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Voices unheard, stories untold

A qualitative content analysis of gender bias in war reporting and human rights journalism as a viable alternative

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ABSTRACT

In a world marked by numerous conflicts and violence, war reporting plays a significant role in shaping public understanding and perceptions of, as well as reactions to, war. However, concerns have been raised about the presence of gender bias and the perpetuation of patriarchal norms within war reporting, as it perpetuates gender bias in society as a whole and has negative consequences on peacebuilding processes and approaches to human rights violations. This master's thesis aims to uncover the presence of gender bias and the patriarchal paradigm in war reporting. By utilizing a qualitative content analysis to examine war reporting characteristics in three prominent news outlets - The Guardian, De Standaard, and Al Jazeera - this research explores the representation of women's voices, experiences, and contributions, as well as the reinforcement or challenge of traditional gender roles and power dynamics. Additionally, the study acknowledges the significance of alternative approaches such as peace journalism and human rights journalism to get to more balanced, inclusive, ethically responsible and humane journalism that prioritises the protection of human rights in conflict situations. The analysis reveals recurring themes in war reporting. Conclusions indicate that gender bias and the patriarchal paradigm persist in war reporting, with the portrayal of women reinforcing traditional gender roles. Female agency, experiences and contributions are often overlooked and marginalised or serve to bolster patriarchal, patriotic, strategic or elitist discourse. However, some positive developments towards Peace Journalism and, to a lesser extent, Human Rights Journalism, are noted, highlighting a more people-oriented and solution-oriented approach with a focus on exposing human rights violations.

Keywords: journalism, war reporting, gender bias, patriarchy, human rights, peace journalism, human rights journalism, patriarchy

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INTRODUCTION

The war in Ukraine, the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, more than 35 armed conflicts taking place on the African continent (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan…), six in Mexico and Columbia and 19 in Asia (India, Myanmar, Pakistan and the Philippines)… (Geneva Academy, 2023). While it is not always visible to the general public, our world is constantly marked by violence, displacement and human suffering. Amidst ongoing conflicts and turbulent geopolitical landscapes, the media play an increasingly crucial role in shaping public understanding and perceptions of war. In our interconnected world, where information spreads rapidly, widely and uncontrollably, the media serves as a powerful mediator of conflicts, influencing global discourse and policy decisions.

Nevertheless, alongside the imperative to inform, researchers have expressed concerns regarding the presence of gender bias and the perpetuation of patriarchal norms within war reporting. This master's thesis aims to delve into the characteristics of war reporting in three prominent news outlets, namely The Guardian, De Standaard, and Al Jazeera, through qualitative content analysis. By scrutinising the content of these news sources, this study seeks to shed light on the extent to which gender bias and the patriarchal paradigm manifest in war reporting, as well as the potential implications for the portrayal of contemporary conflict, with a specific focus on the representation of women and their roles. It seeks to explore whether women's voices, experiences, and contributions are adequately represented, how they are portrayed in comparison to their male counterparts and whether traditional gender roles and power dynamics are reinforced or challenged in the narratives and framing of war reporting. Furthermore, this thesis acknowledges the importance of alternative approaches to war reporting through Peace Journalism and Human Rights Journalism. By analysing whether elements of these alternative approaches are already present within the selected news outlets' war reporting, this study aims to identify potential avenues for more balanced, inclusive and ethically responsible journalism, with a focus on the protection of human rights.

1. State of the art

A comprehensive body of research has already been conducted on the representation of war and conflict in the media, encompassing various aspects of gender bias, patriarchal norms and alternative approaches to war reporting. Several researchers have made significant contributions to this field.

Cockburn (2010) and Giles and Hyndman (2004) have examined the representation of women in war reporting, both emphasising the marginalisation of women's experiences and the need for more diverse narratives. The former focuses on gender dynamics and the omission of women's contributions, while the latter focus on the importance of challenging gender stereotypes to ensure inclusive journalism. Lorenzen and Turpin (1998), Banwell (2020) and Halonen (1996) have explored

the influence of gender on war journalism, each highlighting the impact of traditional gender norms on media narratives. Lorenzen and Turpin (1998) pay particular attention to the role of masculinity and femininity in shaping war reporting, while Banwell (2020) looks at the framing of gender and the challenges faced by female journalists in war zones. Halonen (1996) emphasises the need for more nuanced representations of women's experiences in war coverage.

Klaus and Kassel (2005) analyse gender biases and patriarchal norms across different countries. Korac (2022) explores the intersectionality of gender and ethnicity in media representations. Both offer a comparative perspective on war reporting. Lahav (2010) and Wegner (2021) delve more into the visual aspects of war reporting. The former examines the role of female journalists in accessing and reporting on conflict zones, while the latter focuses on the portrayal of women in war photography. Amer (2017) investigates specifically the representation of Muslim women and the impact of Islamophobia and orientalism on media narratives. Harp et al. (2011) and Ottosen (2016) focus on the coverage of sexual violence, emphasising the need for ethical reporting and sensitivity in addressing this issue. Other researchers focusing on specific dimensions are Unaegbu (2016) and Houge (2016), who examine the representation of women as victims and survivors, Thompson et al. (2007), who emphasise the importance of inclusive perspectives, and Andersen (2005), who highlights the agency of women as peacebuilders.

While these researchers have made significant contributions to the field, there is a need for further comparative analyses across news outlets, in-depth examinations of women's representation and exploration of alternative approaches. This thesis aims to address these gaps by, on the one hand, building upon their work and using it as a baseline, and on the other hand, by contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of gender dynamics and power structures within the context of war reporting.

2. Structure of the thesis

The rest of this thesis is divided into four more chapters. The next chapter consists of the literature review that establishes a theoretical lens based on previous research, concepts and theories that will guide the rest of the thesis. It starts with an exploration of why studying media discourse is important, followed by a look at the intersection of gender and war. The chapter ends with an in-depth focus on war reporting and its alternatives, Peace Journalism and Human Rights Journalism. The third chapter is the methodology. It gives an overview of why qualitative content analysis is the best method for this thesis. After that, it goes over the different steps of the analysis. The following chapter contains the analysis and discussion, where the collected data is analysed, compared and discussed, with the ultimate goal of formulating an answer to the research questions. Lastly, chapter five is the conclusion, which contains a summary of the results and how they relate to the research questions

and fulfil the objectives of this thesis, gaps that were filled with this research, ultimately ending with a discussion of the limitations of this study and possibilities for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Why study media discourse?

The focus of this thesis is on media texts, specifically written news. But why is it so important to look at this? Researchers have been studying media discourse for decades, from radio and television to – more recently – social media, because of several reasons. This first chapter of the literature review will look into these different reasons.

First of all, the study of media is critical because of the impact they have on our understanding of the world. Out of all the information available, only a small percentage makes it into the media. Those creating the news have to go through a process of sorting, selecting and constructing. Dependent on the medium, the format, the journalistic routines, and the process of handling information, the image that the consumer receives of the world is framed in a particular way. It is the media that give meaning to particular events or issues by considering them to be newsworthy enough to be translated into specific words and images and to be transferred from the private to the public domain. This, according to Adampa (1999, p. 18), means 'that the news automatically [becomes] an ideological produce'. An event or issue is packaged in such a way that it is easy to recognise and consume, leading to the meaning behind the news being 'framed as the only possible meaning' causing us to 'organize our conduct, attitude and belief system accordingly' (del Zotto, 2002, p. 142-143). Klaus and Kassel (2005, p. 337) formulated this as follows: 'It cannot be overemphasized that media serve as major sources of legitimation in how reality is defined and acted upon'.

Secondly, the media reproduces power relations and the dominant ideology within a specific society (Amer, 2017; Adampa, 1999). Media institutions are a major site where social and political fights for power take place, and those in powerful positions often have privileged access to them. On top of this, the media consider powerful individuals and institutions to be the most trustworthy sources of information. For example, when writing a story on an armed conflict, a politician or general will be considered much more trustworthy than a victim. As such, primarily the most powerful have access to media discourse and thus public discourse (Adampa, 1999; Lahav, 2010). Hall et al. (1978, p. 7-58) call these 'spokesmen' the 'primary definers' of the news. That is, they are often the primary source asked to interpret a specific issue or topic, which means they can bend the interpretation to their will. As a result, society gets stuck in a vicious cycle in which the dominant ideology of who and what is important is continuously reproduced (Lahav, 2010).

Thirdly, media 'create cultural identity' (Halonen, 1996, p. 9). The socio-political, economic and cultural environment in which media is created shapes the ideologies it produces. It is this environment that helps media producers to decide whether certain news will be attractive to consumers or not (Klaus and Kassel, 2005). As a consequence, the specific traits and qualities of journalistic content are often only fully appreciated and understood within the culture in which it is created. By presenting timely and relevant topics, journalism prompts audiences to take a stance on current issues in society. These themes can vary from day to day, depending on the discourse and medium employed. Furthermore, journalism has the potential to introduce new narratives or revive established ones, thus contributing to cultural myths (Halonen, 1996).

Lastly, studying media discourse helps us to recognize the ways in which media industries operate, including how they make decisions about what content to produce and how they target different audiences. This can help us to become more critical consumers of media and be better equipped to navigate the complex media landscape that surrounds us. According to Kosicki (1993, p. 111), 'studies of news work are crucial to the study of public issues because they offer the key to understanding how the particular issues are framed and offered to the public.' By uncovering the ideologies, attitudes and views embedded in media discourse, we can better understand dominant ideologies in society and the behaviours that arise from them.

In conclusion, when determining what constitutes news and who is allowed to speak, the press inevitably accepts some ideologies and values as natural and rejects others. This might be problematic, because 'the wealthy tend to receive more attention than the impoverished, [and] official sources are often given more weight than unofficial ones, the knowledgeable are favoured over the ignorant, and the voiceless are overshadowed by the eloquent' (Shaw, 2012, p. 85). Although media content cannot be considered the only source of societal values, it remains the dominant source of information for a majority of individuals. As a result, the values espoused by the press undoubtedly influence and reflect our values as members of a specific society. That is why studying media discourse and understanding the ideologies behind it is so important. To do this, agenda-setting theory and Feminist Media Studies provide an important theoretical basis.

1.1. Agenda-setting theory

One cannot talk about the influence of media discourse without running into the literature on agenda-setting theory. Getting a grasp of everything that has been studied and written on agenda-setting theory is an immensely complex task. As agenda-setting is not the main issue of this study, only the basic understandings of the theory will be discussed here. Going deeper into the research field goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

The foundations of the agenda-setting theory can be attributed to Walter Lippman, who, as early as 1922, studied the effects of mass media on the views of the public on the world, an effect he called 'bridging the world outside and the pictures in our head' (Guo et al., 2015, p. 343; Mohd Zain, 2014). While Lippman is considered the father of the agenda-setting theory, he never named it that. The theory only came to be 50 years later because of McCombs and Shaw's infamous study on the correlation between the subject of mass media's emphasis and the extent to which the public reacts and connects attributes to that subject (Mohd Zain, 2014).

In its most basic understanding, agenda-setting is concerned with the way the media can influence the public's views and ideas about a particular issue by moving certain topics up or down its agenda (Mazarr, 2007; Valenzuela and McCombs, 2019; Mohd Zain, 2014). More than 70 years after its inception, the theory has been deepened, expanded and strengthened in an extensive array of literature. This thesis follows Zahariadis' (2016, p. 6) statement that we have to differentiate between 'agenda setting' and 'agenda building'. The former refers to the basic understanding of the agenda-setting theory: the effect of the media's agenda on public opinion. The latter refers to how the agenda is shaped through interaction between society and media: how does an idea get on the media agenda and as such become a priority? The 'agenda building' of the media is influenced by multiple factors. Predominantly journalistic traditions and news values, such as proximity and timeliness, but also policy agendas and 'the daily interactions among news organizations themselves […], and – more recently – online social media trends' (Guo et al., 2015; Kosicki, 1993; Valenzuela and McCombs, 2019, p. 10-11).

The fact that the media engage in 'agenda setting' and thereby influence the public's agenda is well-established. Research has shown that, when a specific socio-political issue rises within the hierarchy of the media's agenda, it also moves up on the public agenda. In other words, when something is addressed more often in the media, people will be more likely to prioritise it, which in turn will shape their opinions and behaviour (Guo et al., 2015; Valenzuela and McCombs, 2019). More recent research has also demonstrated that the more media mentions different topics together, the more likely people are to subconsciously form connections between these topics (Vargo et al., 2017). For instance, if Western media continuously mention migration and Islamisation together, people are more likely to form opinions based on the idea that these two processes are interconnected. As such, 'news media are not only successful at telling us what to think and how to think it, but also are capable of telling us how to link these objects and attributes with one another' (Guo et al., 2015, p. 345).

Mazarr (1993, p. 101) attributes the consequences of agenda setting to the media's use of 'causal stories'. Within psychology, it is well-documented that human beings are more responsive to storytelling than to objective documentation or rationality. Those responsible for constructing social

reality and influencing public opinion, such as the media or policymakers, leverage this responsiveness, both consciously and unconsciously. Within war reporting, for instance, the causal story would consist of identifying and explaining which group has been harmed, which parties are involved and who is responsible for that harm. Others, like Valenzuela and McCombs (2019, p. 7), attribute agenda setting to individuals' 'need for orientation', which 'refers to the idea that we have an innate curiosity about the world around us and a desire to become familiar with that world'. We depend on the media to fulfil this 'innate curiosity' and provide us with the information we need to make sense of events and issues. The more distant and unfamiliar an event, the more we need orientation, and the bigger the influence of the news agenda.

1.2. Feminist Media Studies

In the 1960s, the academic feminist movement had to adapt to a rapidly growing media environment (Mendes and Carter, 2008). Many argue that it was in this decade that Feminist Media Studies came to be, specifically when Betty Friedan released her study on male-owned women's magazines that directed criticism at 'their single-minded celebration of the feminine mystique' (Steiner, 2014, p. 360). Others argue that Feminist Media Studies as a clear-cut academic field only came into being in the 1970s. During the so-called second wave of feminism, the women's movement spread from Western countries to the rest of the world. At the time, scholars were mainly concerned with the neglect of women's history and the seeming degradation of women into secondary citizens (Byerly, 2018; Mendes and Carter, 2008). In the 1980s, both the media environment and gender studies developed significantly. The idea that gender identity is represented by a diverse and multifaceted collection of signs and symbols was introduced. Within media, gender codes were playfully blended, with a lot of overlap between highly different genres, which translated into a growing recognition of the increasingly complex nature of gender in society (Mendes and Carter, 2008). A decade later, the globalization of the media system transformed the field of Feminist Media Studies from one mainly centred around women living in the so-called 'developed world' to one that concerns the entire international women's movement (Gallagher, 2001).

Because early Feminist Media Studies had roots in the social movements of the 20th century that were keen on challenging the status quo, its main focus was on the representation of women in the media (Bachmann, Harp and Loke, 2018). According to Steiner (2014, p. 361), the emphasis of feminist media scholars at the time was on 'the three Rs: depictions of women result from, reflect, and reproduce dominant ideologies'. The presupposition at the time was that if media production would become owned by women instead of men, the content would be more diverse, more positive and more creative and it would better represent reality. This presumption arises from an idea that is dominant in cultural feminism, namely that 'women's distinctive communication skills, compassion for others,

and empathy rendered them not merely well qualified for media jobs, but better suited' (Steiner, 2014, p. 361-363).

Early Feminist Media Studies also had its pitfalls. Three main criticisms can be identified. Firstly, it neglected the intersectionality of identity. If one would have opened up the category of gender to include race, sexuality, ethnicity, etc., one would have seen that not only were women misrepresented in the media, specific groups of women were completely absent in media representations. Secondly, even though this started to improve in the 1980s, as mentioned earlier, gender was looked at as a uniform, natural category that divides the population into a single group of women on the one hand and a single group of men on the other (Bachmann, Harp and Loke, 2018). Lastly, not all women are equally harmed by media content, as was assumed by early feminist media scholars. Black women, for instance, are much more misrepresented than white women, and therefore much more harmed by this content, as are queer women in comparison to straight women (Steiner, 2014).

Even though Feminist Media Studies have already been in existence for several decades, there is still no single universal definition of what the field exactly constitutes. However, when comparing different researchers of the 21st century (Bachmann, Harp and Loke, 2018; Byerly, 2018; Mendes and Carter, 2008), several elements return. First of all, Feminist Media Studies focuses on women and gender in the media, both in its production process and the content produced. Secondly, feminist media scholars study and analyse the influence of these representations on society and power relations. Thirdly, all of this is based on the premise that these representations prevent gender equality because they reproduce social inequalities, i.e. media discourses are not ideologically neutral. According to Bachmann, Harp and Loke (2018, p. 4-5), therefore, the main question within feminist media scholarship is 'how, and to whose avail, particular ideological constructs of femininity are produced in media content'

One of the most important elements of feminist media approaches is its link to the feminist movement. This might seem obvious, but both Bachmann et al. (2018) and Mendes and Carter (2008) argue that it is not because a field is engaged in the study of gender, sex and women, that it is necessarily feminist. Yet the reason why differs between both. The former argues that to be considered feminist, media research has to understand 'that gender is not a fixed property of individuals, but a social construct reinforced by media messages' that functions to continuously recreate patriarchal power relations (Bachmann, Harp and Loke, 2018, p. 7). According to the latter, media studies can claim to be feminist only when it 'studies communication theories and practices from a perspective that ultimately is oriented towards the achievement of gender justice', in a way that is intersectional and thereby includes other identity signifiers such as race, class and sexuality (Mendes and Carter, 2008,

p. 1701-1702). Therefore, as is posited by Steiner (2014, p. 369) and Kennedy (2018, p. 66), it is not necessary for the medium or content studied to have a 'feminist ethos'.

1.2.1. Symbolic annihilation

One of the most influential concepts within Feminist Media Studies and communication studies is 'symbolic annihilation', which was initially introduced by Gerbner and Gross (1976), but later adapted to a feminist context by Gaye Tuchman (1978). In general, it refers to the omission of particular social groups within the media, which creates a chain effect that perpetuates this omission within the public order. Tuchman's adaptation added, besides omission, also victimization, denigration and underestimation.

The representation of women in traditional gender roles, the general marginalization of women's issues and interests and the sexualization of women in the media present an image to men and women alike that women do not deserve a space in public life and that their concerns are not important (Harp et al., 2018). Therefore, 'we find ourselves in a cyclical spiral wherein media are said to reflect reality, and real people model their behaviour on the media. […] the material world and the symbolic world continuously respond to one another' (Lance and Paschyn, 2018, p. 38-39).

Tuchman's theory, as it has been developed in the United States, has been criticised for providing a Westernized view of gender and media, based on Western ideals such as individualism, democracy and a desire for gender equality, which are not necessarily universal. Therefore, the question remains whether the theory of 'symbolic annihilation' can be universally applied. Furthermore, just like the early approaches to Feminist Media Studies, it assumes that everyone is similarly influenced by media and that all media can impart social values and ideologies on the population (Lance and Paschyn, 2018).

2. The intersection of gender and conflict

Now that we have seen why studying media discourse is so important, especially when it comes to gender, the next part looks at why studying the intersection between war and gender learns us a lot about the causes, evolution and consequences of war.

2.1. Patriarchy as a cause of war

According to Oxford Reference (s.d.), patriarchy is 'a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.' According to Cockburn (2010, p. 140), 'patriarchal gender relations predispose our societies to war'. This is a bold statement, but a statement that has been made by many others. Within patriarchal systems, almost universally, to be a 'man' means being brave, being ready to take up arms and fight for your land. To be a 'woman' means staying home, taking care of the children, supporting the men of your country unconditionally,

thanking them for keeping you safe, and mourning your father, brother and son when they lose their lives on the battlefield. These ideals are, often implicitly, perpetuated in all layers of society, from popular culture to religion (Giles and Hyndman, 2004; Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998).

As early as 1998, Lorenzen and Turpin argued that the psychological socialisation of men and women is one of the main causes of war. Masculinity is associated with violence, authority and force. Because the patriarchal system values masculine socialisation over feminine one, favourable conditions for war are naturally created. Cockburn (2010) argues that war is therefore not a consequence of the actions of individuals, political parties or national leaders, but of patriarchal gender relations. War is not a direct consequence of these relations, i.e. wars are not fought because of the subordination of femininity like it is fought because of border issues, resources, autonomy…, but it is a 'favourable condition' (p. 149). A concrete example of this is that, since fewer women are in high-ranking positions in international relations, most decision-making rests in the hands of men. These men are in turn influenced by the patriarchal idea that they are the 'protectors' of society, of their nation, of women and are therefore more likely to go to war (Banwell, 2020; Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998). The influence of the patriarchal system is always present and is often applied in strategic ways, which will be elaborated on later. Examples of other 'favourable conditions' are capitalism, nationalism and populism.

If one would simply tell people that it is up to men to take up the arms and women to support their brothers, husbands and sons, one would need to provide an explanation. Why is it not up to women to take up arms? Why shouldn't men stay home and take care of the household? But because we are socialised into the patriarchal system since birth, these tendencies have become so naturalised that no one asks these questions (Giles and Hyndman, 2004). Therefore, Halonen's (1996) argument that patriarchy is most palpable during wartime seems logical. That is also what Klaus and Kassel (2005, p. 339) emphasise: 'The dichotomy of gender roles that is visible in times of peace is reproduced during times of war and more forcefully enacted.' As such, the relationship between war and patriarchy continuously reinforces itself: military actions need patriarchy, but patriarchy is also enforced by military action (Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998).

The intersection between patriarchy and war or armed conflicts rests on three main principles: the concept of hegemonic masculinity, the convergence of violence and masculinity and the creation and maintenance of a militarized masculinity.

2.1.1. Hegemonic masculinity

Hegemony, as understood by Antonio Gramsci, 'is the cultural, moral and ideological leadership of a group over allied and subaltern groups' (de Orellana, 2015). Hegemonic masculinity, in turn, is a

concept introduced by sociologist Robert W. Connell. He defines it 'as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women' (Connell, 2005, p. 77). Let us deconstruct this definition.

By calling gender practice a 'configuration', Connell emphasises that masculinity is a constructed phenomenon. Rather than a biologically given division, gender differences are dependent on behaviours, perceptions and judgments. These have become what Connell calls 'currently accepted': they are hegemonic, and therefore naturalised and taken for granted in a specific time and space. 'The legitimacy of patriarchy' refers to the 'dominant position of men and the subordination of women' that follows it. Hegemonic masculinity only exists because it exists in opposition to femininity. Because gender relations are socially fluid, this would be unsustainable if there was no system in place to continuously reproduce this gender imbalance. Patriarchy is 'the core of the collective project of hegemonic masculinity', because it legitimises masculinity as a privileged gender category that stands in opposition to femininity (Connell, 2005, p. 212).

In short, hegemonic masculinity defines both what is to be a woman and what it is to be a man. To be the former means to be subordinate to the latter, a phenomenon that is continuously reproduced through unequal power relations, the denial of the constructed nature of gender and its relevance for the public order and other social phenomena such as war and human rights. Masculinity has become a non-negotiable, integral part of our societies (Lahav, 2010; Ottosen, 2016; Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016).

2.1.2. Violence and masculinity

One of the main acts by which war is perpetrated is through violence. Violence, in this context, refers to any physical or mental damage that is intentionally inflicted on an individual or a group of people. According to Sarikakis (2002, p. 153), masculinity and violence are 'two sides of the same coin'. This statement has been statistically supported. The Violence Policy Center (2017) has shown that in the US, 1,686 murders with female victims were perpetrated by males and in 93% of the cases the murderer was known by the woman. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017) found that in cases where men experience violence, 39% is perpetrated by a man, 12% by a woman.

The perpetuation of violence by men has been linked to the patriarchal system. From birth, men are socialised to suppress soft emotions and to prioritize dominance and aggression. Therefore, when their masculinity is threatened, men oftentimes resort to violence to reconstruct it (Adampa, 1999; Cockburn, 2010). The devaluation of feminine qualities and the glorification of masculine ones, create an environment in which men feel entitled to exercise power over others. This entitlement is

reproduced in the most fundamental institutions of our society, from the family to the media, the military and state institutions. This gender imbalance continues 'the continuum of violence' present in our modern societies (Korac, 2022, p. 34).

The perceived entitlement to power of men is reinforced by societal norms that often excuse or minimise male violence, leading them to believe that their behaviour is acceptable or even expected. Adampa (1999, p. 20-22) has studied this phenomenon in the media. She argues that, in media discourse covering male violence, the man is talked about in a passive voice, shifting the attention of the reader from the male aggressor to the female victim. Therefore, 'his actions are de-agentialised', which 'leads to the manipulation of blame and, in the end, to the removal or even the denial of responsibility for his actions'. The gender of the aggressor is ignored, as is the fact that this violence was inflicted because of imbalanced gender relationships between the aggressor (male) and the victim (female). This reproduces the patriarchal ideological system, whereby 'violence […] becomes the arena of power used to create and maintain male dominance'.

The power imbalances between men and women created by the patriarchal system are not only present in the media industry but also in other positions of authority and control. During war, for instance, sexual crimes such as rape are used by political leaders to fuel nationalism and distrust towards the 'Other'. As such, gender-specific crimes, rather than becoming a means to challenge gender imbalances, become an instrument of propaganda to justify more violence (Giles and Hyndman, 2004; Sarikakis, 2002). For women, war is just an extension of the violence they experience on a day-to-day basis, on a larger scale. What differentiates it is the fact that the violence that is perpetrated against them now carries more meaning to humanity. Their body gains social and cultural significance, it becomes a strategic resource (Korac, 2022; Manchanda, 2005).

In short, the masculine identity is continuously reproduced through violence. It is the subordination of the feminine and, perhaps even more, the elevation of the masculine present in patriarchal systems that legitimises violence perpetrated by men. Male violence, in turn, both maintains gender inequalities and constructs masculinity. This creates a causal nexus whereby our societies become stuck in a cycle of violence, whether small-scale (e.g. family-related violence) or large-scale (e.g. war). Therefore, the idea of many studying the intersection of violence and masculinity is that, if men were socialised more like women, the cycle of violence would be broken (Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998).

2.1.3. Militarised masculinity

This linkage between hegemonic masculinity and violence, as explained in the previous part, is exploited by the State and the military industry. Without violence as a natural part of masculinity,

there would be no war industry (Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998). In 2021, only 17.3% of the US Army was female (Department of Defense, 2022). In Belgium, this was 10.21% in 2022 (Het Nieuwsblad, 2023). In 2016, less than 6% of the Japanese Army was female (Romaniuk, 2017). In Russia, it is even less: 4.26% in 2020 (Chesnut, 2020). For decades, men have formed the overwhelming majority in national armies, militias, police forces and gangs.

Men partake in these groups for their own reason, whether it is for honour, political beliefs, patriotism or protection. However, according to Korac (2022, p. 30), the major underlying cause of why men are more eager to join violent groups than women is because 'the perpetual reproduction of the patriarchal order through the socialisation of young generations enables the militarisation of society'. This 'reproduction of the patriarchal order' and its link to hegemonic masculinity has been thoroughly explained above. Military institutions both reproduce this system and profit from it the most. The traditional understanding of masculinity is closely linked to authority, competition, dominance and violence, which all lay at the core of the military. The military constructs gender in such a way that it presents the army 'as the ultimate test of maleness' (Lahav, 2010, p. 244). The army's role in shaping gender ideology reinforces the notion that men are naturally more aggressive and dominant and that these traits are essential for military success.

This is what Wegner (2021, p. 7) has called 'militarized masculinity'. He defines it as: 'the ongoing social construction of masculinity in the military that defines the 'ideal soldier', an archetype that reflects the perceived gendered identity of the nation/state.' Military masculinities are not fixed but depend on the historical, temporal and geo-cultural context in which they are (re)produced. They are also not real, but rather an ideal type, a fantasy, a desire. This ideal type has its roots in hegemonic masculinity, as described above (Banwell, 2020). It is the fact that men try to embody this ideal type that sustains militarisation. Militarised masculinity includes all the characteristics that the patriarchal system imposes on men since birth: strength, dominance, rationality, aggression, unemotional, physically fit, heterosexual, risk-taking…, i.e. the 'signifiers of manliness' (Banwell, 2020; Wegner, 2021, p. 8). These characteristics have become the main qualities trained in soldiers joining the army. Those that not conform to the militarized masculinity model or present deviant gender expressions are pressured to conform, making this model a way to contain socio-political contradictions that could not be harmonised with the military system (Wegner, 2021).

And it is not just men that facilitate this process of militarization. Women as well are useful for the military industry, as they (unconsciously) help to gain civilian support for wars and give men an emotional, and often sexual, incentive to embrace their 'masculinity'. Militarization is not only important for the state itself, but also because 'it works for many individual men and women' (Mertus, 2000, p. 343). According to Von der Lippe and Ottosen (2016), because militarised masculinity is

just an ideal, if the relationship between masculinity and militarism disappears, so does the power of the military. They go even further by stating that the state as well will lose public support for the use of violence in international relations and forcing or encouraging men and women alike to join the army and sacrifice their lives for the state. Therefore, while the state embraces the inclusion of women in the military in the name of feminism and progressivism, they also have a strong need to maintain the link between militarism and masculinity.

2.2. Women in the military

As we have seen, this interplay of patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity and militarisation has created a military industry in which men form the majority all over the world. At its core, patriarchy assumes that 'real' men and women take on the roles of combatants and non-combatants respectively, because violence is inherent to men's nature while compassion is inherent to that of women (Elshtain, 1995; Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998). Anyone that diverges from this norm - a nonviolent man, or an aggressive woman - is considered deviant. But, inter alia because of feminist advances, reality has become much more complex.

In the past decade, more and more women have started joining the military. While this is not a new phenomenon, armies are now actively trying to recruit women. This has created a paradox within the military industry. On the one hand, armies remain sites of patriotism, brotherhood, and masculine strength. On the other, they want to be seen as modern and inclusive agencies that are willing to develop at the same pace as society (Yuval-Davis, 2004). This paradox has created two important consequences for women who decide to join the army.

Firstly, discrimination and prejudice against women are omnipresent. Despite advances in modern warfare, which make far-distance attacks more prominent and weapons lighter to handle, women are often prohibited from engaging in combat, even if they were trained for it (Yuval-Davis, 2004). Instead, they have to sustain other aspects of military life and work as nurses, caterers, secretaries… Jobs that are associated with the 'motherly' characteristics of women, because femininity and engaging in violent acts are seen to be incongruous (Korac, 2022; Ottosen, 2016; Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998; Yuval-Davis, 2004). Furthermore, just like in many other fields, women are often overlooked for promotions in the military. The characteristics that are associated with high-ranking positions in the military, such as assertiveness, the ability to make split-second decisions, strategic thinking…, tend to be attributed to men more than to women. Hence why a male candidate would be preferred over a female one (Yuval-Davis, 2004). Lastly, women often face discrimination from their male colleagues in the army, as they 'fear that their male bonding would be disrupted' (Yuval-Davis, 2004, p. 182).

Secondly, 'women often become the bearers of modernity' (Yuval-Davis, 2004, p. 172). With the recent rise of liberal feminism and the gains in gender equality, the military industry does not want to be left behind. Furthermore, with many armies facing difficulties to recruit manpower, opening the army up to women is a way to deal with this problem. Women serve as a flagship for the military. When they engage in violent acts like their male colleagues do, these acts are interpreted 'rather as a biological defect of femininity than heroic deeds' (Korac, 2022, p. 39).

Because of these consequences, feminists are divided on whether the inclusion of women in the military is indeed a step towards more gender equality and a dismantling of the patriarchy. Korac (2022, p. 39) argues that the inclusion of women is just a tactic used by the military industry that perpetuates 'the gendered logic of late capitalism that still treats women as a reserve army of labour'. As such, even when the military becomes more gender equal, this will not create a ripple effect in the societal order because agency is still not attributed to women. In this sense, gender equality is used as a disguise to continue to emphasise the differences between men and women (Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998). This was already implied 20 years earlier by Mertus (2000, p. 341), who posited that the integration of women in the military is a political process 'in which power struggles take place'. Others resist the inclusion of women in the military by arguing that if women become part of the military, they implicitly support militarised masculinity (Yuval-Davis, 2004). Some consider the inclusion of women in the military a good step towards gender equality. One argument is that, because women remain excluded from military drafting, they will only join the army as volunteers. Therefore, they reduce some of the militarism of the army by exerting agency over militarisation. Besides this, the presence of women debunks some of the macho nature of the military (Yuval-Davis, 2004).

2.3. Gendered consequences of war

War and armed conflict have a profound influence on everyone, regardless of age, gender, sex or nationality. But the consequences are experienced differently both between and within genders. Women, for instance, mainly suffer due to gender-based vulnerabilities, while men mainly have to deal with militarization and more general consequences of war such as economic difficulties and crime (Macharia, 2016). Based on existing literature, the intersection of the consequences of war and gender experiences produces two opposite, yet interlinked, effects. On the one hand, it deepens and/or perpetuates already existing sexual divisions. On the other, it deranges traditional gender arrangements. First, let's take a look at the former, then the latter.

There are different ways in which war deepens and perpetuates already existing sexual divisions. Firstly, it reinforces the distinction between the male perpetrator versus the female victim. In the past, a consequence of patriarchal militarization was that men were the main casualties of war, as fighting would primarily take place on the battlefield and close attention was paid to avoiding civilian

casualties. Today, however, citizens do not only often form collateral damage, but targeting citizens has become an explicit military strategy and civilians are often incorporated into the war. According to Giles and Hyndman (2004, p. 35), during the Second World War civilians made up 50% of casualties. At the beginning of the 21st century, this had already risen to 90%. Since men are usually drafted for the military, the majority of civilians are women. Therefore, women (and children) are now the main victims of war and armed conflict (Giles and Hyndman, 2004; Manchanda, 2005; Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998).

The distinction between the male perpetrator and female victims holds truth, as has been argued by Thompson et al. (2007), because the distinction is continuously created and reproduced by the patriarchal system, which neglects certain nuances. The use of the word victim 'implies passivity, a resignation to circumstance and lack of ability or will to take control' (Macharia, 2016, p. 56). Specifically, the sexual division of perpetrator versus victim ignores that women not just passively undergo war, but also play important roles as survivors, peacebuilders and voices of resistance. With the men off to fight and women left to cope on their own, the level of agency that women hold often increases during times of war. As Lorenzen and Turpin (1998, p. 24) have put it, '[…] since they pay the primary price when peace is absent, women have a particular interest in pursuing peace.' Peace for women is a necessity for survival (Hardjono, 2001). Nonetheless, these contributions are often ignored, forgotten, or simply remain unknown, and women continue to be devalued as 'just' victims, even in humanitarian action. As a consequence, after the war, sexual divisions just slip back into their initial positioning and gender is ignored in peace-building, demobilisation and reintegration processes (Kakar, 2016; MacKenzie, 2009; Manchanda, 2005).

Secondly, the male violence that is already present in our society on a daily basis becomes even more legitimised during wartime. Besides losing their loved ones, the problems that women face because of their sex and/or gender identity are exacerbated (Cockburn, 2010; Thompson et al., 2007; Lorenzen and Turpin, 1998). Women either stay at home to care for the children, where they might be subjected to looting, mass rape, torture and other sexual violence, or they flee. In 2022, over 50% of refugees were women. 1 in 5 have reported experiencing sexual violence (Women for Women International, 2022). During wartime male violence transcends the boundaries of the public and private sphere and 'women's bodies are part of the global battleground' (Korac, 2022; Mertus, 2000, p. 6; Giles and Hyndman, 2004; Yuval-Davis, 2004).

Even though all these factors play into the exacerbation of gender divisions, war also deranges the traditional gender order. This is one of the results of the separation of families and the increase in female-led households. As men are off to the military or killed in battle, women are left to deal with family and community life, which leads to them undertaking duties that exceed the expectations of

traditional female behaviour (Klaus and Kassel, 2005). Women thereby exert what Hardjono (2001, p. 2) has called a 'ruthless practicality' based on a 'psychological map' of the past, present and future that allows them to survive while taking care of their family and community. They become more independent, engage in crisis management and rapid decision-making and are in a constant state of preparedness to flee. They take on traditionally 'male' roles, such as providing food and shelter, while at the same time continuing their 'feminine' role of taking care of their children and the elderly (Hardjono, 2001; Manchanda, 2005). This debunks the traditional patriarchal idea that men protect women during war, while they are waiting for their husbands and sons to return. Yet, according to Manchanda (2005, p. 4739), this 'does not necessarily advance gender equality', because the disruption of the gender balance disappears once war is over.

In conclusion, the process and consequences of war are deeply gendered. War deepens traditional sexual dichotomies, inter alia through the victimisation of women, the legitimation of male sexual violence, the subordination and marginalisation of female refugees and the neglect of female peacebuilding initiatives and voices of resistance. On the other hand, war also leads to a disruption of traditional gender practices, due to an increase in female-led households and female strategies of survival, albeit temporarily. So, while it is, still today, primarily men who join the army, women bear the biggest burdens and face the harshest consequences of war.

2.4. Feminist perspectives on war

Within feminist literature, we have seen a rise in scholarship on conflict and war. The main emphasis of this kind of feminist conflict studies is on how war is gendered 'in its discourse, its institutions, its execution, its agents and the damage it inflicts' (Macklin, 2004, p. 75). Within this work, war is seen as a continuum of violence, meaning that the violence inflicted during war does not suddenly arise, but rather is a continuation of violence that is already existent in the private sphere on a daily basis (Giles and Hyndman, 2004). Over the years, different feminist and women's movements have tried to publicly defy the militarization of society and offer alternative outlooks on security and peace issues. However, those voices have often been seen as deviant, especially because they try to challenge patriarchy and militarized masculinity, and are excluded from public debate (Lemish, 2005).

The main issue addressed by feminists is the patriarchal idea that militarisation and violence will bring peace. According to them, peace is much more than just the absence of conflict. It is about 'how we enable people, and especially women, caught in the conflict to access things they feel are important like food, clean water, health and education'. Many argue that policies imposed to enhance so-called 'security' actually create less security for minority groups, specifically women, be it economically, environmentally, physically or mentally. Security policies are created based on the patriarchal

paradigm which views men as more capable and trustworthy when it comes to war and security issues, thereby promoting a non-inclusive approach (Thompson et al., 2007, p. 437). What all of these approaches have in common, according to Houge (2016, p. 262), is that they 'emphasise the importance of a gendered perception of the world – of seeing gender everywhere – and recognise the relation between – and within – the genders as power relations.'

Two of the main approaches of feminism when it comes to war and militarization are equality feminism and difference feminism. The name speaks for itself: while it does not deny basic biological differences, equality feminism focuses on the similarities between men and women when it comes to reasoning, rationality, goals and life values. Difference feminism, on the other hand, emphasises the differences between men and women, especially when it comes to virtues and fundamental biological characteristics (Orgeret, 2016). If we apply this to war, equality feminists would argue that violence is not an inherent value in men, but something that is shared by both men and women. Difference feminists would argue that women are less prone to violence because they possess certain moral values such as empathy, tolerance, compassion and peacefulness which men are less likely to possess. According to Lorenzen and Turpin (1998), adopting a difference feminism approach contradicts reality and the diverse actions of individuals. They consider the belief that men are militaristic and women are peaceful to be simply untrue. They posit that history has shown us that many men resist war through various means, including refusing the draft and protesting. On the other hand, some women openly show support for wars, and as we have seen, more and more women join the military. They call for a more equality feminist approach, while still recognising that differences between men and women exist.

Although the gendered patterns of war-making and security issues are increasingly studied, they rarely become part of public discourse. International and national policymakers, civil society organisations and military institutions still overlook feminist perspectives on militarization and female efforts of peacebuilding (Giles and Hyndman, 2004; Manchanda, 2005). Von der Lippe and Ottosen (2016, p. 13) argue that it is this ignorance that is the problem, and that 'representation in power politics' can lead to actual change more than 'redistribution and opposition to existing power structures'. Cockburn (2010, p. 153) seems to think so as well, arguing that women need to come together to create 'transformative change', which will force those in power to admit that 'to be sustainably peaceful, a society will also have to be the one in which we live gender very differently from the way it is lived today'.

3. War reporting

3.1. The definition of war reporting and why it is important

The discourse studied in this thesis is that of war reporting. Here, war reporting refers to the practice of journalists and correspondents covering and reporting on events related to military conflicts, armed battles and violent humanitarian crises. The work of war reporters involves gathering information on a conflict and disseminating it to a wider audience, often under difficult circumstances. War reporting may involve a range of media, including print, broadcast, and digital platforms, and it plays a crucial role in informing public opinion and shaping policy decisions related to military conflicts. Here, the definition of Amer (2017, p. 3) is followed, which I believe is a good summary:

> *'This paper considers war reporting as a multi-functional-task operated/executed by journalists in a war time to cover war events using language that conveys patterns of representation (discourse) on the war actors to either local or international audience(s).'*

We have already discussed the extent to which media discourses influence public perception and social reality. This influence is even more prominent for reporting on war since armed conflict usually takes place in a specific part of the world and thus is distant and unknown to the rest of the world. People start with a lower level of knowledge of the conflict and need more information to form an opinion or take action. For this, war reporting forms an important resource (Amer, 2017). It informs us on the role of actors, our country's place in the conflict, the background of the conflict and more. Because of agenda-setting theory, as we saw earlier, war reporting also has the power to decide which issues are considered important and which aren't (Harp et al., 2011; Unaegbu, 2016).

According to Korac (2022), this influence has even been strengthened because traditional war reporting is now supported by new forms of digital communication and social media. Because of the power it holds, media on war 'can be a mediator or an interpreter or even a facilitator of conflict, if only be editing away facts that do not fit the demands of airtime or print space' (Thompson et al., 2007, p. 438). What Thompson and his colleagues mean is that war reporting is always a consequence of negotiation, because there is too little time and space and wars are too complex to describe everything. War reporting is therefore not only about informing, but also about convincing readers that the meaning that this specific reporter has attributed to a conflict is the correct one (Amer, 2017; Andersen, 2005). In short, the media report on the conflict, but at the same time they also shape it.

3.2. The ethical dilemmas of reporting on war

Journalists have a lot of ethical standards that they need to adhere to. Most journalists sign an ethical charter and code of conduct before they start a job. Yet, a lot of these ethics are often contested. Within war reporting, three ethical values can be identified that can cause some ambiguity.

Firstly, the responsibility to report accurately and objectively. This is one of the primary ethical considerations in reporting, but also one of the hardest to obtain. War reporters must provide truthful and factual accounts of what is happening on the ground, regardless of any biases or preconceived notions they may have. This means, for instance, reporting on both the successes and failures of all warring parties, as well as the impact of the conflict on civilians and infrastructure. There are several reasons why this goal is hard to reach, especially for war reporters, and why sometimes it might be better to not entirely stick to this ethical value during times of war.

The hardest thing for war reporters to deal with is writing about the suffering and violence taking place during war and armed conflict. This raises dilemmas: should they stick to their ethical obligation of objectivity or deal with the issues they write about in an emotional, one could say more human, manner? Most often, the former option is chosen, and suffering is portrayed with the value of objectivity as a basis. This leads to a form of journalism in which humanity is separated from suffering, the reader is distanced from emotions, those suffering are anonymised and readers and writers alike are not supposed to feel anything when presented with the material (Halonen, 1996). Besides this, placing too much emphasis on adhering to objectivity leads to a big emphasis on telling both sides of the story, which neglects that some stories have more than two sides and leads to journalism that maintains the dichotomies of us versus them, winner versus loser, good versus bad (Harp et al., 2011). Journalists may also face government censorship or pressure from elite actors to spin the narrative of the conflict in a certain way. They may even face threats or violence from warring parties who seek to control the flow of information. Pressure on journalists to conform leads to stories only told from elite perspectives, which might be considered harmful to objectivity (Thompson et al., 2007).

Secondly, there is the difficulty of balancing the need for transparency with the need for national security. On the one hand, reporters have a responsibility to report on the facts of the conflict, including potential war crimes and human rights abuses. On the other, governments and military officials may argue that the release of certain information could compromise national security or even endanger lives. Elitist pressures, as we have talked about earlier, may lead journalists to withhold information that may either raise questions about journalistic independence and objectivity or lead to ignorance of important background information in the public sphere. To navigate this complex issue, war reporters must carefully consider the potential consequences of their reporting, while also ensuring that they uphold their responsibility to report accurately and objectively. This may involve seeking out multiple sources, verifying information before reporting it, and being transparent with audiences about any limitations on their reporting due to security concerns.

Thirdly, there is the duty to avoid bias and propaganda. The problem with this ethical value is that shocking and controversial news is the news that sells best (Unaegbu, 2016). Images of the enemy engaging in shocking and controversial acts are therefore one of the core components of war propaganda. These kinds of images lead to greater support for the 'right' side of the conflict. If this is your own country, support for the government will increase, as will war mobilisation (Ottosen, 2016). A certain degree of bias is unavoidable, because, as we have seen, every media outlet engages in selection and omission (Houge, 2016). Avoiding this bias, however, is crucial for war reporters to maintain the accuracy and credibility of their reporting. And it is often when peace returns that cases of extreme bias and war propaganda come to light. By adhering to strict standards of journalistic integrity, remaining independent from warring parties, and carefully evaluating the information they receive, war reporters can provide the public with the objective and trustworthy reporting necessary to understand the complexities of war (Halonen, 1996).

3.3. Gender and war reporting

In this thesis, we follow Klaus and Kassel's (2005, p. 340) idea that within war reporting, 'war logic, media logic and gender logic are closely interwoven'. Each of these has a specific nature that contributes to how war is reported on, how war reporting frames certain issues, and who is considered trustworthy. Gender logic refers to the gender relations that are most prominent in a particular society. In most societies, this will be a patriarchal system. Media logic incorporates all the factors that are meant to make media systems the fourth estate of democratic societies, from time constraints that lead to continuous pursuits of fast news, over traditional rules and routines, to ethical frameworks. War logic, lastly, contains the particular circumstances of war, and the fact that militarization leads to a dichotomization of society in us versus them, friend versus foe and good versus evil (Klaus and Kassel, 2005, p. 336-340). Gender logic naturally influences media logic because the patriarchy is a hegemonic system. This means that the media always perpetuates patriarchy, both in hard news (politics, war, economy, business…) and soft news (fashion, design, sexuality…). Yet, when we add war logic to this, this gendered discourse gains even more ground. It is the interplay of these logics, according to different researchers (Andersen, 2005; Boller, 2016; del Zotto, 2002; Halonen, 1996; Harp et al., 2011; Klaus and Kassel, 2005; Lahav, 2010; Macharia, 2016; Parikka, 2020; Thompson et al., 2007; Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016), that leads the media to perpetuate a prejudiced, restricted, gendered and masculine perspective on war. Across existing literature, four recurring tendencies of war reporting can be identified.

Firstly, women's voices are largely or completely ignored in war reporting, a process that Lahav (2010, p. 251-252) has called 'concealing'. In 2008, according to Harp et al. (2008, p. 212), women made up 8% of all sources. This had improved a little bit by 2018, with women making up 24% of

all sources in newspapers, on television and radio news (Geertsema-Sligh, 2018, p. 5). There are several reasons for this low percentage of coverage of women. One overarching reason relates to what Del Zotto (2002, p. 142) has called the 'relentless pursuit of speed and simplicity', which is made more difficult by the complexity of war, the amount of different actors, the scale of conflicts, the actions taken… To facilitate this, war in media is diminished to a set of operations, sequences, commands and policies, rather than portrayed as the complex situation that it is. This means that certain actors, actions and events naturally fall outside the scope of mainstream journalism.

In order to decide which actors to include and which not, reporters look at the trustworthiness of an actor. Mainstream media primarily consider official sources and state actors trustworthy, both due to ideological pressures and because they are considered reliable. This has many consequences that all lead to the same outcome: women's voices are excluded from the media. As we have seen, women's contribution to war still primarily takes place behind the scenes, for instance as peace activists. But these 'behind the scenes' sources are considered untrustworthy, unofficial and subjective. Furthermore, a lot of these unofficial vehicles of exerting agency resist the dominant paradigm of militarized masculinity and the idea that violence leads to peace, a stance that is considered to be deviant, even unpatriotic, by the mainstream media. Added to this is the fact that most high-level positions are still held by men. Therefore, their experiences are most often covered, which makes them more trustworthy. As such, a vicious cycle is created. When women are in positions of power, they are often ignored, trivialised or their contributions to conflict situations are downplayed (del Zotto, 2002; Harp et al., 2011; Korac, 2022; Macharia, 2016).

Another reason why women's voices are excluded is because the ownership of mainstream media organisations is predominantly in the hands of men. Because patriarchal journalistic traditions do not seem harmful to these men, they continue them. Topics that were traditionally considered 'male domains', such as politics, war and finance, remain dominated by male reporters, keeping women on soft topics such as entertainment and lifestyle. It has been proven that female reporters are more likely to include female perspectives and sources in their reporting. So without more female war reporters, it is not likely that more women will be included in war reporting (Byerly, 2005; Harp et al., 2011; Macharia, 2016; Thompson et al., 2007; Unaegbu, 2016; Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016).

Secondly, when women's voices are included, they are used to support the traditional patriarchal discourse of war, or other strategic, patriotic or elitist purposes. To cope with the fast-paced and competitive media environment, reporters tend to rely on recognisable imagery, such as stereotypes, as it is easier to handle and decipher within the hyper-masculinised milieu they work in. When women exhibit non-traditional behaviour, like actively resisting war through peace movements, they become too difficult to manage in the media. As a result, if they are not ignored altogether, their behaviour

will be reframed to fit journalistic criteria and what a war is expected, or known, to be. Since, as we have seen, most war reporters are still men, this reframing, or stereotyping, will be done from the perspective of men (del Zotto, 2002; Halonen, 1996). According to Giles and Hyndman (2004, p. 4), these representations 'tell us little about the diversity of women's experience during war, their role on the front lines, or their care in refugee camps.'

We have already discussed the main stereotypes associated with women and war, especially the victimisation of women. The image of the grieving woman, wife or mother is reoccurring in war reporting because it serves a political purpose. Seeing someone grieve evokes feelings of pity, sadness, and hatred towards the one who has caused this grief. As such, women's pain is sensationalised and emotionalised to maintain the anger towards the 'Other' and spur public support for the war, as well as serve the patriarchal paradigm of war. Women are portrayed as private individuals, often civilians, separated from the public sphere in which power and agency circulate (Boller, 2016; Halonen, 1996; Harp et al., 2011; Lemish, 2005; Orgeret, 2016; Parikka, 2020; Pankov et al., 2011). As such, 'women become advocates for destruction in the name of representation' (Ross and Moorti, 2005, p. 361), which is also agreed on by Unaegbu (2016, p. 64), who posits that 'while women are seen in the media, their voices are not heard'.

Not only women are affected by this masculine discourse, but men are as well. While women are passive, private individuals, men are portrayed as heroic, violent, active individuals, warriors and advocates of war. They are glorified in opposition to women, and whoever does not fit this heroic masculinity is considered deviant. This way, masculinity and femininity are stretched in opposite directions as far as possible (Boller, 2016; Harp et al., 2011; Korac, 2022; Lemish, 2005; Ottosen, 2016). This causes neglect of the real traumatic experiences of men during the war, which often leads to PTSD, violent tendencies in the household, substance abuse and even suicide (Ottosen, 2016). In short, gendered discourse within war reporting makes war seem logical to the public while at the same time reinforcing gender inequality and naturalising masculine violence (Andersen, 2005). As a general remark, I would like to consider the following quote:

> *'By no means do we want to argue that it is not important to address the issue of women's rights in the media. But whenever women's rights suddenly appear on the agenda of foreign or domestic news, we should ask where this interest is rooted and whether it serves women or some other purpose. With regard to the media reporting on war and conflict, it has to be asked whether the subject is used to promote war as the only possible means for solving problems and preventing further abuses. What are the gender discourses into which the news coverage ties? Do women routinely have their voices heard in the news? Are there more than symbolic and fleeting references to the way they live their lives?' (Klaus and Kassel, 2005, p. 351)*

Thirdly, there is the process of anonymisation. According to Halonen (1996), this is found in imagery more than it is in text. Images next to news articles or on television portray men more than women. When women are shown, they are a background character, supporting the male, often with their backs turned or their heads bowed. No name or background story is given, and they remain anonymous. They embody an ideal, that of the grieving woman that needs saving, rather than a person. When a group or movement is described, a phenomenon we see a lot in migration reports, it is described as a mass, a swarm, a sea of people. This way, it becomes a homogeneous, mute group that people feel no connection to, making it easier for the elite to defend their policies and actions (del Zotto, 2002, p. 145).

Lastly, there is the concept of gender blindness. According to Lahav (2010, p. 251-252), this is 'the lack of awareness of the special interest in women as a social group'. When gender is actively avoided or not talked about, war reporting neglects the fact that gender is a relevant category in war that creates different processes and outcomes, and thus should not be ignored. It leads to war being presented only as a militaristic matter, which ignores the human and social impact on people's lives. It matters which voices are being heard and which aren't, whose stories are being told and whose stories aren't (Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016). Furthermore, Orgeret (2016, p. 212) has stated that 'when the physical sex of the actors of the stories is not explicitly stated, the implied norm is that 'people' are male', which furthers the masculine discourse.

In short, gender logic, media logic and war logic all influence each other and create war reporting that is traditionalistic, hegemonic, militarised and gendered. War reporters, who still are mostly men, stick to a very patriarchal idea of both war and journalism, which has very strong consequences for women. There are four ways in which women are presented in war reporting: they are ignored, used to support the patriarchal and military paradigm through victimisation and stereotyping, they are anonymised or there is gender blindness. Either way, gender is used by the media to legitimise war, either consciously or unconsciously, and support the patriarchal paradigm.

3.4. Consequences of gendered war reporting

While the previously described omission and trivialisation of women in war reporting may seem intangible or farfetched for some, it does have very tangible and real-life consequences. Six important consequences can be identified.

Firstly, the media silence women's voices, interests, perceptions and opinions, and disrespect their right to be heard (Geertsema-Sligh, 2018; Macharia, 2016). This can create serious effects, for instance, women might be left out of international aid and rebuilding schemes. This leads to women becoming even further oppressed, when they are already hit the most by war situations, which leads

to even more female casualties (Harp et al., 2011). Furthermore, when women only get their voices heard when they are portrayed as victims or passive spectators, it 'reflects a mental block not only in terms of what society may expect from women, but also, more seriously, in terms of what women may expect of themselves' (Unaegbu, 2016, p. 68). Especially for women in politics or positions of power, this makes the glass ceiling and their struggle for equality even more prominent (Macharia, 2016).

Secondly, gendered war reporting allows for the continuation of male dominance and violence, both in the public and in the private sphere, thereby fortifying the idea that gender inequalities are natural and normal (Harp et al., 2011; Macharia, 2016). Thirdly, it leads to 'the reinforcement of women as less than equal to men in public affairs' because the absence of women in war reporting tells the reader a lot about where women belong and what they are capable of doing. This relates to the first consequence, namely that it makes it seem like women's ideas, and even their lives in general, are irrelevant when it comes to international relations and war (Harp et al., 2011, p. 202).

The fourth consequence is that women's contributions to war and peace are neglected. Even though women form a minority on the actual front lines, as we have seen, they are significantly affected by war and are involved in different ways, often behind the scenes. By not acknowledging this, war reporting neglects to look at different sides of the conflict and other possible solutions (Harp et al., 2011). Fifthly, as we have seen, when reporting on war, reporters greatly dumb down the amount of information that they provide to the public in comparison with the amount of information available to make the conflict more understandable and more manageable. By reducing the complexity to such a great extent, the possibility for fruitful and relevant discussions on all dimensions of the war is also reduced. Therefore, the media fails to fulfil its function as a fourth estate that must correctly and accurately inform the public. This is also the reason why women's position in society continues to legitimise military intervention (Klaus and Kassel, 2005; Unaegbu, 2016).

Lastly, gendered war reporting greatly distances war from the reader by making it unemotional and intangible. It, therefore, neglects that war is a human phenomenon that involves intimate relationships between individuals (Thompson et al., 2007). According to del Zotto (2002, p. 142), 'it is under these more 'intimate' conditions of war that we often find the root causes of the conflict and where we also see women playing a central rather than peripheral role in addressing such conflict.'

4. Peace Journalism…

Peace journalism (PJ) was introduced as a concept within media and communication studies by Johan Galtung in the 1960s. Specifically, Galtung used the concept to criticise two tendencies within the kind of reporting he calls 'War Journalism' (WJ): the tendency to stick to news values and to follow

traditional journalistic arrangements. From the 1990s onwards, the concept got increasing attention from professional journalists across the world, as well as academics interested in peace, conflict and media studies, both in a positive and a negative sense (Kalfeli et al., 2020; Kalfeli et al., 2022; Macharia, 2016; Orgeret, 2016; Shaw et al., 2012; Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016). This past decade, the understanding of PJ has been expanded to explore other fields such as human rights, migration and gender (Kalfeli et al., 2022).

Galtung developed PJ not just as a criticism of WJ, but as a valuable alternative that reporters should consider, and preferably apply, when they write about war and conflict (Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016). We can identify four ways in which peace journalism differs from war journalism. Firstly, It is people-oriented rather than elite-oriented. Galtung and many others after him have criticised the way the media rely on elite sources because they are seen as reliable and trustworthy. PJ would instead give a voice to all parties to the conflict, including minority groups, with a strong focus on victims on all sides (Houge, 2016; Kalfeli et al., 2020; Shaw et al., 2012; Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016). Secondly, PJ is truth-oriented rather than propaganda-oriented, 'it reveals untruth on all sides and focuses on propaganda as a means of continuing the war (Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016, p. 14). Thereby, it takes a step away from the dichotomies created by war reporters to justify a violent response to conflict, such as us versus them, feminine versus masculine and winners versus losers, to expose that these untruths function as war propaganda rather than portray reality (Orgeret, 2016). This also implies exposing cover-ups and liars on all sides of the conflict (Shaw et al., 2012).

Thirdly, PJ is peace-oriented rather than violence-oriented. It aims to present innovative strategies for resolving disputes, advancing development and maintaining peace, which includes paying attention to peace efforts behind the scenes both during the war and afterwards (Shaw et al., 2012). This is in stark contrast to WJ, which is often said to support the continuation of violence through war propaganda and the perpetuation of the idea that only violence can solve disputes. This does not mean, however, that it is 'the job of journalists to come up with specific peace suggestions in their reporting' (Orgeret, 2016; Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016, p. 15). Instead, it is journalists' job to provide the right information in the right way to ensure that the public can come up with nonviolent solutions to the problem. Lastly, PJ is solution-oriented rather than victory-oriented. In PJ, there are no winners or losers. The goal is to find a way to solve the dispute and stop the violence as quickly and efficiently as possible, rather than waiting until they can declare someone the 'victor'. The objective of PJ is to offer a contextualised perspective of a conflict rather than merely covering violent events. According to this approach, journalists should investigate the underlying causes of the conflict and explore potential long-term solutions to promote peace. PJ emphasises the importance of understanding the conflict's historical and social context, including its origins, causes, long-term consequences and

internal composition. In contrast with most mainstream reporting, it doesn't shy away from complexity, thereby naturally opening up the number of sources used and voices heard (Houge, 2016; Kalfeli et al., 2020; Orgeret, 2016; Shaw et al., 2012).

In short, PJ analyses and transforms conflicts to upgrade the idea of balance, impartiality and precision in journalism. It offers a fresh path that maps the relationships between journalists, sources, the topics they address and the outcome of their reporting, and promotes nonviolent and innovative reporting techniques. PJ deviates from the conventional approach to reporting news, specifically on war and violence, not only on an implicit, subtle, level, but also in its substance (Macharia, 2016). According to Shaw et al. (2012, p. 11), 'PJ may be a consciously applied editorial philosophy'. However, most media either pursue practices to challenge war journalism on purpose because it is part of their values or their identity as a media channel, but the journalists are not explicitly trained to apply PJ, or 'there is accidental peace journalism'. The latter means that it seems like journalists are applying PJ, but the way they report is just a consequence of the routines of news in a specific socio-economic context, such as the positioning of a news organisation concerning a particular conflict.

Let's apply Galtung's concept of Peace Journalism to gender, the main issue under scrutiny in this thesis. The perspectives on whether gender is included in PJ and whether it should differ significantly. Von der Lippe and Ottosen (2016) argue that PJ does not acknowledge gender issues and differences between masculinities and femininities. Ottosen (2016) added that while the original model did not include a gender perspective, Galtung did recognise the possibility to include one. However, he criticises Galtung for looking at gender as a political phenomenon, rather than a collection of 'several masculinities and several femininities, some of which are peace-oriented, and some are war-oriented' (p. 241-242). Houge (2016) agrees with this, arguing that the main problem of Galtung's perspective on gender is that he refers to simplified definitions of biological sex rather than socially constructed gender. This makes it impossible for PJ to define and embed gender into its reporting and analysis of a conflict situation. To be successful, he argues, reporters need to recognise that there are multiple genders, each of which suffers from war. Macharia (2016) and Orgeret (2016), however, think otherwise. According to them, PJ as developed by Galtung is inherently gendered. The former argues that this is the result of the human rights angle embedded in the concept, as well as the fact that it always pays attention to the public sphere and the voices of those excluded from mainstream war journalism. The latter argues that the gender perspective is a result of PJ's direct link to postcolonial feminism, as 'both perspectives are concerned with getting more voices and perspectives heard' (p. 210). Either way, what they do agree on is that contemporary PJ should always include a gender

perspective, as only gender-aware journalism can ensure reporting that is realistic, accurate and fair and that leads to an inclusion of gender concerns into every step of the peace and post-war processes.

5. … or Human Rights Journalism?

An important element of every conflict or war is human rights. Yet, just like the link between peace and media, the connection between human rights and the media tends to be neglected. According to Shaw (2012), this connection consists of two interlinked components. On the one hand, a society needs a free and independent press to communicate correct information to people related to their human rights. On the other hand, one needs to take into account the extent to which the media can freely report on these human rights and their possible violations. It is only when these two components are in order that a country is said to respect and protect the human rights of its people. One cannot exist without the other. The media is needed to function as a watchdog of human rights protection, while human rights also ensure that the media can effectively exercise that function through the protection of free speech and freedom of expression.

It is within this interlinkage that we notice problems in contemporary journalism. These are the same problems that we discussed earlier in connection to PJ: the traditions and conventions of journalism cause a distorted, superficial and prejudiced image of what is happening around the world and people do not get enough information to correctly understand big events, which in turn leads to negative responses, manipulation and a further perpetuation of violence. Therefore, the two big principles of media needed to ensure the protection of human rights are harmed: the media are not independent, but controlled by power relations, and the media cannot report freely on human rights issues, both due to these power relations and because of time constraints and news values (Selvaraiah, 2020; Shaw, 2012).

According to Ibrahim Seaga Shaw (2012), PJ is not specific enough to deal with these problems in relation to human rights. To fill this gap, he has proposed Human Rights Journalism (from now onwards: HRJ) based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), as an extension of PJ that deals with reporting on human rights violations. HRJ is characterised by the following elements: 'it offers more good communication to offset bad communication'; it deconstructs events in order to provide a more thorough understandings of the history, causes and issues; if limitations are set on reporting, they are done so on a human-rights based reasoning rather than elitism, politics or economics; it encourages a human-rights based response to events; it reports not only on tangible physical violence (e.g. genocide, killings, rape…) but also on indirect structure violence (e.g. human trafficking, poverty, famine…); it exercises its watchdog function and exposes human rights violations; it focuses on achieving second-generation rights (economic, social and cultural) in order to achieve the fulfilment of first-generation rights (political and civil) by calling for a more

preventive, proactive role of the media in humanitarian interventions; it focuses on including a more diverse set of voices, especially marginalised and minority groups, rather than solely the elite; it is 'predicated on the sustainable peace and human rights logic of the principle "it is better to prevent the escalation of violence than to try to stop it"'; it is diagnostic (i.e. focused on diagnosing the problems and their causes) and holistic; it challenges the status quo on all levels; it has no borders, both figuratively and literally; it focuses on achieving negative peace (the absence of direct violence) and positive peace (ensuring the sustainability of peace by getting rid of the underlying causes) (Shaw, 2012, p. 35-47; Selvaraiah, 2020).

All these elements are summarised in Shaw's original definition, which will be the understanding of HRJ throughout this thesis:

> *'A diagnostic style of reporting, which gives a critical reflection on the experiences and needs of the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations of all types – physical as well as cultural and structural – in order to stimulate understanding of the reasons for these violations and to prevent or solve them in ways that would not produce more human rights imbalances or violations in the future. Moreover, it is a journalism that challenges, not reinforces, the status quo of the powerful dominant voices of society against the weak and marginalised ones in the promotion and protection of human rights and peace' (Shaw, 2012a, p. 46; as quoted in Luo, 2017, p. 44)*

Based on these elements, it might seem like HRJ is the same as PJ, but focused on human rights rather than peace. The similarities are not surprising, since peace and human rights are strongly interlinked. As long as human rights violations persist, there can be no peace. And if there is no peace, human rights violations will persist. It is because of this interconnectedness that Shaw (2012) has taken PJ as the basis of his HRJ theory. The four characteristics of PJ that we identified earlier (peace-oriented, truth-oriented, people-oriented and solution-oriented) persist but are complemented by four more elements. Firstly, HRJ pursues a 'triple-win' approach rather than a 'win-win' or 'win-lose' one. This means that everyone wins, not solely the parties to the conflict, but that peace and the respect of human rights become global and that structural violence is eliminated. Secondly, HRJ favours vulnerable voices and marginalised voices over elite ones. While PJ focuses on integrating all voices equally, HRJ is explicitly biased in favour of the most vulnerable. Thirdly, HRJ is 'pro-active (preventive) rather than reactive (prescriptive)' by preventing future violations rather than just solving current ones. Lastly, HRJ is 'attached rather than detached to victims of violence and justice' (Shaw, 2012, p. 230). Another difference, according to Luo (2017), is that PJ can only be applied to conflict and war reporting, while HRJ can be applied to any kind of reporting that has links with human rights. Therefore, the applicability of HRJ is broader than that of PJ.

Just like PJ has been developed as an alternative to war journalism, HRJ has been developed as an alternative to what Shaw (2012, p. 39) has called 'Human Wrongs Journalism' (from here on forward: HWJ). This is the kind of journalism that we now see in most media when it comes to reporting on human rights. Just like WJ, it is an elitist kind of reporting that often misreports events and reinforces dominant ideologies, such as patriarchy and capitalism, and the status quo. It thereby indirectly supports human rights violations (Selvarajah, 2020). HWJ is more specific and elaborate than WJ. Besides all the elements of WJ, it is 'competition-oriented', meaning that it focuses on what attracts the most readers and what increases profits (violence, drama, evocative content); 'propaganda-oriented' by focusing on why certain groups have reasons to commit human rights violations and why others don't; 'demonisation-oriented' by emphasising us versus them and good versus bad; and 'partial solution-oriented' by focusing on fulfilling the needs of the dominant groups of society at the expense of long-term solutions and the needs of the vulnerable; it creates a distance between the reader and the human rights issues; and it is non-interventionist, meaning that it does not contribute to possible solutions (Luo, 2017; Selvarajah, 2020; Shaw, 2012, p. 48).

If more media started using HRJ rather than HWJ, this would create a favourable environment for the protection and promotion of human rights and peace across the world. A few specific consequences can be identified. Firstly, it bridges different parts of the world by creating a shared understanding and knowledge of different issues and events and establishes the media as a trustworthy source of education and information. Secondly, it gives marginalised groups and individuals a voice. Thirdly, it creates more opportunities and support for civil society to engage in human rights protection, expose violations by the state and demand action. Fourthly, it encourages the international community to act on countries that continuously violate the right to freedom of expression and other human rights, as well as better cooperation between the media and international institutions. Fifthly, a more informed and well-educated public can lead to a more active population as well as a population that feels more empathy towards those suffering from human rights violations, which can lead to more calls for intervention and better systems of protection. Lastly, human rights can become a news value which puts people first. This can influence the media agenda for the better, as well as agenda-setting on the local, institutional and supranational levels. In general, one could say that applying HRJ could completely change the way that journalism functions, not only how it is produced and consumed, but also the kind of people that the field attracts as journalists. This is important because ultimately, it is the analysis and knowledge of the journalists that shape how an event is conveyed to the audience (Luo, 2017; Selvarajah, 2020; Shaw, 2012).

Even though HRJ seems to have a lot of positive consequences, it is still a rarity in reporting on war and conflict, and some criticism has been directed in its direction. The biggest criticism is that HRJ

would undermine the core values of journalism, particularly its adherence to objectivity. This has been refuted by Shaw (2012), who argues that objectivity is not a necessity within HRJ because it focuses on telling the truth and letting everyone have a voice. Selvarajah (2020, p. 48) agrees with this, but argues that 'advocacy and objectivity' are needed to promote human rights and peace, and that 'these two concepts are not mutually exclusive'. Other criticisms include the fact that, because HRJ wants to let everyone's voice be heard, specialists' voices are neglected and the accounts of an event, therefore, remain superficial. Another criticism relates to how one decides what constitutes a human rights issue and what does not. From what point onwards is an issue severe enough to be considered a human rights violation? Lastly, it has been posited that, when reporting on human rights abuses, Western media solely focus on non-Western countries, neglecting to look at the abuses going on in their own country or on their own continent (Luo, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

This thesis aims to understand war and conflict reporting, with a focus on gender bias, the victimisation of women and the masculine paradigm of war. Specifically, this study answers the following research questions:

What are the characteristics of war reporting in different English-language news outlets in Europe and the Arab world?

- **How and to what extent is the patriarchal paradigm of war, and the resulting gender bias, present in this war reporting?**
- **Which, if any, differences can be found between these news sites?**
- **How and to what extent are the values of peace and/or human rights journalism already present in this reporting? Could it provide a viable alternative?**

These questions are answered using qualitative content analysis. One of the most crucial aspects of this method, according to Krippendorff (2004), Forman and Damschroder (2007), Elo and Kyngäs (2008), and others, is for the researchers to be explicit about the steps taken during the research. This is required to improve the study's reliability and validity, so that it can be replicated by other academics. Therefore, the following chapter explains the methods used for this research and the reasoning behind it. The first section examines the decision to use qualitative content analysis and why it is the optimal approach given the research questions. The sampling method is described in the second section, while the third section lays down the data coding and abstraction that led to the analysis of the material and the conclusions drawn from it.

1. Qualitative Content Analysis

In this thesis, the method applied to the sample to answer the research questions and sub-questions is Qualitative Content Analysis (from here: QCA). According to Krippendorf (2004, p. xiii), content analysis, whether quantitative or qualitative is 'one of the most important research techniques in the social sciences'. Content analysis was already used as a research method in the 18th century in Scandinavia, after which it expanded to the US and Europe (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). At the beginning of the 19th century, it was primarily used to analyse articles, advertisements and political speeches (Elo and Kyngäs, 2007). It reached its highs in the 1920s and 30s due to the stark increase in movies. However, these first uses of content analysis were predominantly quantitative, following a positivistic paradigm which is based on values of reason, direct observation and logic. Because of this dominance, the foundations of content analysis, including its first definitions and research designs, were based on quantitative criteria of analysis (Macnamara, 2005; Devi Prasad, 2019; White and Marsh, 2006).

From the mid-1950s onwards, certain voices began to resist the quantification of the research method, arguing that its focus on direct observation leads to a disregard for more hidden and complex meanings embedded in texts. They posited that an interpretative approach, rather than a positivistic one, would provide data that is much richer and easier to compare and connect (Graneheim et al., 2016; Devi Prasad, 2019; White and Marsh, 2006). From the 1960s onwards, QCA spread across the globe, even though it was still mistrusted by the proponents of the quantitative approach. In the past century, QCA has gained in popularity, primarily due to health research. It is now applied in a broad range of fields, including social sciences, business, journalism and psychology (Elo and Kyngäs, 2007; Morgan, 1993; Devi Prasad, 2019).

As is in the name, QCA analyses qualitative data with qualitative methods. In its most basic sense, it is a method to study texts and reduce them to understandable, small categories that convey a certain meaning, in order to create an understanding of every layer of the text. Because of its turbulent history, different definitions and interpretations of content analysis exist. Devi Prasad (2019, p. 7-8) has identified three types of definitions. The first type, such as the one of Berelson (1952), focuses solely on quantitative content analysis: 'content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication'. In the second type, content analysis is portrayed as a general research method, with no reference to either quantitative or qualitative dimensions. This is for instance the case in Krippendorff's (2004; as quoted in White and Marsh, 2006, p. 27) definition: content analysis is 'a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use'. In the third type, either both methods are stated, or only the qualitative approach is. Even though the definitions are

diverging, a couple of common elements can be identified that make QCA the most relevant method for this thesis and to answer the research questions described above:

1. QCA can be employed to study both the manifest meanings of a text and the latent ones, its main focus is reducing data to uncover underlying themes, meanings and patterns and drawing conclusions from them, rather than making 'generalizations from the study sample to the population based on statistical inference', also acknowledging that texts are 'polysemic – i.e. open to multiple different meanings to different readers';
2. The method is not linked to a distinct science, in comparison with its quantitative variant, meaning that there is more room for flexibility related to concepts and definitions and less room for confusion about the research process;
3. Qualitative content analysis can be applied to a great variety of material, including but not limited to focus group transcripts, interviews, television fragments and, in this case, news articles;
4. QCA tries to make sense of a text not only by focusing on its content, but also on the surrounding context, the source in question and any underlying concepts that might be present, starting from the presumption that every text is value-laden;
5. The method is labour-intensive rather than capital-intensive, focusing on smaller samples but diving deeper into them in a reflective process to uncover everything, which is better suited for a thesis like this with limited time and resources;
6. It is unobtrusive, meaning that neither the source nor the researcher can influence the content of the sample during the analysis process (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 9; Denzin and Lincoln, 2004; Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017; Forman and Damschroder, 2007, p. 41; Graneheim et al., 2016; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Macnamara, 2005, p. 5; Roller, 2019).

2. Limitations and criticisms of Qualitative Content Analysis

Even though it has slowly grown in popularity over the years, QCA has its limitations, like any other research method. The main criticism relates to its flexible nature and the fact that the methodology is not grounded in a particular science or theory. Cavanagh (1997, p. 5), has called QCA 'a naïve technique that results in a simplicist description of data', others have posited that the theory is unsound and too simple to be considered scientific (Denzin and Lincoln, 2004; Macnamara, 2005). Elo and Kyngäs (2007, p. 108-109) have refuted this, arguing that its flexibility is one of the main strengths of the method, making it one of the most efficient methods for uncovering underlying 'meanings, intentions, consequences and context'. What they do argue is that going through the entire research process can be very challenging and time-consuming, since there is no established roadmap for the researcher to follow. However, as mentioned earlier, because QCA is usually applied to small

samples, the method can be made 'as easy or as difficult as the researcher determines it to be', which is ideal for a thesis like this one (Elo and Kyngäs, 2007, p. 108-109).

One of the main limitations of QCA, for this study specifically, is that I am the sole coder of the data. In its quantitative counterpart, validity and objectivity are ensured by inter-coder reliability checks, and it is often argued that this should be applied to QCA as well. This is especially relevant since 'capturing latent meaning is more context-dependent and interpretive, and therefore more likely to be subjective, and less precise' (Devi Prasad, 2019, p. 7-8). As this is a master's thesis, there are no other coders to ensure objectivity. There is always a possibility that the researcher's background, personality or experience influences results or skews the understanding of the data.. Macnamara (2005, p. 5) agrees that QCA 'is difficult and maybe impossible to do with scientific reliability' but, the method is needed to 'understand deeper meanings and likely interpretations by audiences'. Here Saldana's (2013, p. 34) argument that a 'lone ethnographer' is much more 'intimately at work with her data', and therefore still creates valid scientific research, is followed.

Lastly, most researchers recommend using QCA in combination with its quantitative variant, because qualitative content analysis cannot study everything (Bengtsson, 2016; Macnamara, 2005). Using a dual-method approach, however, goes beyond the scope of this thesis. While certain aspects, specifically a quantification of results, will be neglected, this thesis can still provide reliable and valid answers to the research questions.

3. Preparation phase: sample and units of analysis

Now that a theoretical basis has been laid out in the literature review and QCA has been established as the best method to answer the research questions, the sample and units of analysis have to be decided. The unit of analysis 'is the object about which the research wants to say something at the end of the study' and should flow naturally out of the research questions (Forman and Damschroder, 2007, p. 43). Here, the units of analysis are the following online news sites: The Guardian (International Edition), Al Jazeera and De Standaard. The choice has been made to use an approach combining Western and Arab news outlets, on the one hand to increase the diversity of the sample, on the other hand because various cultural and political viewpoints inexorably influence the news-making process, news values and organisational practices. Due to the varied cultural viewpoints that both publications are exposed to, it is expected that there will be disparities in how they deal with gender. For instance, a study by Lance and Paschyn (2018, p; 41) has shown that in the pan-Arab news media under study, when women were featured, 'they took on much more active roles than in Western news media'. However, it is important to note that the English version of Al Jazeera is used throughout this research, and according to research done by Romero-Trillo and Attio (2016), the news on the English version differs significantly from the news on the Arab version in terms of 'story

content, ideology, collocation categories and frequency distribution' (p. 207). Recognising cultural differences and regional expertise is crucial. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge the dominance of specific Western gender roles in a globalising society and their (often negative) effects on non-Western societies.

Because units of analysis are too broad to be studied in their entirety, they have to be sampled. In QCA, that means selecting a specific amount of phenomena within a specific period that can be collected, analysed and reported on with the resources and time available. Sampling in QCA is always done with the purpose in mind of answering the research questions (Forman and Damschroder, 2007; White and Marsh, 2006). The sample in this study is news articles related to war and armed conflict from the three news sites in the year 2022. The period was chosen based on the availability of articles related to the topic of war and armed conflict and because it is recent, meaning there is still a lack of research related to this topic. To generate a representative sample that is equal for all news sites, the databases were searched with the keywords 'war' and 'armed conflict'. Because war and armed conflict are often used interchangeably, the variation within the sample is increased as much as possible by including both. When searching for the keyword 'war', 348 articles were found on The Guardian, 316 on Al Jazeera and 299 on De Standaard. When searching for 'armed conflict', 111 articles were found on The Guardian, 297 on Al Jazeera and 309 on De Standaard (see table). Opinion pieces, double articles and unrelated articles, however, have not yet been filtered out of these numbers.

	The Guardian	**Al Jazeera**	**De Standaard**
War	348 articles	316 articles	299 articles
Armed conflict	111 articles	297 articles	309 articles

Table 1 Number of articles found based on three keywords (left column) per news site (upper row), without filtering

Every article was assigned a unique number, after which a random number generator was used to create a sample of 105 articles, 35 per news site, 18 based on the search query 'war', and 17 on the search query 'armed conflict'. This number was to ensure the sample is big enough to be reliable, yet small enough to be feasible. The following articles were excluded from this sampling process: opinion pieces, double articles and articles unrelated to the search query. The list of sampled articles can be found in the annex.

3.1. Choice of news media sites

3.1.1. The Guardian (International Edition)

The Guardian, founded in Manchester, England in 1821, has established itself as one of the most influential and respected newspapers in the world, as well as one of London's leading newspapers. The Guardian is owned by the Guardian Media Group, whose single shareholder is the Scott Trust,

named after the newspaper's longest-serving editor. The main goal of this shareholder is to ensure that The Guardian can continue to exist as a financially and editorially independent news provider. Even though its news site does not have a paywall, more than half of The Guardian's income comes directly from the readers (Britannica, 2023).

Throughout its rich history, The Guardian has taken pride in its dedication to upholding journalistic integrity, promoting social justice and championing progressive causes. According to the newspaper's editor-in-chief, The Guardian's mission is simple and well-known: 'holding power to account, and upholding liberal values' (Viner, 2016). According to its website, they deliver 'fearless investigate journalism', and its 'independent ownership structure means that [they] are entirely free from political and commercial influence' (The Guardian, s.d.). With its focus on investigative journalism, The Guardian has helped to uncover famous social and political scandals, such as Cambridge Analytica and the Panama Papers. More recently, the Guardian has started engaging in more media forms than just written text, producing podcasts, videos, and documentaries and updating the usability of its app. In 1961, the Guardian launched its global edition, expanding its reach beyond the UK. The online news site was the fifth most widely read across the world in 2014, with approximately 42.6 million readers (AllSides, 2021).

When The Guardian was founded, it mainly supported liberal interests. Studies have shown that a large majority (72%) of The Guardian's readers consider themselves left-wing or left-leaning, with a very small minority (9%) voting right-wing or centre-right. The remaining part of the audience considers itself to belong to the centre (Pew Research Center, 2014). The Guardian is therefore considered to be a left-leaning, liberal, newspaper.

3.1.2. Al Jazeera

Al Jazeera was launched in Doha, Qatar, in 1996 as the first independent news channel in the Arab world. It constituted a turning point in the Arab world's approach to media, as until then most media were either dominated by the Western world or state-owned. Al Jazeera was also one of the first media outlets in the region to create in-depth, investigative journalism that focuses on the human being as the centre of news. According to their website, their tagline 'The Opinion and the Other Opinion', 'encapsulated bringing multiple angles to a story, informing and empowering its audiences, championing their stories, while maintaining the spirit of journalistic integrity' (Al Jazeera, s.d.).

Although Al Jazeera prides itself on its independence, it has been funded by Qatari rulers since its inception. Without the billions of dollars invested in Al Jazeera by the Qatari state through the Qatar Media Corporation, Al Jazeera would not have survived this long (Hashmi, s.d.; Telhami, 2012). This dependence on the Qatari state has generated a lot of criticism related to its independence and

objectivity. Criticisms have come from both inside the Arab world and outside. Especially the US has been hesitant, claiming that Al Jazeera helps stoke 'Arab anger against American foreign policy' (Al Jazeera, s.d.; Telhami, 2012). They have been quick to keep up with developments in the media market, expanding from television to online news sites, providing news in Arabic and English, starting a YouTube channel, having a prominent social media presence and even releasing content under Creative Commons licenses (Hashmi, s.d.). According to bias and reliability tests, Al Jazeera is left-leaning, but more balanced than The Guardian (Ad Fontes Media, s.d.; AllSides, 2022).

3.1.3. De Standaard

At the beginning of the 20th century, when the French language was still dominant in Belgium, a group of Flemish intellectuals believed that Flemish people had the right to Flemish education and that any administration had to be handled in Dutch. The Flemish Movement believed that to gradually achieve this, they needed their own Flemish newspaper. This was the start of De Standaard (De Standaard, s.d.). In 1976, De Standaard became part of the Vlaamse Uitgeversmaatschappij (VUM) ('Flemish Publishing Company'). For the next three decades, the paper would be the mouthpiece of the Catholic Flemish movement, carrying AVV-VVK ('Allen Voor Vlaanderen – Vlaanderen Voor Kristus' or 'All for Flanders – Flanders for Christ') as its logo from 1919 until 1999. Since 1997, De Standaard is also available online. In 2022, De Standaard remained the market leader and the largest news brand among quality newspapers in Flanders, reaching 457,200 readers both on paper and online and 410,600 readers for its magazine (Ads and Data, 2022; De Standaard, s.d.; Mediahuis, s.d.). The development of De Standaard cannot be disconnected from the Catholic and Flemish nationalist movements. Therefore, the newspaper is usually considered to be right-leaning and attracts a nationalist and Catholic readership.

4. Preliminary phase: preliminary coding and analysis

After creating a sample out of the units of analysis that is sufficiently representative, what follows is the preliminary phase. This phase consists of three steps. First, I read through the news articles multiple times. The aim of this was to familiarize myself with the material that I will be analysing and get a sense of what the articles are talking about and what the main themes are. Getting a sense of the whole is important before breaking the texts down into smaller categories. This step may already lead to some ideas or hunches of what is interesting concerning the research questions and what is not (Bengtsson, 2016; Elo and Kyngäs, 2007; Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017; Forman and Damschroder, 2007). What is paramount, according to Forman and Damschroder (2007, p. 47) and White and Marsh (2006, p. 37-38) is to write down these first hunches. This process is called 'memoing'. Memos are written down during the exploration reading at the beginning of the analysis process and can be anything from a single word to a sentence or even a paragraph. They are useful

for two reasons: it can make it easier to identify categories and themes in the next phase, but it can also be useful at the end of the analysis, to check whether nothing has been neglected in the reporting. Because they are the instinctive hunches of the researcher, they increase the credibility of the research.

Secondly, after getting a sense of the big picture, I started with 'preliminary coding' (Forman and Damschroder, 2007, p. 48). Coding is a way to 'organize large quantities of text into much fewer content categories' (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1285-1286). During preliminary coding, interesting parts of the text, which can be words, sentences or a paragraph, but never the whole text, are labelled with a code, which is usually one or two words (Lindgren et al., 2020). An important consideration during this stage is deciding whether you will start to code with a clean slate or based on pre-existing categories. This is called inductive and deductive analysis respectively. The former is a way of coding that is entirely based on the text that is being coded, 'the researcher analyses the text with an open mind in order to identify meaningful subjects answering the research question' (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 8-9). However, the slate with which the researcher starts is not entirely clean: it is informed by the research questions, the aims of the study and the researcher's background (Armat et al., 2018). Inductive codes are very flexible and can be changed through the analysis process or even cause a change in the research questions. The result of an inductive analysis is new knowledge, moving 'from the concrete and specific to the abstract and general' (Elo and Kyngäs, 2007; Graneheim et al., 2016, p. 30; Macnamara, 2005). Deductive analysis, on the other hand, 'involves working from a broad theory or general position to specific observations to confirm or disprove the former', i.e. previously-determined aspects are connected to the text (Macnamara, 2005, p. 17). The main aim of a deductive analysis is to provide definitions and examples for the predetermined categories, trying to prove or disprove a hypothesis (Forman and Damschroder, 2007; Graneheim et al., 2016; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Mayring, 2019).

Most researchers, like Elo and Kyngäs (2014), Morgan (1993) and White and Marsh (2006), argue that quantitative content analysis uses deduction, while qualitative content analysis uses induction. However, here I follow the idea of Armat e.a (2018),. Forman and Damschroder (2007, p. 48) and Graneheim et al. (2016) that in QCA you gain the most valuable insights by applying both at the same time, 'this means using a priori deductive codes as a way to 'get into' the data and an inductive approach to identify new codes and to refine or even eliminate a priori codes'. Graneheim et al. (2016, p. 31) call this 'an abductive approach'. By constantly switching between induction and deduction, one can get a clearer picture of all the latent and manifest meanings present in the text. While one method might gain dominance, it is important to clarify that both methods are used.

5. Organising phase: open coding, abstraction and codebook development

The result of the first phase is a text that has been prepared for further coding and sorting during the organising phase. Open coding is a more inductive continuation of preliminary coding that is focused on creating codes that are condensed, yet sufficiently explorative. During this phase as well it is important to keep track of your thoughts and impressions (Bengtsson, 2016; Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017). After open coding, codes are sorted into categories or themes, which can be aided by the memos made during the preliminary and open coding. This process of 'formulating a general description of the research topic through generating categories' is called abstraction (Elo and Kyngäs, 2007, p. 111; Lindgren et al., 2020). A category 'consists of codes that appear to deal with the same issue' and answers the question 'who, what, when or where?', i.e. you look for patterns and group codes that seem to belong together (Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017, p. 96-97). A theme, on the other hand, also sometimes called a mother category, is 'a unifying red threat running through several categories that brings meaning to a recurrent topic or experiences and its various manifestation'. Themes are especially important in qualitative content analysis because they focus on latent meaning much more than categories do (Lindgren et al., 2020; Roller, 2019).

The main characteristic of both open coding and abstraction is that they are iterative processes: you go through the codes again and again, until you attain the most reliable results (Bengtsson, 2016; Elo e.a, 2014; Forman and Damschroder, 2007; Graneheim et al., 2016, p. 32; Mayring, 2019). This also includes checking whether all the facets of the text have been studied in relation to the research questions. If any text has been left uncoded, two things can happen. Either the researcher considers the text to be important for the research aim and codes it with an existing or new code, or the researcher considers it to be unimportant and excludes it from the analysis. That is why going back to your text is so important, because something might seem irrelevant one moment but relevant the next (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The main aim of all of this is 'to provide a means of describing the phenomenon, to increase understanding and to generate knowledge' (Elo and Kyngäs, 2007, p. 111).

The ultimate goal of these two processes is the development of, what I will call, a codebook (Forman and Damschroder, 2007; Roller, 2019), what others have called a coding list (Bengtsson, 2016) or coding scheme (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). A codebook is a table that summarizes all the important information about the codes and categories. This is needed, on the one hand, to facilitate the analysis process of the researcher and, on the other hand, to increase the reliability of the study (Bengtsson, 2016; Forman and Damschroder, 2007). The notebook includes the name of the code, a definition with inclusion and exclusion criteria, an example quote, the number of files the code is found in and the number of times the code is referenced to.

Once the codebook has been constructed, these codes and categories will be applied to the entire dataset. However, it is important, according to Roller (2019) that the codebook remains flexible so that new findings during the analysis and reporting process can still be incorporated. What is especially important is that the codebook is precise, logical and structured so that it is easily understandable, and if needed replicable, for other researchers. This is also the reason why Elo and Kyngäs (2007, p. 112) put a lot of emphasis on including quotes in the codebook: 'authentic citations could also be used to increase the trustworthiness of the research and to point out the readers from where or from what kinds of original data categories are formulated'. The codebook can be found in the annex.

6. Reporting phase

In this phase, the data, categories and codes found in the codebook, memos and other coding reports are described in an attempt to answer the research question and subquestions. This description needs to be done carefully and systematically, which makes data reduction, whereby the data is reduced to its core based on the research aim, very important. The focus needs to be not solely on writing down observations, but primarily on comparing, connecting and identifying patterns in the data. This includes testing your first conclusions and going back to the data to find confirming and non-confirming cases to support or refute the conclusions (Elo et al., 2014; Forman and Damschroder, 2007). Every statement within the conclusion needs to be supported by evidence, in the form of quotes, codes or numbers. The last one may seem contradictory since we are engaging in qualitative and not quantitative research, but, while not necessary, counting might be an important element in supporting evidence (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; White and Marsh, 2006).

The result of the reporting phase should be a 'composite picture of the phenomenon' that 'carefully incorporates context and theoretical construct' (White and Marsh, 2006, p. 39). The chapter should give a broad overview of the subject under scrutiny that is substantiated by the categories and observations of the analysis phase, 'whereby each part should reflect the whole and the whole should be reflected in each part' (Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017, p. 96). During the reporting phase, there are a few things to look out for. Firstly, human mistakes are always possible, for instance when the researcher is tired, distracted or biased. This occurs in qualitative research more often than in quantitative, since there is always a certain degree of interpretation present and the researcher is closely at work with the data (Bengtsson, 2016; Elo et al., 2014). Secondly, certain criteria need to be checked for research like this to be scientific. There is little agreement between researchers on this. Some argue that the same criteria should be applied as in quantitative research, namely 'validity, reliability and generalizability', while others, including White and Marsh (2006, p. 38), argue that

qualitative research requires criteria such as 'credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability' (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 13).

The degree to which research correctly measures (in the case of quantitative research) or analyses (in the case of qualitative research) the targeted ideas and concepts is referred to as validity. The degree to which the results may be duplicated is determined by the consistency and stability of measurements and analysis procedures, and is known as reliability. Generalizability refers to the capacity to extrapolate scientific results from a particular sample or situation and apply these to a wider population of similar contexts. The term credibility refers to the reliability and plausibility of research findings, which can be achieved through meticulous methods of data collection and analysis. Dependability refers to the continuity and constancy of research results through time and the use of multiple researchers who obtain similar results. Lastly, transferability focuses on how well research results and methods can be used in similar contexts or situations to the original (Bengtsson, 2016; Elo et al., 2014; Macnamara, 2005; Devi Prasad, 2019). Here, I argue that all these criteria should be strived for, but because of the nature of this research, it is difficult to check all the boxes.

7. Conclusion

This chapter explained, firstly, why qualitative content analysis is the best method to answer the research questions. After this, it laid out the four phases that this thesis followed to correctly and thoroughly apply QCA: the preparation phase, the preliminary phase, the organising phase and the reporting phase. While these steps may seem obvious to some researchers, providing an in-depth walkthrough of the methodology is important, especially in QCA, to improve reliability and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the study. Based on this, this thesis tries to understand how war reporting by both Western and non-Western news outlets portrays gender and whether, and to what extent, it perpetuates the patriarchal paradigm of war. This next part lays out the analysis of the data and the results.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This part focuses on the results of the qualitative content analysis and, based on these results, discusses possible answers to the research questions. The first part looks into the characteristics of war reporting, after which these are connected and discussed in relation to the patriarchal paradigm of war and gender bias. Lastly, I will take a look at which elements, if any, of Peace Journalism and Human Rights Journalism are already present, and whether the elements that aren't yet present could provide a viable alternative to the characteristics of current war reporting. Throughout this analysis, the three news sites are compared, to see if there are any major differences.

1. General characteristics of war reporting

When it comes to general characteristics that can be found within war reporting, four recurring themes can be identified in this study: geographical diversity, Eurocentrism, adherence to the hierarchy of credibility and sensationalism through victim accounts and storytelling.

On the 24th of February, Russia invaded Ukraine and started a war that is currently still ongoing. Because the sampling period of this thesis is the year 2022, the sample is prone to be influenced by a dominance of articles regarding the Ukrainian war. Out of the 105 articles, 64 articles were either directly concerned with or related to the war in Ukraine. 24 of these came from De Standaard, 23 from The Guardian and 17 from Al Jazeera. When it comes to geographical diversity, The Guardian is the only news source that covers South America (Colombia and Guatemala), while Al Jazeera covers the biggest amount of different countries, including conflicts in Yemen, North and South Korea, Congo, Israel, Togo, Sudan, Libya, Taiwan, Pakistan, India, Syria and Myanmar. Notable is that De Standaard pays the most attention to conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which can be explained by the fact that Belgium colonised the DRC from 1908 until 1960. Notwithstanding, one needs to be critical of the fact that currently, besides the war in Ukraine, most wars and armed conflicts take place outside of the European continent, which explains the geographical diversity.

However, this diversity in coverage does not translate into a diversity of voices on a geographical level. When it comes to the sources used, the three news outlets are very Eurocentric. Eurocentrism is a subcategory of ethnocentrism, which refers to 'the tendency to view one's own ethnic group and its social standards as the basis for evaluative judgment concerning the practices of others – with the implication that one views one's own standards as superior' (Joseph et al., 1990, p. 1). The information that is created in and about Europe contributes to the preservation of an impression of social and political supremacy over everything and everyone beyond its borders. This might be implied, for example, by depending only on European knowledge or by stereotyping non-European cultures. Here, all three news sites show a certain level of Eurocentrism, especially in their use of sources. There is a tendency to always fall back on the opinion or contribution of Western sources, even if the West is barely involved in the conflict. This is primarily prominent in De Standaard and The Guardian, but Al Jazeera is also guilty of this.

For instance, in an article by De Standaard on Israelian attacks in Gaza, the spokesman Joseph Borrell, the high representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs, is a major source weighing in on the attack:

> *'Israel has the right to protect its civilians, but everything needs to be done to prevent a larger conflict. That would, in the first place, hit civilians on both sides and lead to even more victims and suffering.'*

Comments like this make it seem as if Europe is taken as a baseline against which other countries are compared. The events happening in the rest of the world and the way these countries deal with them are compared to what is happening in Europe and how Europeans would deal with it.

This can be related to the third characteristic of war reporting: the adherence to the hierarchy of credibility. This refers to the privileging of the powerful in society because they are considered to be more credible sources of information. In this study, 497 references to elite sources were found in 91 articles. This includes politicians, experts, world leaders and other high-ranking officials. The remaining sources, 141 mentions in 35 articles, are considered non-elite. This includes, in this case, primarily civilians and soldiers. These numbers confirm, on the one hand, the idea of Forde (2011), Fuchs (2010), Kenix (2011) and McChesney (2003) that the hierarchy of credibility is slowly disappearing in mainstream media, but on the other hand, also rejects it. While civilian sources are often appreciated, especially as witnesses to human rights violations or war crimes and to bring some emotions into the article, elite sources are still nearly four times as prominent. Therefore, the hierarchy of credibility persists in war reporting.

Lastly, war reporting engages in sensationalism to grasp (and keep) the attention of the reader. Oxford Dictionary (s.d.) identifies sensationalism as 'the presentation of stories in a way that is intended to provoke public interest or excitement, at the expense of accuracy'. According to Arbaoui et al. (2020), violence is a sensational topic in and of itself. Here we see that this sensationalism is enforced in two interlinked ways. The first is the use of human interest stories and victim and witness accounts. Previous studies have shown that 'personalised exemplification exerts considerable (emotional) influence on viewers' processing of the news' (Arbaoui et al., 2020, p. 302). By including 'ordinary' people as witnesses, accidental passer-by's or victims, news, no matter how far away it took place, becomes not only much more concrete and tangible but also more personal for the reader. This makes them want to continue reading. According to Mazarr (1993), as we have seen, identifying the victims, the parties involved and the 'villain' is also a productive way of agenda-setting. Take this example from De Standaard (2022):

> *'The attack on Rutshuru was merciless, the rebels threw themselves on the civilians. I can say I am lucky that we were all able to escape: my wife, my seven children and I. But the situation in this camp is unliveable. We have nothing and the only thing I can do is beg for a little food during the day in the villages that are near. If the people give me some food, we are saved for a day. If the people don't give anything, we don't eat and we starve.'*

Victim accounts like this evoke feelings in the reader, making them feel like they are part of this story themselves. It appeals to emotions such as fear, sadness and anger, and can even shape public opinion.

This last element is especially relevant in war reporting, as it can help to create a common enemy and public outrage.

A second way of enhancing sensationalism is through storytelling. By moving away from the distant and formal style of reporting normally present in mainstream media, and moving towards a more engaging and dramatized form of storytelling, the journalist can grab the attention of the reader and entice them to continue reading. Important here is the attention to detail. Take, for instance, the first sentence of an Al Jazeera article on a suicide bomber in Pakistan: *'It is doubtful the minibus driver paid any attention to the inconspicuous woman standing by the roadside as he swung his vehicle into the entrance of Karachi's Chinese cultural centre on Tuesday'*. This reads like the first sentence of a book, rather than a news article. The same goes for an article in The Guardian on the conflict in the DRC: *'In the camps on the flanks of the Nyiragongo volcano in the Democratic Republic of Congo, they listen carefully. Not for warning of an eruption but to the dull thuds of distant mortar and artillery fire'*. One would think they are reading the start of a Stephen King thriller. Yet, it is an effective way to grasp readers' attention.

2. Gender bias in war reporting

2.1. Casualties and gendered consequences of war

2.1.1. Gender blindness, lack of gender specification and targeting citizens as a military strategy

Out of the 389 times that casualties were mentioned in the articles, they remained ungendered and anonymous 30 times. While this is only close to 8% of the cases, this anonymity is important to mention. It is, on the one hand, a way of protecting the identity of individuals who were a victim of violence or war, but, on the other hand, it also has a potential impact on gender visibility in war reporting. This anonymisation is often influenced by cultural, social and/or political factors, and may perpetuate gender biases or mask gender-specific experiences in situations of war. Because of the influence that news reporting has on public opinion and public agenda-setting, avoiding the gendering of casualties of conflict can lead to a misunderstanding of the impact that war has on different individuals, to an underreporting of gender-based violence or the marginalisation of specific gender groups. Omitting gender information may seem like a small thing, but it can lead to potential biases and consequences, such as the erasure of women's experiences, the reinforcement of gender stereotypes and the marginalisation of non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals.

Take for instance this paragraph from an article in The Guardian (2022) on human rights abuses in Afghanistan:

'Taliban authorities have presided over widespread human rights abuses since they took control of Afghanistan last August, the UN said, including 160 killings of former government officials and members of the security forces, and dozens of cases of torture, arbitrary arrests and inhumane punishments.'

Here, and in the rest of the article, the gender of the casualties, who have been subjected to torture, arbitrary arrests and inhumane punishments is not specified. Does this only concern men? Does this include gender-based violence? Omissions like this erase experiences of the casualties that are gender-based, including sexual violence and discrimination. Gender specification can help governments, NGOs and humanitarian actors to better address human rights violations.

Furthermore, targeting civilians as a military strategy came up 32 times across all three news sites. This also has gendered motivations and consequences. As laid out in the literature review, war is still primarily a masculine endeavour. Men go to war, women stay home to take care of the children and the household. This means that most civilians in times of conflict and war are women. Thus, when countries, militias or armies actively target civilians and civilian infrastructure, women and children are affected the most. It can lead to sexual violence, displacement or loss of livelihood. Yet, this remains unrecognised in war reporting on the three news sites. Sentences such as *'Mose highlighted that a number of attacks the team investigated had been carried out without distinguishing between civilians and combatants, including attacks with munitions in populated areas.'* neglect that those 'populated areas' are mostly populated by women and children while men are on the battlefield. This perpetuates the public perception that men constitute the majority of war's casualties.

2.1.2. Gendered implications of torture, gender-based and sexual violence

Torture as a war strategy is mentioned 24 times in the articles studied. 18 of those cases do not specify the type of torture or the gender of the people being tortured. Four talk about torture of women, one specifies that the person was male, and one talks about children. The ones that mention the gender of the person being tortured refer to mental abuse, being forced to eat human flesh and rape. In the past, traditional and popular conceptions of torture have centred on the anguish and misery inflicted on a person – typically a man – being held in state custody. The denial of protection from the many heinous kinds of severe pain and suffering intentionally inflicted on people in many circumstances – frequently on women and members of marginalised groups – as an assertion of power and control by the state or with its complicity is the result of viewing torture solely in this way.

An important form of torture is gender-based and/or sexual violence. In this study, this was coded separately from torture, and as such not included in the previously-mentioned 24 references, because it makes the different approaches towards the two when it comes to gender clearer. Gender-based and sexual violence was mentioned 45 times. In 23 of those cases, the gender of the aggressor was not

mentioned. In three cases, it was referred to as a taboo in the particular society under scrutiny. Victims of gender-based and sexual violence are identified as female 23 times. While rape not only happens to women, it is frequently applied in a way that emphasises the subordination and weakness of the victim. Just like female rape, male rape often gets unreported, because of various reasons. Gender clarification is also important in other cases, such as pregnant women and women of childbearing age who might get pregnant due to sexual violence. The different aspects of identity, such as gender, age and ethnicity, often change the severity and kind of torture. Therefore, mentioning such details in war reporting is important to create a correct image in society of the atrocities being committed. Highlighting or obscuring gender-based violence in war reporting can also influence the survivors, communities and government response, and the extent to which they consider the topic a taboo. Furthermore, mentioning the gender of the perpetrator, which is not often done in the articles studied, can be important for holding those responsible accountable and creating policy frameworks in times of war. As such, gender is very much implicated in the framing and narratives surrounding torture and sexual violence in war reporting.

2.1.3. Change of gender dynamics in times of war

As mentioned in the literature review, war affects gender dynamics and power relations. It not only reaffirms and strengthens patriarchal notions of gender, but also shifts traditional gender roles and expectations. War impacts, inter alia, the division of labour, family structures and societal norms. Based on the analysis, four ways can be identified in which gender dynamics change during times of conflict or war according to war reporting.

Firstly, not all men want to become soldiers. This was found eight times in articles of De Standaard. This change in gender dynamics is explained on religious, moral and practical grounds, rather than as an inherent characteristic of that person. One man describes the willingness of other men as 'bloodlust' that he never understood. While he already gets nervous when he gets into a fight with someone, he describes his friends as being obsessed with weapons, war and violence since an early age. Another man says that he sometimes feels ashamed that he didn't stay in Ukraine like the others, but that he had to leave so that his wife would too. The Guardian further reports from a refugee camp that you predominantly see women, but that here and there you see men. The way that is being reported on this makes it kind of seem like an anomaly. They have to explain the reason why they are not fighting and differentiate themselves from other men. So, on the one hand, reporting on men refusing to fight changes gender traditions, yet the way that De Standaard and The Guardian report on it makes these men seem less masculine and an abnormality.

Secondly, women take on roles as protestors and activists, resisting war and conflict. While, according to the patriarchal paradigm of war, women are usually portrayed as passive citizens,

undergoing the war until their husbands return from the battlefield, here women step up to express their discontent with the war or conflict. In the articles analysed, the protests of women are usually framed as something that is part of a bigger community or something that is a reaction to something bigger that happened to a community or a person they were close to. In an article from Al Jazeera (2022), one woman is protesting her government and sending medical supplies to Ukraine and explains this protest as follows: *'I decided to do it because I understand what is happening in Ukraine because of Georgia's history. I remember the problems from 2008 – I was a doctor in one of the hospitals in Tbilisi, it was my job to care for the wounded.'* In The Guardian (2022), the protest of a single woman against gendered dress codes led to the protest of hundreds more women: *'Iran has been gripped by protests since the death in custody on 16 September of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian of Kurdish origin who had been arrested three days earlier for allegedly breaching the Islamic dress code for women.'* No mention is made of the impact of these women's protests on social change or power dynamics.

Thirdly, women are featured as aggressors and instigators of violence. According to the patriarchal paradigm, aggression is a male feature and in patriarchal societies it is bred into men from birth, as has been described in the literature review. There are 16 references to female aggression in the articles, and most refer to bombings carried out by women. In an article by Al Jazeera (2022), a female suicide bomber is considered to be a turning point in the conflict that illustrates the grimness of the group under which the attack is carried out:

> *'The arrival of a female suicide bomber has alarmed Pakistan's security analysts, who say the attack demonstrates the 'remorseless radicalisation' of the separatists waging a bloody rebellion for more than 20 years.'*

There is also a lot of emphasis on how the woman had a husband, a family, was highly educated and came from a wealthy family. This background is not given for male aggressors. It is a way for the news site to appeal to the reader's emotions, cater to the characteristics that are usually associated with women and exploit them to elicit emotions of shock and rage.

Fourthly, as we have seen, war leads to an increase in female-headed households. Husbands leave and women are expected to take over the household. This means they also take up traditionally male roles, such as providing food, while at the same time continuing their feminine role of taking care of the children and the elderly. When the husband dies in the war, the woman becomes the new head of the family. This, however, is only found once in all the articles, and it is in an article completely dedicated to women. The reference, however, re-establishes the dependency of women on men: *'She says she has spoken to many women who feel resentful that they have had to play the roles of both mother and father to their children, while their husbands are away at war.'*

2.2. Stereotypical gender representations

2.2.1. The male sacrifice narrative: men as family leaders and saviours

Becoming a soldier and going to the battlefield is often described as a sacrifice: you don't know whether you will survive, but you are willing to give up your life for a specific goal. War reporting perpetuates this idea. Because of the patriarchal stereotypes that men are brave, strong, leaders, assertive…, sacrifice is always attributed to men. There are two reasons why men have to fight and sacrifice themselves: they have to protect their families and/or they have to save the 'weaker' ones in society. In De Standaard (2022) a (male) source talks about why the men are so eager to go to war: *'They know what they are fighting for. Nobody wants to live under Russia. They want to live in a free and democratic country. They fight for their children'.* When the father figure in the family is absent, it is the son that takes up the responsibilities of 'the protector': *'Armed with a pistol, Jagjit had strict instruction to shoot his sisters and then himself if they were met with danger'* (Al Jazeera, 2022). Those not fighting, due to age or illness, remain seen as protectors, willing to sacrifice themselves at any given moment: *'His dog, a though Staffordshire bullterrier, began to bark uncontrollably, as Kostomolov led his terrified wife under the stairs for shelter before heading out to help people injured in the blast'* (Al Jazeera).

2.2.2. The female elite

If we look at the sources that are included in the articles, there is one major thing that is notable. There are only 68 references to female elite sources, while there are 388 references to male elite sources. The number of civilian male and female sources and women are slightly more anonymised (see table). This means that in total men are considered to be more relevant sources. The lack of female elite sources can, on the one hand, be explained by the fact that, due to the patriarchal system, there are fewer women in leadership positions. This means there are fewer sources to choose from for journalists. On the other hand, it is also a consequence of the omission of female elite sources because they are considered less credible and less experienced, especially concerning war.

	A : Female source	B : Male source
1 : Elite source	68	388
2 : Civilian source	35	35
3 : Anonymous source	8	6

Table 2 Female and male sources

As we have seen, the imagery of the mourning woman, wife or mother is a reoccurring element in war reporting, especially because it evokes feelings of sadness, pity or hatred towards the 'other' and as such can be utilised to create public support for the war (Boller, 2016; Halonen, 1996; Harp et al.,

2011; Lemish, 2005; Orgeret, 2016; Parikka, 2020; Pankov et al., 2011). This study confirms that this is still dominant in war reporting, both on a textual and visual level.

In 9 of the 69 cases, the decision or comment of the female elite person is either questioned or undermined.

> *'Putin said the west, including Britain's Liz Truss, had engaged in 'nuclear blackmail' against Russia and rejected claims that Russian forces were attacking the Zaporizhzia nuclear power plant – located in territory controlled by Russia in Southern Ukraine.'*

This paragraph from The Guardian (2022) is a paraphrasing of something Putin said. However, there is no follow-up on this in the rest of the article. Was Putin right in undermining Truss' statements? Or were Truss' statements correct? By not actively rejecting this statement from Putin, The Guardian is indirectly undermining Truss' statements as well. The statement *'Those are huge numbers, but were Von der Leyen's numbers even correct? '* (De Standaard, 2022), on the other hand, directly questions Ursula Von der Leyen's credibility. It is, of course, always needed to fact-check statements, even if they come from the so-called 'elite'. Yet, this is not done in any of the articles for male elite figures making statements on numbers, amounts or events. This is the result of gender stereotypes and the patriarchal paradigm of war, which puts women in the private sphere, incompetent of making strategic decisions or statements on war. This also includes framing their achievements as exceptions rather than the norm.

2.2.3. Emphasis on female emotions, women as mothers and comments on women's appearance

In nearly all articles where a women's voice is featured, there is a disproportionate emphasis on women's emotions, particularly in their roles as victims or survivors of conflict. The adjectives used in the human interest stories of women primarily relate to feelings of passivity and sadness, such as grief, distress, peaceful, distraught, quiet, gentle, despondent, empathic… When it comes to men, adjectives are much more rational and serious, such as concerned, ashamed, brave, aggressive, combative, confident and revengeful. This stereotypical reporting on women's emotions has potential consequences for the perpetuation of gender stereotypes, the marginalisation of women's agency and the devaluation of their experiences as active participants in conflict situations.

Another notable element in the framing of women in war reporting is the emphasis on women's appearance and private surroundings. This includes in particular an emphasis on women's age, descriptions of physical attributes, clothing choices and living environment. This is much less apparent when it comes to the description of men. For instance

> *'The light turns on. Ira is delighted. Only now I can see what she looks like. She has a proud face with sharp contours. Her eyebrows are neatly trimmed. Only her hands betray that she knows how to handle things.'* (De Standaard, 2022)

It should be noted that this is only the case for non-elite female sources. When it comes to non-elite male sources, usually not a lot of background is given. If there is, it concerns his occupation (*'Mohammad Amir Rana, an Islamabad-based security analyst, said the Baloch rebellion increasingly resembled Peru's Shining Path […].'* (Al Jazeera, 2022)) or his age *('"I fear for the lives of my students," the 53-year-old principal, who confronted the settlers during the attack, told Al Jazeera.'* (2022)). By reducing women to their appearance, their contributions and experiences are once again overshadowed, reinforcing gender inequalities and objectifying them in the public eye. Moreover, the emphasis on age is often exploited to emphasise their vulnerability or romanticise youthful heroism, disregarding the diverse experiences and perspectives of women across different age groups. Furthermore, the emphasis on the living environment of women, such as focusing on the house they live in, once again confines women to the private sphere.

Lastly, women's role in society is often limited to their role as mothers. Their goal during war or armed conflict is to take care of the children, and whatever they do, they do for their children. Even if it is totally unrelated to the rest of the article, motherhood is emphasised: *'On March 11, Olesya Masanovec, a sociable 40-year-old manicurist and devoted mother, stepped out of her family's charming singlestorey home onto Yablunska (Apple Tree) Street'* (Al Jazeera, 2022). This narrow focus leads to an overshadowing of women's diverse roles in experiences in conflict shadows. While motherhood undoubtedly plays a significant role in conflict and war, limiting the portrayal of women in war zones primarily to their maternal role perpetuates stereotypes and reinforces gender norms. Moreover, by exclusively highlighting the maternal aspect, it disregards the experiences of women who may not be mothers and reinforces the patriarchal notions that women's main role is to ensure offspring.

2.2.4. Assumption of soldiers as male

As has been thoroughly described in the literature review, the assumption of soldiers as male in war reporting stems from several factors that are deeply rooted in our patriarchal societal norms and historical contexts. This includes the male domination of military institutions, the barriers women face in accessing combat roles, the patriarchal gender roles and stereotypes that associate masculinity with physical strength, aggression and heroism and femininity with weakness and emotionality. These societal expectations create a biased lens through which war reporting is framed, and this analysis shows that this is also perpetuated in the three media sites under study.

Across all articles, there are 77 references to soldiers as men/male, 40 as female and 11 remain ungendered. However, the latter is usually used in combination with references to gender-based and sexual violence, and since we know that the majority of these cases are perpetuated by men, one can assume that most of these ungendered soldiers are male too (e.g. *'Speaking at the session, SOFEPADI's President Julienne Lusenge shared the story of a Congolese woman who was kidnapped twice by fighters, repeatedly raped and forced to cook and eat human flesh.'* (Al Jazeera, 2022)). Other times, the soldiers remain ungendered when the article is talking about casualties (e.g. *'In addition to five deaths, two soldiers were injured in the fighting, Singh said.'* (Al Jazeera, 2022)). Besides this, soldiers are often generalised as being all male or it is assumed that the soldiers are male: *'We are distraught. The bloodshed needs to stop. It are our boys that are dying, said Olga Odoeva […]'* (De Standaard, 2022).

The impact of these assumptions and generalisations is twofold. Firstly, it perpetuates the invisibility and underrepresentation of women in war reporting. By predominantly focusing on male soldiers, the news sites fail to capture the diverse perspectives, challenges and accomplishments of women serving in the military. This not only reinforces gender stereotypes but also hinders progress towards gender equality in the armed forces. Secondly, it limits the public's understanding of the multifaceted nature of conflict and the role women play in them. While women are still a minority in most military forces around the world, actively seeking out their voices and experiences can lead to more accurate war reporting.

2.3. Gendered imagery and representation: the foregrounding of men and symbolic annihilation of women

Qualitative content analysis cannot only be used to study written texts but also imagery. Here, this refers to the pictures that accompany articles. Three trends can be identified across the news sites that contribute to the symbolic annihilation of women in the imagery of war reporting.

Firstly, there is a foregrounding of men in pictures. In 93 pictures, a single man or multiple men take the foreground, usually in the form of a close-up. For women, this is 53 times. While the difference might not seem that big, there are a few elements that make the times when women are foregrounded problematic. Firstly, in 20 cases, the woman is not the only one in the foreground but is accompanied by a man or multiple men. Secondly, in 26 of the cases, the woman is anonymous and only in 7 cases she is a famous or elite person. This is in comparison with 18 and 26 for men respectively. Thirdly, women are accompanied by children in nine cases, men only in three.

The second way the images lead to the symbolic annihilation of women is through the strong presence of soldiers in pictures. There are 57 pictures including soldiers, in 41 of those the soldier depicted is a man and is foregrounded. In seven pictures, the soldiers is a woman and is foregrounded, in the

remaining cases it is impossible to identify the gender of the soldier. This is a logical consequence of the fact that military combat roles have traditionally been dominated by men, resulting in a larger presence of male soldiers in conflict zones. It is thus easier for photographers to take pictures of male soldiers than of female soldiers.

The third observation is the portrayal of women engaging in traditionally female behaviour. As mentioned before, in nine pictures women are portrayed with children. In six cases, they are seen crying or mourning, in comparison to three times for men. In seven pictures, a woman is engaging in what is traditionally considered to be typical female behaviour, such as hanging out the laundry to dry, taking care of children, teaching and preparing food.

Image 1 A woman preparing food while looking at a soldier passing by

Image 2 A woman hanging out the laundry next to a destroyed house

The foregrounding of men in war reporting imagery, the neglect of portraying women in power, the strong presence of male soldiers and the portrayal of women engaging in traditionally female behaviour all contribute to the symbolic annihilation of women in the imagery of war reporting. There is an omission of women in media imagery, which perpetuates the idea that women do not belong in public life and the omission of women in the public sphere. It stems from a combination of factors that are influenced by the patriarchal paradigm of war, including the larger presence of men in conflict zones, the portrayal of men as central figures in combat and military decision-making positions and the societal expectations of masculinity that have made men the default representation in war reporting imagery. The selection and framing of pictures in war reporting are influenced by these consequences of patriarchy and have significant consequences for the representation of women. It reinforces the idea that women are less relevant or active in conflict zones, it neglects women's diverse roles as combatants, aid workers, journalists and civilians and it perpetuates the gender gap in public perception and understanding of conflict.

3. Towards Peace Journalism or Human Rights Journalism?

As we have seen, the reporting on war by Al Jazeera, De Standaard and The Guardian shows a lot of characteristics of traditional war reporting. In this part, we are going to compare the elements of War Journalism with those of Peace Journalism as defined by Galtung and the element of Human Wrongs

Journalism with those of Human Rights Journalism as defined by Shaw, to see which one is dominant or whether they balance each other out.

3.1. Peace Journalism or War Journalism?

Can we still talk about war journalism or does peace journalism fit better? Let us look at the four dichotomies we have identified in the literature review. Surprisingly, the articles were more people-oriented than elite-oriented. While most sources are elite, more attention is paid to people when it comes to suffering, resistance and the consequences of war, for instance *'The civilians of Kherson did not give in easily. On the 5th of March they came in thousands to the central Svoboda square to scream 'Kherson is Ukrainian', and they continued to resist in the days and weeks after that'* (De Standaard, 2022). Especially Al Jazeera is characterised by its stories of 'the people', attributing almost double the amount of space to them than to elite voices. In De Standaard and The Guardian, stories of 'ordinary' people are more concentrated in single articles (i.e. less spread out) focusing on specific stories (e.g. *'Better a fallen Buryat than a Russian with blue eyes' (De Standaard, 2022), 'The Ukrainians teaching in a war zone: bombed out schools, evacuations and board games' (The Guardian, 2022)*). However, this does not apply to all parties of the conflict, as is a requirement according to Galtung. For instance, in coverage of the war in Ukraine, it is predominantly Ukrainians that are featured.

When it comes to propaganda versus truth, war reporting is still very much propagandist. As we have seen, in WJ propaganda-oriented means that the news supports dichotomies of us versus them, winners versus losers, and good versus bad and thereby justifies violent responses. For instance: *'He added other regions will likely continue to be targeted by Russian air and missile attacks to cause military and economic damage – and, frankly, to cause terror, including against cities like Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, and Lviv'* (Al Jazeera, 2022). Yet, the news sites also contribute to uncovering lies and false information, an important part of maintaining their perceived objectivity: *'The problem with Putin is that no one any longer gives credence to his words. For months he has been stringing along international leaders, who are feverishly increasing the pace of their shuttle diplomacy. One day he seemed to agree with their propositions, the next he was discontent again. Few can predict what his next step will be'* (De Standaard, 2022) or *'Russia has escalated its rhetoric in recent weeks by claiming without evidence that Ukraine was preparing to detonate a low-yield radioactive device on its own territory, leading Kyiv and other western observers to consider that Putin may be preparing a 'false flag' attack of its own'* (The Guardian, 2022).

Next, the three news sites are more violence-oriented than peace-oriented. This is something that already became apparent during the preliminary coding round. Detailed descriptions of the violence are warp and weft, for instance *'The Russian army has chosen for heavy bombing on big cities. On*

Monday, Kharkov, the country's second biggest city close to the Russian border, was bombarded with rockets. The shelling continued yesterday' (De Standaard, 2022). As described above, this is a process of sensationalism that ensures that the reader will continue reading. However, it is also a way to justify violence to get to peace. In the case of The Guardian and De Standaard, two Western-based news sites, this is especially apparent when it concerns violence committed by allies of the West (*'That is why the government in Kyiv is pushing for the supply of even heavier weapons'* (De Standaard, 2022)). Peace efforts are mentioned, but sparely and specifically those taking place between official instances. None of the news articles presents innovative strategies for resolving disputes, advancing development and maintaining peace, nor do they pay attention to peace efforts behind the scenes, as is needed for PJ according to Shaw et al. (2012).

Lastly, war reporting is more solution-oriented than victory-oriented, which stands in contrast with the previously-mentioned focus on violence. Being solution-oriented means giving the context of the conflict, rather than merely covering the violence that is being committed. It means not talking about winners or losers, but about the historical and social context of the conflict so that it can be resolved as efficiently as possible. This is the most apparent in Al Jazeera (e.g. *'CODECO is one of the several armed groups that have long been fighting over land and resources in the DRC's mineral-rich east, a conflict that has killed thousands and displaced millions over the past decade.'*), followed by De Standaard (e.g. *'The oil in the bottom of Lake Albert would also provoke the necessary jealousy in Rwanda. In February, Uganda signed a $10 billion development contract with TotalEnergies. In addition, Uganda began large-scale road works in eastern Congo to improve the transportation of raw materials, which could increase volume. One of these roads runs right next to the Rwandan border.'*). The Guardian is the only news site that focuses more on victory than on solutions, with sentences such as *'When we give [Ukraine] what they need, they win. If we don't, it's going to be a long and protracted war'* and *'When asked about the chances of Ukraine being able to repel the Russian assault, 70% said they believed it was possible.'*

In short, the war reporting engaged in by these three news sites cannot be purely described as WJ, nor is it purely PJ. It sits somewhere in between and shows elements of both. Al Jazeera is the one leaning the most towards PJ, while The Guardian leans the most towards WJ. Being people-oriented and solution-oriented is engaged in the most when it comes to peace journalism. This can be explained by the fact that violence and propaganda are two important elements of sensationalism and commercialisation. They form two ways in which newspapers try to attract readers and entice them to continue reading. All three news sites are mainstream and commercial, meaning they pay a lot of attention to news values in order to make profit. This could explain their hesitance to become more

peace -and truth-oriented.

3.2. Human Rights Journalism or Human Wrongs Journalism?

Since these articles show some signs of leaning towards Peace Journalism, does this translate into a stronger focus on human rights as well or does HWJ still dominate? This question will be answered by looking at the different elements that differentiate PJ from HRJ and whether or not (and to what extent) they are present in our news articles.

Firstly, HRJ is characterised by a triple-win approach, which means that everyone wins, not solely the parties to the conflict. This means that also the most vulnerable become protected and structural violence is emanated. This approach, however, is never found in our articles. The assumption is that by eliminating the violence and ending the conflict, everyone will benefit. This partial solution approach is typical for HWJ and focuses solely on fulfilling the current needs of the dominant groups, without taking into account the long-term solutions that will also fulfil the needs of the most vulnerable and minority groups. Especially De Standaard pursues this approach, take for instance the following paragraph:

> *'The whole of Ethiopia has benefited from this, but no state has made a greater leap forward than Tigray, which represents only seven percent of the population. This aroused resentment, especially among the Amharic elite who had ruled Ethiopia during the empire, and among the Oromo, who, as the largest population group, feel eternally marginalised.'* (2022)

Secondly, as we have seen concerning PJ, war reporting is propagandist. However, in HRJ, propagandist retains a slightly different meaning, referring to arguments that justify why certain groups have reasons to commit human rights violations. Oftentimes, the justification is revenge for human rights violations that were committed earlier. While this is present, with Al Jazeera dominating the charts (*'Iran, which backs Islamic Jihad, said Israel will pay a heavy price for the latest attacks'*(2022)), a surprisingly big element of the articles is the extent to which they expose human rights violations and thereby fulfil their watchdog function. This is an essential element of HRJ. With 32 mentions of human rights violations, The Guardian takes the lead (*'Taliban authorities have presided over widespread human rights abuses since they took control of Afghanistan last August, the UN said, including 160 killings of former government officials and members of security forces, and dozen cases of torture, arbitrary arrests and inhumane punishments.'* (2022)), closely followed by Al Jazeera with 30 mentions (*'One of the places where Guseinova was held was Isolvatsia, a concentration camp in Donetsk where thousands of people have allegedly been tortured since 2014.'* (2022)). De Standaard lags behind with only 18 mentions (*'Sexual violence, recruiting child soldiers and looting are warp and weft. 400.000 people fled and ended up in camps, where there is hardly*

any food or medical help.' 2022)). This means that there are 80 mentions of human rights violations spread over 105 articles.

Thirdly, all three news sites strongly fulfil the criteria of deconstructing events to provide a more thorough understanding of the conflict, its problems and its causes. War reporting is thus to a certain level diagnostic and holistic. Providing context like this is a big part of giving people a more thorough analysis of the conflict so that they can form their own opinions and engage in educated discussions. Here, Al Jazeera performs the strongest, for instance in an article on the rebel movements in Pakistan, wherein it describes how the country is divided, where the problems lay and what the consequences are. De Standaard, as well, tends to provide a certain level of context in its articles, while The Guardian provides the least context. However, while identifying problems, causes and consequences, the news sites barely provide possible solutions to the problems and thereby are non-interventionist. While, as was discussed earlier, it is not 'the job of the journalist to come up with specific peace suggestions in their reporting' (Von der Lippe and Ottosen, 2016, p. 15), providing the right information and possible options for peace is important to ensure that the public can come up with the most viable solution.

Fourthly, the reporting on war is very competition-oriented, which relates to the element of sensationalism: the conflict or war is reported in a way that attracts readers and increases profits. But, while it is usually direct violence that attracts the reader's attention because it is more tangible, contradictory, Al Jazeera focuses very strongly on indirect structural violence, such as human trafficking, poverty, economic consequences, trauma and famine. For instance: *'Although the bombs have stopped falling, seven years of brutal conflict have taken a devastating toll on an already impoverished country and led to what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis.'* (2022). This adds to HRJ's goal to provide more context to the reader.

Fifthly, while it was already said that war reporting by all three news sites is more violence-oriented than peace-oriented, when they do mention peace, negative peace dominates. To revise, negative peace is the absence of direct violence, while positive peace is peace on all levels that addresses the underlying causes and ensures peace for all societal groups. In most articles, negative peace is seen as the ultimate end goal, rather than positive peace. The Guardian (2022) touches slightly upon positive peace a few times, for instance in an article on peace deals in Colombia: *'Yet he also said it could mark an important change in strategy for a country that has historically addressed the armed conflict with militarisation as opposed to addressing root causes of conflict such as poverty and lack of opportunity.'* But overall, negative peace dominates.

Lastly, there are a few criteria that none of the news sites fulfil to be considered HRJ: focus on the achievement of second-generation rights by calling for a more proactive role of the media in humanitarian interventions, a bias towards minority voices and challenging the status quo. A focus on prevention to prevent escalation is only minimally present in some articles of The Guardian (e.g. *'The violence will undermine slim hopes of mitigating a growing humanitarian crisis in the region and averting a durable regional proxy conflict that analysts and diplomats fear could bring chaos to central Africa'* (2022)).

In short, none of the news sites fulfil enough criteria to be considered HRJ. Taking everything into consideration, Al Jazeera seems to be the closest to reaching a basic level of HRJ, by exposing human rights violations, providing the context of conflicts and diagnosing the problems and by focusing not solely on direct violence but also indirect structural violence. Yet, the coverage that fulfils this criterion remains limited in comparison to the total coverage. While all three news sites lean to some extent away from WJ towards PJ, the human rights element is still lacking and HWJ still has the upper hand.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research has provided a comprehensive analysis of war reporting in The Guardian, De Standaard, and Al Jazeera, focusing on the presence of gender bias and the perpetuation of patriarchal norms within these media outlets. By employing qualitative content analysis, I have examined the characteristics of war reporting and explored the representation of women in conflict. Additionally, I have analysed the extent to which elements of Peace Journalism and Human Rights Journalism are present in the war reporting of these outlets. The study had three objectives: identifying general characteristics of war reporting in the three news outlets and comparing them, examining gender bias and the presence of the patriarchal paradigm in reporting on conflict and inspecting which, if any, elements of Peace Journalism and Human Rights Journalism are already present.

Related to the first objective, four general characteristics can be identified. The first one, geographical diversity, can be seen in all three news outlets. However, they also differ slightly in this aspect. Al Jazeera shows the biggest diversity, while The Guardian is the only outlet to include articles on conflict in Latin America. De Standaard is very much influenced by its country's history, with a strong focus on the previously colonised DRC. The geographical diversity in coverage, however, is not translated into diversity in sources. This leads to the second general characteristic: Eurocentrism. Across all three news outlets, Europe is taken as a baseline against which other countries are

compared. Even if Europe is not involved in the conflict, there is nearly always a European source that gives their opinion on the conflict.

The third general characteristic is adherence to the hierarchy of credibility. There are 497 elite sources referenced, in comparison to 141 non-elites. Relying heavily on official sources and established authorities may lead to a narrative that aligns with the perspectives of those in power, potentially neglecting alternative viewpoints and the experiences of marginalised communities affected by the conflict. Lastly, there is sensationalism in war reporting. Violence in itself is a topic that can be considered sensational, but there are two ways by which war reporters ensure readership and elicit emotions. The first one is the inclusion of human interest stories and victim and witness accounts. The second strategy is storytelling which is engaging and dramatic. This makes war and armed conflict more concrete, tangible and personal for the reader, evoking feelings that can shape public opinion and create a common enemy and public outrage.

The second objective, examining gender bias and patriarchal elements in war reporting, was the main focus of this study. The analysis of casualties and gendered consequences of war has revealed several issues. Firstly, gender blindness within war reporting fails to recognize the specific vulnerabilities faced by women as citizens. Furthermore, the coverage of torture, gender-based and sexual violence often neglects to mention the gender of the aggressor or clarify the gender of the victims, perpetuating a skewed narrative. The changing gender dynamics, such as men resisting becoming soldiers and women assuming roles as protestors, activists and aggressors, are often trivialised, overlooked or framed within a broader community context.

The thesis also highlighted the presence of stereotypical gender representations in war reporting. The male sacrifice narrative reinforces men as family leaders and saviours, while female elites are underrepresented and trivialized. Emphasis on typical female emotions, the portrayal of women primarily as mothers, and comments on women's appearance further contribute to the gender bias in reporting. Additionally, the assumption that soldiers are predominantly male further marginalizes the experiences and contributions of women in conflict situations. I explored gender bias not only in written text but also in images. The foregrounding of men and the strong presence of male soldiers overshadows the experiences and agency of women in war reporting. Women engaging in traditionally female behaviour are often overrepresented in pictures. This leads to a symbolic annihilation of women whereby women are not only ignored but also trivialised, underestimated and denigrated.

In short, the findings of this research indicate that gender bias and the patriarchal paradigm are still evident in war reporting, although to varying degrees across the selected news outlets, with Al Jazeera

being the least biased. The portrayal of women reinforces traditional gender roles, depicting them as victims or secondary characters overshadowed by men. Their agency, experiences, and contributions in conflict zones are frequently marginalized or overlooked. Women's voices, when included, are repeatedly utilized to bolster the conventional patriarchal discourse surrounding war or serve strategic, patriotic, or elitist agendas. When women display non-traditional behaviours, such as actively opposing war through peace movements, they become increasingly challenging to accommodate within the media's framework. Consequently, if not completely disregarded, their actions are reframed to conform to journalistic criteria and preconceived notions of war. Given that a majority of war reporters are still men, this reframing or stereotyping process occurs from a male perspective, perpetuating the conventional belief that men selflessly sacrifice on the battlefield while women mourn at home or assume passive roles.

However, it is worth noting that some positive developments have been observed in the inclusion of alternative perspectives and narratives. Elements of Peace Journalism and Human Rights Journalism have surfaced in the war reporting of the analysed news outlets, albeit to a limited extent. All three news outlets pay attention to being people-oriented, even though most sources are still elitist. De Standaard and Al Jazeera are characterised by articles that provide a lot of context on conflicts and wars, and thereby move away from being victory-oriented, in comparison to The Guardian. When it comes to HRJ, the characteristics of exposing human rights violations, deconstructing events and paying attention to indirect structural violence are reoccurring. Especially Al Jazeera, the only non-Western news outlet, fulfils some criteria of both PJ and HRJ. This suggests a potential shift toward more nuanced and ethical reporting, with an emphasis on nonviolent solutions, accountability, and amplifying marginalized voices. Yet, the integration of PJ and HRJ principles could still be enhanced to offer more comprehensive and ethical coverage of conflicts.

This research has contributed to the existing body of literature by offering a comparative analysis of war reporting in Western and non-Western news outlets and providing insights into the presence of gender bias and the perpetuation of patriarchal norms. It also highlights the potential for integrating elements of Peace Journalism and Human Rights Journalism into war reporting. Ultimately, this research serves as a foundation for future studies in understanding and transforming the landscape of war reporting, to promote more equitable, diverse, and ethically responsible journalism in the context of conflict. The findings of this research can inform future efforts to promote gender equality, human rights and more balanced reporting in the context of war.

However, like any research, this study also has its limitations, which may impact the findings and conclusions. Firstly, the analysis is based on a qualitative content analysis, which means, as described in the methodology, that there is some level of subjectivity. This is enhanced by the fact that I am the

sole coder. Different researchers may interpret the same content differently, and biases or preconceived notions may influence the analysis. Secondly, the analysis focuses on a specific set of codes derived from the QCA, which may not capture the entire spectrum of gender bias in war reporting. Other relevant dimensions or codes may exist that were not included in the analysis. Additionally, the research is limited by the availability and selection of the war reporting sources used, which may not represent the full diversity of war reporting practices globally. Furthermore, while the analysis explores the representation of gender in war reporting, it may not fully capture the complex interplay of intersecting factors such as race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality, which can also influence gender biases. Lastly, the research is part of a master's thesis, which means that I was limited in resources and time. This means, for instance, that, if I would have had more time and resources, the results might have been different, as I would have had the ability to analyse more in-depth.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, there are several promising avenues for future research on gender bias in war reporting. Firstly, quantitative content analysis can complement qualitative analysis by providing statistical insights into the prevalence and patterns of gender bias in war reporting. By employing large-scale data analysis and survey methodologies, future researchers can identify broader trends and examine the impact of gender bias on public perceptions and policy-making. Additionally, comparative studies across different regions and conflicts can provide insights into the cultural, societal, and contextual factors that shape gender biases in war reporting, since this research was limited to only two Western and one non-Western news outlets. Furthermore, exploring the perspectives and experiences of journalists, editors, and newsroom decision-makers can shed light on the underlying factors and mechanisms that contribute to gender bias in the production and dissemination of war reporting. Lastly, incorporating intersectional approaches in future research can uncover how multiple dimensions of identity intersect with gender, and how these intersections shape the representation and experiences of individuals in conflict situations. Interesting would be, for instance, to study the intersection of race and gender more in-depth, especially comparing Western and non-Western portrayals. By addressing these avenues, future research can further advance our understanding of gender bias in war reporting and contribute to efforts for more inclusive and equitable media representations, with a focus on the promotion and preservation of human rights.

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Global Campus Europe

ANNEX

ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNESCO Chair on Education for Human Rights, Democracy and Peace, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

1. List of sampled articles

The Guardian – search query 'war'

N°	Title of the article	Publication data	URL
1	Russia-Ukraine war latest: what we know on day 184 of the invasion	26/08/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/26/russia-ukraine-war-latest-what-we-know-on-day-184-of-the-invasion
2	Russia-Ukraine war: Zelenskiy visits Bakhmut as Putin admits situation in parts of Ukraine 'extremely difficult' – as it happened	20/12/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/dec/20/russia-ukraine-war-live-putin-says-situation-in-illegally-annexed-parts-of-ukraine-extremely-difficult
3	Russia-Ukraine war 'about to enter new phase as Russia forces gather in the south, UK intelligence warns	06/08/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/aug/06/russia-ukraine-war-live-news-latest-updates-putin-zelenskiy
4	Russia-Ukraine war at a glance: what we know on day 276 of the invasion	26/11/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/26/russia-ukraine-war-at-a-glance-what-we-know-on-day-276-of-the-invasion
5	Would Lukashenko throw Belarus into a war Russia is losing?	12/10/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/12/alexander-lukashenko-belarus-russia-ukraine-war-putin
6	Russia-Ukraine war at a glance: what we know on day 297 of the invasion	17/12/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/17/russia-ukraine-war-at-a-glance-what-we-know-on-day-297-of-the-invasion
7	Russia-Ukraine war: no need to evacuate Kyiv, says Ukraine PM, as country rules out peace talks with Moscow	08/11/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/nov/08/russia-ukraine-war-live-news-us-communications-channels-kremlin-reports-ukraine-prepares-battle-kherson-streets
8	Russia-Ukraine war: Russia 'pulls back forces from opposite Kherson'	01/12/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/dec/01/russia-ukraine-war-live-us-hands-raytheon-12bn-ukraine-missile-systems-contract-6-million-without-power-as-winter-begins
9	Russia-Ukraine war: what we know on day 165 of the invasion	07/08/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/07/russia-ukraine-war-what-we-know-on-day-165-of-the-invasion
10	'We have to prepare': Tigray's neighbours on war footing as peace remains elusive	02/02/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/feb/02/tigray-neighbours-on-war-footing-as-ethiopia-peace-remains-elusive

11	The revenge of history in Ukraine: year of war has shaken up the world order	26/12/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/26/ukraine-war-revenge-of-history-how-geopolitics-shaping-conflict
12	George W Bush accidentally admits Iraq war was 'unjustified and brutal' in gaffe	19/05/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/may/19/george-bush-iraq-ukraine-speech
13	Russia-Ukraine war: what we now on day 166 of the invasion	08/08/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/08/russia-ukraine-war-what-we-know-on-day-166-of-the-invasion
14	'I don't see justice in this war': Russian soldier exposes rot at core of Ukraine invasion	17/08/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/17/i-dont-see-justice-in-this-war-russian-soldier-exposes-rot-at-core-of-ukraine-invasion
15	Russia-Ukraine war live: Putin rails against 'west' in latest speech; Kyiv faces longer and stricter blackouts after attacks	27/10/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/oct/27/russia-ukraine-war-live-news-kyiv-region-and-zaporizhzhia-hit-by-fresh-strikes-local-officials-say
16	EU calls for war crimes tribunal after mass graves found in Ukraine	17/09/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/17/eu-calls-for-war-crimes-tribunal-after-mass-graves-found-in-ukraine
17	Russia has committed war crimes in Ukraine, UN investigators	23/09/2023	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/23/russia-has-committed-war-crimes-in-ukraine-say-un-investigators
18	'People are turning off': Muscovites put the war aside and enjoy summer	30/07/2023	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/30/people-are-turning-off-muscovites-put-the-war-aside-and-enjoy-summer

The Guardian – search query 'armed conflict'

N°	Title	Publication date	URL
19	Victory in court for indigenous women raped during Guatemala's civil war	25/01/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/25/guatemala-victory-in-court-for-indigenous-women-raped-during-civil-war
20	'I saw a rocket hit an orphanage': the Ukrainians recording possible war crimes	17/03/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/17/i-saw-a-rocket-hit-an-orphanage-the-ukrainians-recording-possible-war-crimes
21	Russian mercenaries accused of civilian massacre in Mali	01/11/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/01/russian-mercenaries-accused-of-civilian-massacre-in-mali

22	The Ukrainians teaching in a war zone: bombed-out schools, evacuations and board games	17/04/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/16/ukraine-invasion-teachers-schools
23	Mapping Iran's unrest: how Masha Amini's death led to nationwide protests	31/10/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2022/oct/31/mapping-irans-unrest-how-mahsa-aminis-death-led-to-nationwide-protests
24	Russian mercenaries and Mali army accused of killing 300 civilians	05/04/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/05/russian-mercenaries-and-mali-army-accused-of-killing-300-civilians
25	Myanmar military air strike kilss 60 people at concert, says Kachin separatist group	24/10/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/24/myanmar-military-air-strike-kills-dozens-at-concert-says-kachin-separatist-group
26	Three people killed and at least four injured in attack in Israeli town of Elad	06/05/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/05/three-people-killed-and-at-least-four-injured-in-attack-at-israeli-town-of-elad
27	Another American dies in combat as part of Ukraine's international legion	08/11/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/nov/08/us-soldier-timothy-griffin-dies-ukraine-russia-international-legion
28	'Our lives are destroyed': families take fight for truth of flight 752 to ICC	14/09/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/14/our-lives-are-destroyed-families-take-fight-for-truth-of-flight-752-to-icc
29	Renewed fighting in DRC raises fears of chaotic proxy conflict	12/12/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/12/renewed-fighting-in-drc-raises-fears-of-chaotic-proxy-conflict
30	Colombian leaders' promise of 'total peace' may prove too ambitious	22/09/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/22/colombia-gustavo-petro-total-peace
31	'A Sikh soldier pulled me out of the rubble': survivors recall India's violent partition – and reflect on its legacy	11/08/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/11/a-sikh-soldier-pulled-me-out-of-the-rubble-survivors-recall-indias-violent-partition-and-reflect-on-its-legacy
32	Ukraine facing humanitarian crisis amid relentless Russian missile attacks	02/03/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/02/ukraine-cities-bombardment-russia-attack-kyiv-kharkiv-russian-war-invasion
33	Taliban presiding over extensive rights abuses in Afghanistan, says UN	21/07/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jul/21/taliban-overseeing-extensive-rights-abuses-afghanistan-says-un
34	Russia-Ukraine war at glance: what we know on day 253 of the invasion	03/11/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/03/russia-ukraine-war-at-a-glance-what-we-know-on-day-253-of-the-invasion
35	Zelenskiy backing hits 90% among Ukrainians in poll since invasion	28/02/2022	https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/feb/27/russia-ukraine-latest-news-missile-strikes-on-oil-facilities-reported-as-some-russian-banks-cut-off-from-swift-system-live

Al Jazeera – search query 'war'

N°	Title	Publication date	URL
1	US warns of 'protracted' war as Russia shifts aim in Ukraine	05/04/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/5/us-official-warns-of-protracted-war-as-russia-shifts-aim
2	Yemen: a glimmer of hope in a devastating war	16/05/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2022/5/16/yemen-a-glimmer-of-hope-in-the-forgotten-war
3	South Korea leader orders North Korea war plan update	25/08/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/25/south-korea-leader-orders-north-korea-war-plan-update
4	UN concludes war crimes committed in Ukraine conflict	23/09/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/23/un-experts-conclude-war-crimes-committed-in-ukraine-conflict
5	Sudan: Russian influence and Ukraine war stir domestic tensions	18/03/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/3/18/sudan-russian-influence-and-ukraine-war-stir-domestic-tensions
6	Ukraine crisis: Russians hope for peace as the world talks of war	27/01/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/27/ukraine-crisis-russians-hope-for-peace-as-the-world-talks-of-war
7	Russia accuses US of 'direct involvement' in war in Ukraine	02/08/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/2/russia-accuses-us-of-direct-role-in-war-in-ukraine
8	Do not call Ukraine invasion a 'war', Russia tells media, schools	02/03/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/2/do-not-call-ukraine-invasion-a-war-russia-tells-media-schools
9	Is Ukraine's new drone a game changer in the war?	07/12/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/12/7/is-ukraines-new-drone-a-game-changer-in-the-war
10	Russia-Ukraine war: list of key events, day 165	07/08/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/7/russia-ukraine-war-list-of-key-events-day-165
11	US, Japan agree to cooperate on economic fallout of Ukraine war	12/07/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/7/12/us-japan-agree-to-address-currency-economic-impact-of-ukraine
12	Russia-Ukraine war: list of key events, day 61	25/04/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/25/russia-ukraine-war-list-of-key-events-on-day-61
13	32 killed in Libya's Tripoli as fears grow of wider war	28/08/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/28/23-killed-in-tripoli-clashes-fears-grow-of-wider-libya-war
14	Women in war: a psychologist helps Ukrainian soldiers' families	09/10/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/10/9/women-in-war-a-psychologist-helps-ukrainian-soldiers-families
15	Ukrainian women joining the military amid Russia's invasion	17/09/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/17/meet-the-women-joining-ukraines-military-amid-russias-invasion
16	'Not treated like humans': Ukrainian women on Russian captivity	27/10/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/27/ukrainian-servicewomen-recall-harrowing-captivity

17	'We are not our government': Georgians slam Ukraine war response	05/04/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/4/5/we-are-not-our-government-georgians-slam-ukraine-war-response
18	'Smash to smithereens': China threatens all-out war over Taiwan	10/06/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/10/china-tells-us-it-will-not-hesitate-to-start-war-over-taiwan

Al Jazeera – search query 'armed conflict'

N°	Title	Publication date	URL
19	UN envoy warns of spiralling DRC conflict	30/06/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/30/un-envoy-warns-of-spiralling-drc-conflict
20	Israel's assault on Gaza: what we know so far	07/08/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/7/israels-assault-on-gaza-what-we-know-so-far
21	Two Palestinians, one Israeli soldier killed in Jenin shoot-out	14/09/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/14/two-palestinians-one-israeli-soldier-killed-in-occupied-jenin
22	Several killed in clashes between Libyan armed groups in Tripoli	22/08/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/22/several-dead-in-clashes-between-libyan-security-forces
23	Togo presidency to oversee armed forces amid security woes	23/12/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/12/23/togo-presidency-to-oversee-armed-forces-as-security-worsens
24	Donetsk and Luhansk: what to know about Ukraine's rebel regions	21/02/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/21/donetsk-and-lugansk-heres-what-we-know-about-rebel-regions
25	Pakistan: woman suicide bomber change in Baloch rebel's strategy?	28/04/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/28/pakistan-woman-suicide-bomber-change-in-baloch-rebels-strategy
26	Israeli settlers attack Palestinians in Nablus amid army siege	19/10/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/19/settlers-target-palestinians-in-nablus-during-military-blockade
27	After battlefield setbacks in Ukraine, Putin orders mobilisation	21/09/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/21/russia-reacts-to-ukraine-success-mobilisation-polls-and-threats
28	What might happen to Ukraine's Azovstal prisoners of war?	19/05/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/5/19/what-might-happen-to-ukraines-azovstal-prisoners-of-war-pows
29	Kashmir rebels storm India army camp; 3 soldiers, 2 attackers die	11/08/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/11/kashmir-rebels-storm-india-army-camp-3-soldiers-2-attackers-die
30	Sweden convicts mother of war crimes over minor fighting for ISIL	04/03/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/4/sweden-jails-mother-for-war-crimes-over-minor-fighting-for-isil

31	More than 9,000 flee violence in in South Sudan's Upper Nile: UN	08/12/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/12/8/more-than-9000-flee-violence-in-south-sudans-upper-nile-un
32	Shadowy pro-military militias target Myanmar's anti-coup movement	02/06/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/2/shadowy-pro-military-militias-target-myanmars-anti-coup-movement
33	Myanmar accused of war crimes over 'depraved use' of land mines	20/07/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/20/amnesty-accuses-myanmar-of-war-crimes-over-landmines
34	Inside Ukraine's war crime investigations	21/06/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/6/21/inside-ukraine-war-crimes-investigations
35	At least 150 killed in two days of fighting in Sudan's Blue Nile	20/10/2022	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/20/sudan-more-than-100-killed-in-two-days-of-fighting

De Standaard – search query 'war'

N°	Title	Publication date	URL
1	Cherson geeft verlaten indruk, maar Kiev kraait nog geen victorie	03/11/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221103_97185423
2	Wanneer vluchten naar Rusland de enige uitweg uit de oorlog is	04/05/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220504_97002408
3	Rusland maakt van Severodonetsk een tweede Marioepol	31/05/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220530_97607108
4	'Wij, dieven en moordenaars, vechten nu Poetins oorlog uit'	22/10/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220921_97578022
5	Volk en material tekort, maar Russisch leger wil doorstomen	18/07/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220718_95245963
6	Odessa wellicht wekenlang zonder stromen, bewoners aangeraden om te vertrekken	11/12/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221211_93003636
7	Merkel: 'Ik had te weinig politieke macht om Poetin te beïnvloeden'	25/11/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221125_92433250
8	President Zelenski onderweg naar Washington	21/12/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221221_93832286
9	Fragiele vrede houdt voorlopig stand in Gaza, minstens 44 Palestijnen gedood	08/08/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220808_93141602

10	Ira, de soldatenmoeder: 'We praten over alles, behalve over de doden'	26/12/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221225_98205222
11	Allegaartje van Oekraïnse vrijwilligers wordt klaargestoomd voor het front	22/08/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220822_93571921
12	Israël is best tevreden na een oorlog van 66 uur	09/08/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220808_97494173
13	'Russische soldaten kunnen sperma gratis laten invriezen'	28/12/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221228_96794561v
14	Geen 100.000 gesneuvelde soldaten, maar menselijke tol is gigantisch	01/12/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221130_98074260
15	Oorlog in Oekraïne wordt steeds vuiler	02/03/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220301_98483295
16	Vrouw van Oekraïnse president Zelenski praat met 'Vogue': 'Poetin wil onze bevolking verdelen, maar dat is onmogelijk'	12/04/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220412_93442570
17	Wie is Olena Kurilo, de dame die bebloed op alle voorpagina's staat?	25/02/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220225_95404361
18	'Ze fluisteren in mijn oor: ik ben verkracht'	24/05/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220523_97628416

De Standaard – search query 'war'

N°	Title	Publication date	URL
19	Al meer dan 200 doden bij gevechten tussen Armenië en Azerbeidzjan	16/09/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220916_93421575
20	'Jemen is onleefbaar geworden'	05/02/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220204_98202659
21	Zeven doden, onder wie vier kinderen, bij Russische aanvallen in Syrië	22/07/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220722_95636937
22	Tshisekedi eist afzetting Kagame na massamoord in Oost-Congo	06/12/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221205_98109504
23	'Iedereen heeft baat bij deze oorlog, behalve de bevolking'	25/11/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221124_98621200
24	Meisje begraven dat omkwam bij Russische raketaanval	17/07/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220717_94275575

25	‘Liever een gesneuveld Boerjaat dan een dode Rus met blauwe ogen’	02/04/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220401_97766337
26	Rwanda en Oeganda voeren in Congo vooral oorlog om goud	24/06/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220623_97707857
27	Van de besetting tot de bevrijding: het oorlogsjaar van Cherson	24/12/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221223_95245399
28	Minstens 32 Palestijnen gestorven bij Israëlische luchtaanvallen op Gazastrook, VN-Veiligheidsraad maandag bijeen	07/08/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220805_96453733
29	Wie straft Vladimir Poetin voor verregaande gruwel in de oorlog?	04/04/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220403_97648286
30	Zegezekere Zelenski doet Russen op de Krim panikeren	15/09/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220914_97589645
31	Bombardementen op Kiev en andere steden	02/03/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220302_91967742
32	Turkije gaat (nog eens) achter Koerden aan in Syrië en Irak	21/11/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221120_97835867
33	Hoe tel je vergeten oorlogsdoden?	19/11/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20221117_96379440
34	Poetins invasie is een feit, maar komt er ook oorlog?	22/02/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220222_95626348
35	Nog liever sterven dan een Rus doden	26/03/2022	https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20220325_97548322

2. Codebook

Name	Definition	Example quote	Files	References
Victims	This code refers to narratives and descriptions that highlight the experiences and vulnerabilities of those directly impacted by war-related violence, displacement, or trauma.			
Anonymous	Instances where the identities of the victims are not disclosed or kept anonymous. It includes cases where their names, personal information, or distinguishing details are withheld.	*"Some of the victims had told the investigators they were transferred to Russia and held for weeks in prisons. Others had "disappeared" following such." (AJ)*	4	4
Children	This code pertains to incidents where children are identified as victims. It encompasses children who have suffered physical, emotional, or psychological harm as a result of armed conflict, including but not limited to injuries, displacement, loss of family members, or trauma.	*"Zeven doden, onder wie vier kinderen, bij Russische aanvallen in Syrië." (DS)*	35	68
Civilians	Instances where individuals who are not actively engaged in armed conflict, such as non-combatant civilians, are affected by violence, harm, or casualties. It includes incidents where civilians sustain injuries, face displacement, or experience other adverse consequences due to war-related activities.	*"I used to speak Russian, but I've switched completely to Ukrainian after Bucha," she says, referring to the reported mass killings and abuse of civilians committed by the Russian forces in a city close to Kyiv in March." (AJ)*	68	170

Male	This code refers to cases in war reporting where males are specifically identified as victims, through the use of male pronouns or words such as 'man', 'male' or 'masculine'.	*"Suspected Russian mercenaries participated in an operation with Mali's army in March in which about 300 civilian men were allegedly killed over five days, Human Rights Watch (HRW) says." (TG)*	10	19
Soldier(s)	Instances where members of the military, such as armed forces personnel or combatants, are identified as victims. It includes incidents where soldiers experience harm, injuries, or casualties during armed conflicts.	*"In May, eight soldiers were killed and 13 wounded when armed gunmen ambushed an army post in the Kpendjal prefecture near the border with Burkina Faso." (AJ)*	31	56
Targeting citizens as a mililitary strategy	References to the deliberate and systematic targeting of civilians as a military strategy. It includes incidents where armed forces or armed groups intentionally direct their attacks or violence towards civilian populations, using them as a means to achieve military objectives.	*"We should be under no illusions that Russia will adjust its tactics, which have included and will likely continue to include wanton and brazen attacks on civilian targets," he said." (AJ)*	21	32
Torture	Cases where acts of torture, including physical, psychological, or emotional abuse, are reported. It includes incidents where individuals, regardless of their status or affiliation, experience severe pain, suffering, or degradation as a result of deliberate actions inflicted upon them during armed conflict.	*"Gevreesd wordt dat dit een van de plekken is waar de Russen hun critici en tegenstanders martelden. Tot nu toe zijn tien martelkamers in de regio gevonden." (DS)*	10	24
Casualties not specified	This code refers to incidents in war reporting where casualties are mentioned without specifying their identities or characteristics. It includes cases where the	*"On 8 January, at least 56 people were reportedly killed in an airstrike on a camp for internally displaced people, prompting aid agencies to suspend their work." (TG)*	17	26

	gender, age, occupation, or other distinguishing details of the casualties are not explicitly provided or remain unspecified. In contrast with anonymous victims, it refers mostly to groups or masses of victims.			
Female	This code pertains to instances where females are specifically identified as victims. It includes incidents where women, regardless of age or occupation, have suffered harm, injuries, or casualties as a result of armed conflict, through the use of female pronouns or words such as 'female' or 'woman'.	*"It is estimated that between 75,000 and 100,000 women from both sides were abducted and raped during partition, resulting in premeditated suicide and so-called honour killings by male family members." (DS)*	24	46
Elements of HRJ	This code pertains to characteristics or practices associated with Human Rights Journalism			
Achieving negative peace	This code encompasses the concept of negative peace, which refers to the absence of violence or the cessation of overt hostilities in a conflict situation. It includes narratives, descriptions, or discussions related to efforts or strategies aimed at reducing or ending direct acts of violence in order to establish a state of peace.	*"In a statement published on Wednesday, the president's office said: "Despite the complexity, the president is determined to do whatever it takes to end this violence in Upper Nile and other regions of South Sudan."" (AJ)*	18	26
Achieving positive peace	This code refers to the concept of positive peace, which extends beyond the absence of violence and encompasses the presence of social justice, equality, and the fulfillment of basic human needs. It	*"Yet he also said it could mark an important change in strategy for a country that has historically addressed the armed conflict with militarization as opposed to addressing root causes of conflict such as poverty and lack of opportunity." (TG)*	5	7

	includes narratives, descriptions, or discussions related to efforts or strategies aimed at addressing root causes, fostering reconciliation, and promoting sustainable peace.			
Biased in favour of minority groups	Instances where there is a bias or emphasis on marginalized or minority groups. It includes narratives and descriptions that prioritize the experiences, perspectives, or concerns of minority groups over those of majority groups.	*"Een grote groep jonge Boer jaten weet goed genoeg wat er aan de hand is', zegt een kunstenaar uit de streek. Uit vrees voor vervolging wenst hij anoniem te blijven. 'Het voelt alsof we moeten sterven in een oorlog die niet de onze is. Maar het is gevaarlijk om je mond open te doen.'" (DS)*	1	3
Challenges the status quo	Instances where there is a critical examination or questioning of established norms, power structures, or policies. It includes narratives, descriptions, or discussions that challenge the existing social, political, or economic order.	*"At a table by the window in Moscow's Pushkin cafe, Alexey Venediktov is loudly decrying the conflict as "catastrophic" as the waitstaff look on with an air of concern. The former head of Echo of Moscow, the Russian radio station that was shut down after its public opposition to the war, has now been declared a foreign agent. "I was an enemy, now I am a traitor," he says of his relationship with Vladimir Putin." (TG)*	3	6
Focused on diagnosing the problems and their causes	This code pertains to an emphasis on analysing and identifying the problems, root causes, or underlying factors contributing to armed conflict. It includes narratives, descriptions, or discussions that aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and drivers of war-related issues.	*"Cruciaal daarin was de afzijdigheid van de islamistische Hamas, die Gaza bestuurt en er de zwaarstbewapende militie onderhoudt. Hamas meende blijkbaar dat het weinig te winnen had bij een confrontatie tussen Israël en de PIJ – die zoals Hamas zegt te vechten voor de Palestijnse zaak, maar er tegelijk een concurrent van is. Die PIJ heeft ook een duidelijke pro-Iraanse strekking. Zijn leiders verblijven niet in Gaza, maar in het Syrië van dictator Bashar al-Assad, dat steeds meer een wingewest van Iran wordt." (DS)*	47	109
Indirect structural violence	This code refers to forms of violence that are embedded in social, economic, or political structures and have indirect or systemic effects on individuals or communities. It includes narratives,	*"The UN refugee agency has said more than 368,000 people have fled Ukraine into neighbouring countries. Up to 4 million people could become refugees if the situation continues to worsen, the UN said." (TG)*	23	42

	descriptions, or discussions related to structural inequalities, injustices, or policies that perpetuate harm or disadvantage in the context of armed conflict, such as famine and poverty.			
Preventing escalation	This code encompasses efforts or strategies in war reporting aimed at preventing the escalation or intensification of armed conflict. It includes narratives, descriptions, or discussions that focus on diplomatic, peacebuilding, or conflict resolution initiatives aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting stability.	*"Israël heeft het recht om zijn burgerbevolking te beschermen, maar alles moet in het werk gesteld worden om een groter conflict te voorkomen." (DS)*	19	28
Exposing HR violations	This code pertains to the act of uncovering or bringing to light violations of human rights in war reporting. It includes narratives and descriptions that shed light on human rights abuses, atrocities, or violations committed during war.	*"US President Joe Biden, meanwhile, said the killings show that Putin is a "war criminal", a claim he had previously made in February." (AJ)*	33	80
Elements of HWJ	This code refers to characteristics or practices associated with Human Wrongs Journalism.			
Competition-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that focus on what attracts the most readers and what increases profits (violence, drama, evocative content).	*"The video shows the suicide bomber, identified as Shari Baloch, a 31-year-old mother of two, instantly disappearing in a ball of flame that ripped through the minibus." (AJ)*	10	11
Demonisation-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that focus on dichotomies and differences between groups by emphasising us versus them and good versus bad.	*"The White House has said the next security assistance package for Ukraine was coming and it was expected to include more air defence capabilities for the country. Russia's foreign ministry warned this week that if the US delivered sophisticated Patriot air defence systems to Ukraine, such systems and any crews that accompany them would be a legitimate target for the Russian military. Washington rejected the*	30	49

		threat." (TG)		
Partial-solution oriented	Narratives and descriptions that focus on fulfilling the needs of the dominant groups of society at the expense of long-term solutions and the needs of the vulnerable.	*"Volgens de Britse inlichtingendiensten heeft de Russische regering vorige week de begroting voor volgend jaar vastgelegd, en is daarin omgerekend 143 miljard dollar voorzien voor defensie en veiligheid. Het gaat om een significante toename tegenover de vorige jaren, aldus de Britse inlichtingendiensten, en de vraag is of er ook voldoende middelen zullen worden gevonden om dit te financieren." (DS)*	19	31
Non-interventionist	Narratives and descriptions that do not contribute to possible solutions.	*"During recent weeks, political shifts have pointed to a possible realignment among power brokers and armed factions that could prompt renewed fighting." (AJ)*	6	11
Propaganda-oriented	Narratives and descriptions focusing on why certain groups have reasons to commit human rights violations and why others don't.	*"Russian forces have been smashing their way through Ukraine spurred in large part by historical fiction," he wrote in Foreign Affairs. "But history also propels the fierce Ukrainian resistance. Ukrainians, too, harbour a particular understanding of the past that motivates them to fight. In many ways, this war is the collision of two incompatible historical narratives." (TG)*	19	34
Imagery	This code includes all pictures, images and videos included in the news articles analysed, as well as the descriptions underneath the imagery. It excludes any other written text.			
Anonymous male	Instances where the identity of a male individual depicted in imagery remains undisclosed or anonymous. It includes cases where the name, personal information, or distinguishing details of the male subject are withheld, or where their identity is impossible to retain because of the positioning in the image (e.g. back turned towards the camera).	 **(De Standaard)**	52	74

Anonymous female	Instances where the identity of a female individual depicted in imagery remains undisclosed or anonymous. It includes cases where the name, personal information, or distinguishing details of the female subject are withheld, or where there identity is impossible to retain because of the positioning in the image (e.g. back turned towards the camera).	 **(Al Jazeera)**	28	45
Children	Instances where children are visually represented in imagery, whether anonymously or not.	 **(Al Jazeera)**	10	18
Elite	This code refers to the visual representation of individuals or groups who hold positions of power, influence, or authority. It includes images that portray political leaders, military commanders, or other influential figures.	 **(The Guardian)**	20	31

Male(s) mourning or crying	This code pertains to visual representations that depict one or more male individuals expressing grief, sadness, or mourning. It includes images capturing men displaying emotions such as crying, mourning the loss of loved ones, or reacting emotionally.	 **(De Standaard)**	5	5
Male(s) in the foreground	This code refers to images where male individuals are positioned prominently in the foreground of the visual composition. It includes visuals where men are given prominence, focus, or visibility, symbolically emphasizing their significance or presence in the depicted scene.	 **(The Guardian)**	60	93
Female(s) mourning or crying	This code pertains to visual representations that depict one or more female individuals expressing grief, sadness, or mourning. It includes images capturing men displaying emotions such as crying, mourning the loss of loved ones, or reacting emotionally.	 **(Al Jazeera)**	7	8

Residential area	This code refers to images that depict residential areas or civilian neighbourhoods affected by armed conflict. It includes visuals showing the destruction, damage, or impact of war on residential infrastructure, housing, or communities.	 **(The Guardian)**	17	19
Soldier(s)	This code encompasses images in war reporting that depict individuals serving in the military or armed forces. It includes visuals portraying soldiers in various military roles, such as combat, training, patrolling, or engaging in other activities related to armed conflict. This includes both men and women and anonymously or not.	 **(Al Jazeera)**	38	57

Women engaged in traditionally 'female' behaviour	This code pertains to visual representations in war reporting that depict women engaging in activities traditionally associated with stereotypical gender roles. It includes images showing women performing caregiving, domestic, or nurturing roles (e.g. hanging out the laundry to dry), reinforcing societal expectations of gendered behavior during times of conflict.	 **(De Standaard)**	6	7
Female(s) on the foreground	This code refers to images where female individuals are positioned prominently in the foreground of the visual composition. It includes visuals where women are given prominence, focus, or visibility, symbolically emphasizing their significance or presence in the depicted scene.	 **(Al Jazeera)**	34	53
Reasons for war	This codes includes all instances where reasons or explanations for the war or the armed conflict are given.			
Conflict to protect citizens	Instances where armed conflict is framed as a means to protect or defend a specific group or population, or citizens in general. It includes narratives or discussions that highlight the use of force or military action	*"The story goes that after the self-described Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics in eastern Ukraine rose up against it, they were besieged and subjected to a "genocide" for eight years, which Russia is now preventing through a "special peacekeeping operation" (the materials explicitly state this is "not a war")." (AJ)*	3	5

	as a response to perceived threats or to safeguard the interests or well-being of a particular community or population.			
Men as instigators of violence	The portrayal of men as the primary instigators or perpetrators of violence. It includes narratives and descriptions that emphasize the role of men in initiating or carrying out acts of violence, such as combat, aggression, or acts of war-related violence.	*"After Hemeti's return from Russia, al-Burhan too went on a trip. On the surface, the purpose was to enhance military and economic partnerships with the UAE, yet analysts believe he was trying to strengthen his external position. In Sudan, it was also reported that al-Burhan is attempting to unite a number of Sudanese armed groups into a single force." (AJ)*	13	18
Military as protector of people	The portrayal of the military as a protective force. It includes narratives and descriptions, that emphasize the role of the military in safeguarding civilian populations, ensuring security, or providing humanitarian assistance in conflict zones.	*"Israeli forces have stepped up operations ahead of the UEFA Champions League football game between French club Paris Saint Germain and MaccabiHaifa, which will take place less than 70 kilometres (45 miles) away fromJenin." (AJ)*	9	12
Normalisation of violence	Instances in war reporting where violence becomes normalized or depicted as a routine aspect of conflict. It includes narratives or discussions that downplay or trivialize the impact or consequences of violence, treating it as an expected or ordinary occurrence rather than highlighting its destructive nature or human cost.	*"Die kunnen geen kant op en 'traditioneel' vallen bij een oorlog dan ook veel doden onder kinderen. Deze keer bleven ook die cijfers 'beperkt'." (DS)*	1	1
Violence as a way to achieve peace	The framing of violence as a means to achieve or restore peace in war reporting. It includes narratives or discussions that rationalize or justify the use of force, military action, or aggression as necessary	*Violence as a way to peace* *"Op aansturen van de Keniaanse president Uhuru Kenyatte kwam er een akkoord uit de bus om een stabilisatiemacht naar Oost-Congo te sturen van voornamelijk Keniaanse en Tanzaniaanse militairen. Een idee dat veel experts absurd vinden, omdat er in de regio al een VN-vredesmacht aanwezig is van 16.000 militairen." (DS)*	8	9

	or instrumental in establishing or maintaining peace in conflict situations.			
Sources	This code includes all people that are directly quoted or referenced or indirectly paraphrased.			
Anonymous	Sources cited or referenced in war reporting where the identity of the source remains undisclosed or anonymous. It includes cases where the name, personal information, or other identifying details of the source are not provided, emphasizing the anonymity of the source's contribution or information.	*"An American official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said most of the meeting focused on Taiwan and Austin reiterated Washington's position on Taiwan was unchanged, while criticising China's "military aggression"." (AJ)*	32	49
Citizen/civilian	This code encompasses sources in war reporting that provide perspectives, testimonies, or information from individuals who are not directly involved in armed conflict or affiliated with the military. It includes sources who represent the civilian population affected by war, including non-combatants, residents, or community members impacted by conflict-related events.	*""People in Donbas have a negative opinion of Ukraine's leadership," said Roman. "If you were being fired at every day, how would you feel?"" (AJ)*	25	78
Elite	Sources that represent individuals or groups holding positions of power, influence, or authority. It includes sources who belong to political, military, or social elites.	*"WHO's director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said the group was also working to verify multiple reports of "attacks on health facilities and health workers", adding that attacks on healthcare would be "a violation of international humanitarian law"." (TG)*	91	497
Male	Sources who identify as male or are identified as male. This needs to be	*"'Het is duidelijk dat veel van de gesneuvelde soldaten uit armere republieken met etnische minderheden komen zoals Boerjatië, Kalmukkië en Dagestan', zegt Pavel Luzin, een Russische militaire expert." (DS)*	89	565

	explicitly stated through the use of pronouns or other gender-identifying words.			
Female	Sources who identify as female or are identified as female. This needs to be explicitly stated through the use of pronouns or other gender-identifying words.	*"The head of Amnesty International's Ukraine office, Oksana Pokalchuk, quit the organisation over the publication of a controversial report she said was parroting Kremlin propaganda." (AJ)*	59	228
Soldier	This code pertains to sources in war reporting who are members of the military or armed forces. It includes individuals who provide insights, testimonies, or expert opinions based on their affiliation with the military or their experiences as soldiers engaged in armed conflict.	*""I didn't think I would be in the military when I was growing up," Diana said. "As every little girl, I just wanted to live a happy life, working to be able to travel and see the world."" (AJ)*	10	63
PJ and WJ	This code refers to characteristics or practices associated with Peace Journalism and War Journalism.			
Elite-oriented	This code pertains to narratives and descriptions that strongly focus on the opinions and experiences of 'the elite', including people who hold positions of power, influence or authority, thereby excluding the experiences and opinions of the non-elite, such as civilians and minority groups.	*"US president Joe Biden has told the press conference that the US stands with its allies "as strong as ever" against Russia's "brutal war" against Ukraine. Biden said the support would continue in the face of Russian aggression, which he adds has been "incredibly brutal". He adds: "I knew Russia was [brutal], but I didn't anticipate them being as brutal as they have been."" (TG)*	32	60
Peace-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that present innovative strategies for resolving disputes, advancing development and maintaining peace, which includes paying attention to	*"A truce in Yemen has allowed for some Yemenis to hope of a better future – and a chance to rebuild." (AJ)*	31	69

	peace efforts behind the scenes both during the war and afterwards.			
People-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that give a voice to all parties to the conflict, especially non-elite people, minority groups and victims on all sides.	*"Maryna is a psychologist at the Lviv Centre for the Provision of Services to Combatants in western Ukraine, which offers free legal, psychological and social support to soldiers and their families." (AJ)*	43	103
Propaganda-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that support and perpetuate dichotomies of us versus them, winners versus losers, and good versus bad and thereby justify violent responses.	*"Het Russische bestuur in Cherson was van korte duur. Nadat de bezetters eind september een nepreferendum hadden georganiseerd over de aansluiting bij Rusland, tekende Poetin op 30 september de documenten die de annexatie bezegelden." (DS)*	34	53
Solution-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that do not focus on declaring a winner and a loser, but try to find a way to solve the dispute and stop the violence as quickly and efficiently as possible, rather than waiting until they can declare someone the 'victor'.	*"De onrust volgt op de arrestatie van twee hooggeplaatste leden van Islamitische Jihad (PIJ) begin deze week. De Al-Qudsbrigade, de militaire tak van die organisatie, had daarop met aanvallen gedreigd. Islamitische Jihad is nauw verbonden met Iran, de aartsvijand van Israël. De organisatie voert vanuit de Gazastrook geregeld raketaanvallen uit op Israël." (DS)*	30	52
Truth-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that reveal untruth on all sides and focus on exposing propaganda as a means of continuing the war.	*"There was no independent confirmation of the incident." (AJ)*	23	35
Victory-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that focus on identifying winners and losers of a conflict or war.	*"In so doing she comes closer than Biden, Macron or indeed Scholz in siding with those who say the war must end with Putin being seen to have been defeated, an articulation that raises hard questions about Europe's future relations with Russia." (TG)*	7	18
Violence-oriented	Narratives and descriptions that support the continuation of violence through war propaganda and perpetuate the idea that only violence can solve disputes.	*"China will "not hesitate to start a war" and "smash to smithereens" any Taiwan independence efforts, its defence minister warned his US counterpart in the pair's first face-to-face talks. "If anyone dares to split Taiwan from China, the Chinese army will definitely not hesitate to start a war no matter the cost," Defence Minister Wei Fenghe said during a meeting with Lloyd Austin on Friday." (AJ)*	44	83
Stereotypical gender-based war reporting	Instances in war reporting where gender stereotypes are perpetuated or reinforced in the portrayal of conflict-related events. It includes			

	narratives and descriptions that adhere to traditional gender roles, expectations, or assumptions, shaping the reporting in a manner that aligns with gender stereotypes.			
Comments on women's appearance	Instances where there are explicit or implicit comments made regarding the physical appearance of women. It includes descriptions, judgments, or evaluations related to the attractiveness, clothing, or other aspects of women's physical appearance.	*"Het licht schiet aan. Ira is opgetogen. Nu pas zie ik hoe ze eruitziet. Ze heeft een fier gezicht met scherpe contouren. Haar wenkbrauwen zijn netjes bijgehouden. Alleen haar handen verraden dat ze van aanpakken weet." (DS)*	5	7
Male sacrifice	Instances where the sacrifices made by men are emphasized or highlighted. It includes narratives and descriptions that emphasize men's acts of bravery, heroism, or selflessness in the context of war, often portraying them as sacrificing their lives, well-being, or personal interests for the greater good, such as saving their family.	*""It's the 21st century, we started this idiotic war, and once again we're calling on soldiers to carry out heroic deeds, to sacrifice themselves." (TG)*	8	12
Men as family leaders	Instances where men are portrayed as the primary leaders or decision-makers within the family unit. It includes narratives and descriptions that emphasize men's roles as heads of households or primary decision-makers in matters related to family, relationships, or domestic affairs.	*"Olesya's husband, Nikolay Masanovec, a tall wiry, 42-year-old truck driver and kickboxer, had taken on the responsibility of fetching water every three days with Nikita, their shy 15-year-old son. The pair were forced to walk to a local well after the family's water supply, which ran on an electric pump, had ceased to work after the Russians cut off the electricity." (AJ)*	6	10
Men in power	Instances where men are depicted as holding positions of power, authority, or influence in conflict-related contexts. It includes narratives and descriptions that highlight men's dominance in political,	*"Putin said the west, including Britain's Liz Truss, had engaged in 'nuclear blackmail' against Russia and rejected claims that Russian forces were attacking the Zaporizhzia nuclear power plant – located in territory controlled by Russia in Southern Ukraine." (TG)*	4	9

	military, or social spheres during times of armed conflict.			
Undermining of female elite's opinions/decisions	Instances where the opinions or decisions of female elites, such as political leaders, experts, or influential figures, are undermined or devalued. It includes narratives and descriptions that downplay or challenge the credibility, authority, or significance of female elites in conflict-related decision-making or discourse.	*"Putin said the west, including Britain's Liz Truss, had engaged in 'nuclear blackmail' against Russia and rejected claims that Russian forces were attacking the Zaporizhzia nuclear power plant – located in territory controlled by Russia in Southern Ukraine." (TG)*	5	9
Victimisation of women	Instances where women are portrayed primarily as victims of violence, harm, or adversity during armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that emphasize women's vulnerability, suffering, or victimhood, often overshadowing their agency, resilience, or contributions within the context of war.	*"Most of the people who come to me now are women who have family in themilitary," she says. "I hear a lot about the number of divorces going up after2014 [when fighting first broke out between the Ukrainian military andRussian-backed separatists in the eastern part of the country]. There's oftenconflict within families when men come home from war feeling like heroesbut forget that they have other responsibilities to look after at home." (AJ)*	8	9
Men as saviours of women	Instances where men are portrayed as the protectors or saviours of women in conflict situations. It includes narratives and descriptions that depict men rescuing, assisting, or safeguarding women, often reinforcing traditional gender roles and expectations.	*"His dog, a though Staffordshire bullterrier, began to bark uncontrollably, as Kostomolov led his terrified wife under the stairs for shelter before heading out to help people injured in the blast" (AJ)*	6	7
Women as mothers	Instances where women's roles primarily revolve around motherhood within the context of armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that emphasize women's caregiving, nurturing, or	*"On March 11, Olesya Masanovec, a sociable 40-year-old manicurist and devoted mother, stepped out of her family's charming singlestorey home onto Yablunska (Apple Tree) Street." (AJ)*	15	30

	protective roles as mothers, often overshadowing their diverse experiences, agency, or contributions beyond their maternal identities.			
Gendered consequences of war	This code refers to the specific impacts and consequences of armed conflict on different genders that is mentioned in the sample.			
Emphasis on female emotions	Instance where there is a particular focus on highlighting or foregrounding the emotions and feelings of women in relation to armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that prioritize and emphasize the emotional experiences, reactions, or expressions of women during war-related events.	*"Grief over her son's death eight years ago has been hitting her in fresh waves since the war began, but she prefers to focus on her most cherished memories of him." (AJ)*	7	12
Change of gender dynamics	This code encompasses the exploration of how armed conflict influences or disrupts traditional gender roles, norms, or power dynamics within societies. It involves examining shifts in gender roles, responsibilities, and relationships as a result of war or armed conflict.			
• Women-headed households	Situations or instances where households or families are primarily led or headed by women due to the absence, death, or displacement of male family members. It includes narratives and descriptions that focus on women's roles as the primary	*"She says she has spoken to many women who feel resentful that they have had to play the roles of both mother and father to their children, while their husbands are away at war." (AJ)*	1	1

	decision-makers and providers within households during times of armed conflict.			
• Women as survivors	The portrayal of women as survivors of violence, trauma, or adversity in war reporting. It includes narratives and descriptions that highlight women's resilience, strength, and ability to overcome the challenges and consequences of armed conflict.	*"Maryna sees her personal experiences of hardship – and joy – as having given her the strength to keep supporting other people who need psychological aid. "My colleagues are also surprised [by my resilience], that I am able to do this," she smiles." (AJ)*	5	8
• Women as protesters	Instances in war reporting where women are depicted as actively engaging in protests, demonstrations, or movements related to armed conflict. It includes narratives, descriptions, or visual representations that highlight women's participation, activism, or advocacy for peace, justice, or social change.	"*Women remove their headscarves en masse in front of police officers and chant against mandatory hijabs at Amini's funeral in her hometown of Saqqez." (TG)*	4	12
• Women as aggressors	Instances in war reporting where women are portrayed as instigators or participants in acts of aggression, violence, or combat during armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that challenge traditional gender roles and expectations by depicting women in roles typically associated with male aggression or combat.	*"The video shows the suicide bomber, identified as Shari Baloch, a 31-year-old mother of two, instantly disappearing in a ball of flame that ripped through the minibus." (AJ)*	4	16
• Men don't want to engage in violence	Instances where there is a focus on men expressing a lack of desire or willingness to participate in acts of violence, combat, or armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that challenge the assumption of male inclination towards violence.	*"Maar niet alle Oekraïense mannen zijn bereid te sterven voor hun vaderland. Velen hebben morele, praktische, politieke of religieuze bezwaren." (DS)*	1	8

Gender-based and sexual violence	Instances where acts of violence, abuse, or harm are specifically targeted against individuals based on their gender. It includes narratives and descriptions, that highlight acts of violence, such as sexual violence, assault, rape, or discrimination, perpetrated against individuals due to their gender during armed conflict.	*"Zo vertelt ze over een schuil kelder waar de Russen elke dag een vrouw kwamen uitkiezen. Een meisje heeft meerdere keren de Russische bezetters over zich heen gehad. De andere vrouwen in de kelder vreesden elke dag dat zij aan de beurt zouden zijn. " (DS)*	16	45
• Committed by men	This code refers to instances in war reporting where acts of gender-based or sexual violence are explicitly attributed to male perpetrators.	*"Five men were sentenced to 30 years each in prison in a ruling hailed as vindication for survivors who have spent years fighting for justice." (TG)*	2	4
• No gender of the aggressor	This code pertains to instances in war reporting where the gender of the aggressor or perpetrator of violence is not specified or remains unknown.	*"It is estimated that between 75,000 and 100,000 women from both sides were abducted and raped during partition, resulting in premeditated suicide and so-called honour killings by male family members." (TG)*	9	23
• Taboo	The exploration of topics or issues related to gender-based violence that are considered socially sensitive, culturally prohibited, or subject to silence or avoidance. It includes narratives and descriptions that examine how certain gender-related aspects of armed conflict may be deemed taboo or difficult to discuss openly.	*"They have faced so many difficulties," she told the Guardian, noting the women faced stigma in court as well as back home." (TG)*	3	3
Discrimination on the basis of gender identity	Instances in war reporting where individuals face discrimination or marginalization based on their gender identity or expression. It includes narratives and descriptions that highlight	*"En in de Los Angeles Times getuigt transvrouw Zi Faamelu (31) dat ze niet mag vertrekken omdat ze volgens haar paspoort een man is." (DS)*	2	2

	the experiences of individuals whose gender identity or expression does not conform to societal norms or expectations during armed conflict.			
Soldiers/fighters	This code refers to individuals who are actively engaged in armed conflict or military operations. It includes both combatants and non-combatant personnel associated with military forces or armed groups involved in war-related activities.			
Assumption of soldier as male	Instances where there is an implicit or explicit assumption that soldiers are predominantly or exclusively male. It includes narratives and descriptions that reinforce or perpetuate the stereotype that soldiers are typically men, either through the use of male pronouns or the words 'man' or 'men'.	*"Ukrainian servicemen of the Armed Forces will now be allowed to take a paid leave during martial law, Euromaidan reports." (TG)*	10	16
Incorporation of citizens into the military	Instances where civilians or non-military individuals are incorporated or conscripted into the military forces during armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that highlight the involvement of civilians in military activities or their transition from civilian life to military service.	*"Hij is een man. Mannen mogen Oekraïne niet verlaten. Van hen wordt verwacht dat ze helpen in de strijd tegen het Russische invasieleger." (DS)*	9	14
Male soldiers	This code refers to male individuals who are actively serving as soldiers in armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that specifically focus on the	*"Tass reported that Russian forces "neutralised" a group of armed men in Kherson city on September 17." (AJ)*	12	24

	experiences, roles, or perspectives of male soldiers within the context of war.			
Ungendered soldiers	Instances where the gender or sex of a soldier is not explicitly specified or emphasized.	*"Nu de oorlog al bijna een halfjaar duurt, krijgen de vrijwilligers die het Oekraïense leger versterken extra militaire training voor de strijd aan het front." (DS)*	7	11
Women in war	This code encompasses the presence, roles, and experiences of women within the context of armed conflict or war.			
Caretakers	This code refers to women in war reporting who are portrayed primarily in caregiving roles, such as providing assistance, support, or care for others affected by armed conflict.	*"She helped her mother hand out painkillers to wounded soldiers, read books and played with other children – but kept asking her mother about death." (AJ)*	4	6
Female soldiers	This code pertains to female individuals who are actively serving as soldiers in armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that specifically focus on the experiences, roles, or perspectives of female soldiers within the context of war.	*"About 50,000 women serve in the Ukrainian armed forces in combat and noncombat roles, according to military officials." (AJ)*	7	16
Refugees	This code encompasses women who are forced to flee their homes or countries due to armed conflict or the threat of violence. It includes narratives and descriptions that highlight the experiences, challenges, or resilience of women as refugees in war-related contexts.	*"The UN refugee agency said 836,000 people had now fled Ukraine, mostly women and children but including many foreign students and migrant workers, and the number was rising rapidly." (AJ)*	3	3
Prisoners of war	This code refers to individuals, including women, who are captured, detained, or held as prisoners during armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that	*"Military nurse Viktoria Obidina was among 108 Ukrainian women released on October 17 in a prisoner swap with Russia after spending more than five months in captivity" (AJ)*	2	13

	depict the experiences, conditions, or treatment of women as prisoners of war.			
Reasons for joining	This code pertains to the motivations, factors, or circumstances that influence women to join or participate in armed conflict. It includes narratives and descriptions that explore the reasons behind individuals' decision to become involved in military activities during war.	*"Workeye says she enlisted to avenge the rapes and killings she had seen in her village." (TG)*	3	5
Victims	This code encompasses narratives and descriptions that portray women as victims of war-related violence, displacement and other forms of suffering.	*""As a woman, we cannot go out and have to be careful about everything during both the day and night. We can't even ride motorcycles alone at the moment," she said." (AJ)*	10	14