced displacement (2023) emphasizes "The way we frame stories and present images and language when reporting on refugee and asylum issues holds immense power to shape public perception. Inaccurate reporting can pose significant risks to the safety and well-being of asylum seekers and refugees, as well as their asylum claims" (p.12)

5.3. Peace Journalism (Hypothesis 3)

Hypothesis 3: The coverage of both Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees does not include the elements of peace journalism

Hypothesis 3 was also supported by the findings in chapter 4. In this context, the need for alternate forms of journalism, such as peace journalism, are amplified. Peace journalism, as articulated by Johan Galtung, calls for reporting that prioritizes understanding the causes of conflict, exploring peace pathways, and focusing on the human impact of war beyond immediate violence (Galtung & Fischer, 2013, p.98). In this thesis, as seen in the results section (pages 62-

66), there is no substantial difference in the presence of peace journalism between Ukrainian and Palestinian refugee news coverage.

The usage of peace journalism with Ukrainian refugees was slightly higher (see table 3), primarily due to the increased inclusion of refugee sources, a key element of the "humanisation of all sides" aspect within the peace journalism model (Lynch & Galtung, 2010, p.13). While some elements of peace journalism were present in the sample, the peace journalism framework was not comprehensively applied in either refugee context. As described in their book, Johan Galtung and Dietrich Fischer (2013) write that peace journalism can be understood through two pathways: the "low road" and the "high road" (p.96). The low road is the promotion of a win/lose narrative, it focuses on violence and warfare in a way that mirrors sports journalism: "The reporting model is that of a military command: who advances, who capitulates short of their goals; counting the losses in terms of numbers killed, wounded, and material damage" (p.96). This was specifically employed in the sampled articles through the reporting of political powers' statements and actions as well as the positioning of governing powers against one another and the representation of Ukrainian and Palestinian populations through statistics without the discussion or mention of peace opportunities (pages 62-66). Additionally, they explain that the low road could cause untruthfulness, "[i]f one side is backed by one's own country, nation, class or paper/station/channel" (Galtung & Fischer, 2013, p.97).

In contrast, the high road views conflict as an opportunity for human progress and that it should be used to "find new ways, being imaginative, creative, transforming the conflict so that the opportunities take the upper hand. Without violence" (Galtung & Fischer, 2013, p.97). Most of the sampled articles did not employ this model, instead, they leaned into the "low road" model.

For example, the New York Times article "Calling Off Steel Plant Assault, Putin Prematurely Claims Victory in Mariupol" details the happenings of the war in a sports-like manner (Troianovski et. al, 2022), much as described in the "low road" approach. The article uses words such as "claimed victory" signifying the emphasis of winning and losing through a focus on violence, for example, "Russia is shifting the focus of the war to gaining territory and wiping out Ukrainian forces in Donbas" (Troianovski et. al, 2022).

Notably, one article did employ elements of the "high road" model and stands out as an instructive example. The New York Times opinion piece "How the U.S. Can Help Refugees (and Weaken Vladimir Putin)" includes solutions to both the refugee crisis and the war in Ukraine, for example including lines such as "he [Joe Biden] should grant parole status to newly arriving Ukrainian refugees, allowing them to remain in the United States", as well as "we should resist calls by some politicians to expel Russian students studying in the United States. To the contrary, the United States should grant them special student relief status and allow them to remain here after graduation if they wish. The more of them stay here, the more they contribute to the U.S. economy while depriving Mr. Putin of their services" (Somin, 2022). Although the general tone and structure of the article is focused on "us vs. them" and how to "weaken" Vladimir Putin, it explores those ideas through peaceful measures: allowing russian students to remain in the U.S. to avoid deployment in the war (Somin, 2022).

A large part of the peace journalism model is solution-oriented discussions and frameworks, as explained by Galtung and Fischer, "Peace journalism tries to depolarize by showing the black and white of all sides, and to de-escalate by highlighting peace and conflict resolution as much as violence" (2013, p.99). The sampled articles in this thesis failed to engage in solution-oriented

discussions, instead, they merely reported on existing solutions such as refugee aid and policy changes that allowed Ukrainian refugees' a smoother entry process into host countries. In doing so, without engaging in deeper solution-oriented discussions, the articles perpetuated a conflict-focused perspective.

5.4.   Practical Solutions Towards More Ethical Refugee Representation

This thesis addresses the issue of a lack of refugee voices within the sample as well as the issue of accessing refugees (especially in the Palestinian refugee sample). Improving refugee agency requires collaborative approaches that recognize systemic barriers and journalistic responsibilities. This section proposes practical solutions that focus on refugee agency and presence in their representation. This could involve both community-centered and citizen journalism theories (Wenzel, 2020 & Allan, 2009) where the community is involved in the production of their representation. This moves beyond traditional interview models to more empowering journalistic practices. How these theories are implemented in a war goes beyond the scope of this thesis, however through this research, it is clear that different journalistic pathways and implementations are needed. It is important to mention that Al Jazeera does employ journalists in Gaza to report on the war (e.g., Wael Al-Dahdouh, Ismail al-Ghoul, and Hossam Shabat). Additionally, "The Times has been working with journalists who were already in Gaza when the siege began. We have been interviewing residents and officials in Gaza by phone and using digital apps. We have asked people in the area to share their stories with us on video," (The New York Times, 2023).

Additionally, results show that the sample lacks peace journalism across both refugee groups. One of the main factors missing is historical contexts, which is overshadowed by an influx of immediate news. It is unrealistic to include historical context of the wars in every article, however, providing a link to an article that thoroughly explains the historical events that led up to these wars is a very feasible option. Another fundamental weakness of the sample articles is the lack of solution-oriented dialogues. Articles that truly employ peace journalism should transform reporting from a detailed account of destruction to an exploration of potential peace pathways. This could involve including conflict resolution experts to discuss peaceful options alongside the impacted population, creating a collaborative approach to ending conflict and rebuilding communities.

5.5. A Critical Reflection on Refugee Representation in the Sample

In researching and writing this thesis, I became increasingly aware of the lack of attention that Palestinian refugees receive in academia compared to other refugee groups, not just Ukrainian refugees. The academic literature on refugee representation in media, where a multitude of theoretical frameworks are employed, is diverse and relatively accessible. However, research specifically focusing Palestinian refugee representation in news media is scarce. This realization raised questions: Is this academic shortage due to the political stigma surrounding Palestine? Are we afraid of the implications it may have on our academic progress? I acknowledge my own apprehension surrounding this research. However, I do believe in the critical questioning and examining of journalism as an industry. I want to question why different groups of people are viewed with more nuance and sympathy compared to other groups, all experiencing war, violence, and death. I view the reporting on Ukrainian refugees as a journalistic success. As an industry that so often fails the public and the journalists within it, this research, as well as the

research paper preceding it, prove that journalism was utilized successfully. Yet, this success also highlights a pattern of failure towards other refugee groups, not just Palestinian refugees. Failing to confront and question these patterns and inadequacies is a journalistic failure.

5.6. Strengths and weaknesses

5.6a. Strengths

The findings of this thesis on Ukrainian refugees are supported by previous research (see chapter 2), however, the comparative analysis of the Ukrainian and Palestinian refugee crises offers a unique contribution to current research of refugee portrayals in news media. By examining three news publications of different geographical and political perspectives (*CBC News, The New York Times, and Al Jazeera*), the research provides a more comprehensive understanding of how media framing exists across different journalistic environments. Additionally, the qualitative content analysis allowed for an in-depth examination of representational components such as the language, framing, and sources used. In doing so, the research was able to analyze the samples through Stuart Hall's representation theory and Johan Galtung's peace journalism model, which offered a theoretical foundation and approach. These frameworks facilitated a critical analysis that went beyond news coverage, but also how journalism can reflect and reinforce broader political and social systems.

5.6b. Weaknesses

The sample results across both refugee groups present limitations in this research. The final sample consisted of 120 articles on Ukrainian refugees compared to 180 articles on Palestinian refugees, which created an imbalance that could have a possible effect on the findings. This gap in numbers is caused by database searches resulting in different quantities for both searches. For

example, Al Jazeera search results generated 60 articles on Palestinian refugees but only 30 on Ukrainian refugees. Similar disparities appeared across all three media sources (see chapter 3). The unequal coverage is a restriction that should be considered when assessing the QCA results.

During the analyzed time periods, Ukrainian refugees had access to international borders, opportunities to engage with journalists safely, and to build new lives and become active agents in those communities. They could take part in aid efforts in refugee safe zones as refugees themselves. Palestinian refugees in Gaza, however, faced severe restrictions with border restrictions and media blackouts that affected both their agency and their accessibility to journalists. This research is not limited to Palestinian refugees in Gaza, however, it acknowledges that the dedicated time period of the analysis takes place during the height of media attention on Gaza. However, while the restrictions in Gaza limited reporting capabilities, the systematic patterns of unequal representation, humanization, and sympathy found in this research can be supported by previous research.

5.7. Conclusion

This thesis has examined the representation of Ukrainian and Palestinian refugees across three news outlets using a QCA. It revealed significant disparities in how these refugee groups are framed, sourced, and contextualized. The findings show that Ukrainian refugees were portrayed with greater agency and humanity while Palestinian refugees were more frequently represented through statistics, political developments, and collective framing. This thesis does not aim to discredit the humanizing approach of Ukrainian refugee representation. Rather, it emphasized the importance of such coverage in humanitarian reporting. It advocates for extending the same

practices to all refugee groups. By recognizing and addressing these representational differences, journalism can be greatly improved.

The findings supported all three hypotheses. Ukrainian refugees were represented sympathetically, humanized through personal narratives, professional identities, and family connections that portrayed them as multidimensional individuals beyond their refugee status. Palestinian refugees followed different framing patterns, with limited agency, restricted personal representation, and representation through expert sources and statistics. Finally, neither refugee crisis was covered using a peace journalism lens with all three outlets missing major peace journalism components regardless of which refugee group was being covered.

While the findings identified disparities in refugee representation, they revealed opportunities for improved journalistic approaches not just through the humanizing frameworks used in representing Ukrainian refugees, but also through peace journalism. Journalism can take a more active role through the usage of peace opportunities alongside necessary war reporting, ensuring war coverage doesn't obscure possibilities for resolution.

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