

# Framing, resonance and war: Foregrounds and backgrounds of cultural congruence

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## Abstract

This article addresses the communicative processes through which leaders succeed or fail to generate public support for going to war. In order to answer this question, I rely on the framing literature's insight that cultural congruence helps make frames resonate with an audience. Yet, my argument examines this phenomenon in greater depth. There is more to cultural congruence than selecting commonplaces such as analogies and metaphors from a repertoire that the audience widely shares. Culturally congruent framing also features a genre and more general themes that are taken out of such a repertoire. My empirical analysis of Tony Blair's communicative moves to sway the British public to fight over Kosovo and Iraq provides empirical evidence for this framework. This study makes two important contributions. First, it highlights that public contestations about going to war criss-cross the overly neat categories proposed by most scholars interested in this phenomenon. Second, in identifying different dimensions of framing, this article deepens our understandings of cultural congruence.

## Keywords

Cultural congruence, framing, intervention, political communication, repertoire, resonance

## Introduction

How do leaders generate public support for going to war? In the last two decades, International Relations scholarship has become increasingly interested in investigating this question. Most authors contend that public support is a function of instrumental reasons, such as low casualties and success (Gartner, 2011; Mueller, 2005). This majority

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view is challenged by a number of contending perspectives. Most notably, scholars emphasise justice reasons (Berinsky, 2007; Welch, 2012), contrasting between Self and Other (Brewer, 2009), and framing processes (Entman, 2004; Zellman, 2015).

This study develops two key arguments. First, framing overcomes the literature's compartmentalisation of reasons for going to war. Leaders do not follow the overly clean conceptual lines drawn up by scholars. When they make a case for going to war, they do not confine themselves to instrumental or justice causes, and they do not abstain from contrasting either. The framing literature is very well suited to analyse how leaders make use of different aspects of war justifications because it is situated at a higher level of abstraction than the other perspectives. Framing is selecting and linking clues from a repertoire 'in order to perceive, identify, and label' (Goffman, 1974: 21). Thus, framing promotes 'a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation' (Entman, 1993: 52). It is up to the researcher to *trace how actors select and combine and with what effects* in an unfolding situation.

Second, I contend that cultural congruence is multidimensional. Cultural congruence is a key concept in the framing literature. In order for a message to resonate with an audience, the clues that communicators select and combine need to be taken out of a repertoire that is widely shared by the audience. This makes these clues 'noticeable, understandable, memorable, and emotionally charged' (Entman, 2003: 417). Much of the existing literature equates cultural congruence with catchphrases that are taken out of a widely shared repertoire, for instance, metaphors ranging from medicine to boxing (Lakoff, 1991). I agree that catchphrases — or, more generally put, commonplaces — constitute an important dimension of cultural congruence. I refer to it as the *congruence of commonplaces*. My analysis, however, does not stop at this dimension of congruence. I uncover two more hidden dimensions. The *congruence of themes* is about interlocutors employing broad classifications, that is, something akin to a master frame (Snow and Benford, 1992), which are selected from a widely shared repertoire. The *congruence of genre* — I borrow the notion of genre from rhetorical theory (Aristotle, 1975: 1358a–b; Quintilian, 2001: 3.3.14) — is the most foundational one of them all. Interlocutors fall back upon an order of basic categories of a framing process that is in sync with a widely shared repertoire.

Probing the plausibility of this theoretical framework, I examine Tony Blair's efforts to win over the British public to go to war over Kosovo and Iraq. I argue that this yields empirical evidence for the generative mechanism that links the three dimensions of cultural congruence to resonance. During the Kosovo crisis, Blair's framing was highly culturally congruent throughout. He fell back on the military intervention genre that is found in the dominant British repertoire: prior to the intervention, he emphasised cause; at the onset, he hiked up contrast; and during the war, he returned to stressing cause. His framing was also thematically congruent, putting justice causes ahead of instrumental ones, as well as targeted demarcation (against Milošević) ahead of an all-encompassing one (against the entire Serb people). Last but not least, Blair selected commonplaces from the dominant repertoire such as the appeasement analogy. This high cultural congruence facilitated Blair's attempts to set the tone in the public debate. Political elites from different parties and journalists from different media outlets echoed his framing. Public opinion was on his side.

During the Iraq crisis, by contrast, Blair's framing was not culturally congruent throughout. While his messages put to use the widely taken-for-granted military intervention genre during the entire crisis, he relied on themes and commonplaces that were less familiar to his audience during much of the pre-war debates. He tried to make an instrumental cause stick with the public (threat to national security) and specified it with a key term that was anything but a commonplace ('pre-emption'). In mid-February 2003, that is, only a few weeks before the onset of war, the prime minister revisited his framing. Moving towards a justice cause as well as invoking commonplaces of Britain as the guardian of international order and human rights, his messages added thematic and commonplace congruence to the congruence of genre. From then on, his messages continued to feature a high level of cultural congruence. At the onset of war, Blair emphasised the ritual targeted demarcation over the justice cause, praising British soldiers and vilifying the opponent leader. During the war, he reverted back to stressing his justice causes. Adding cultural congruence made a major difference for Blair. As long as his framing lacked thematic and commonplace congruence, he was severely criticised. Britain witnessed its greatest anti-war demonstrations ever. When he switched his framing around and increased its cultural congruence, however, his messages came to resonate.

This article makes two key contributions. The first one pertains to the literature on how leaders generate public support for going to war. We should not assume that all there is to winning over the public to go to war is emphasising a certain cause or a certain demarcation throughout. The concept of framing provides analytical opportunities for tracing how the actors we study *put together and adapt intersubjectively compelling messages*, including how they move from certain causes to others and even from causes to contrasts, and vice versa. The second contribution adds to our understanding of the framing literature's central concept of cultural congruence. The phenomenon has *foreground and background dimensions*. Scratching at the surface of cultural congruence, authors tend to reduce the concept to what they find in the foreground of a debate. What I refer to as the congruence of commonplaces is squarely located in this foreground. It is easily visible for the actors who communicate with one another, as well as the analysts who try to make sense of the actors' communicative encounters. Yet, we need to dig deeper. Background dimensions — themes and genres — are less visible but certainly no less consequential.<sup>1</sup> If the order of basic categories of frames (genre) and/or the classifications for elaborating on these categories (themes) are not culturally congruent, frames cannot resonate. Even more so, my empirical findings suggest that the background is ontologically prior to the foreground. The selection of, say, incongruent themes (background) predisposes actors to select incongruent commonplaces (foreground).

This article is organised into six sections. First, I discuss the existing literature on war and public support. Second, I address the strengths and weaknesses of the framing literature in further depth. Third, I revisit the concept of cultural congruence. Fourth, I identify the key features of the dominant British repertoire of interpretations on going to war. Fifth, I inquire into how Blair made use of this repertoire to rally support for his war over Kosovo. Sixth, I examine his attempts to gain public support to wage war against Iraq. Finally, the conclusion summarises my findings and sketches an agenda for further research.

## Beyond narrow analytical foci and a truncated understanding of communication

Most of the literature explains a nation's support for going to war by invoking instrumental reasons. Yet, there are also clusters of research on justice reasons, demarcation and framing. Discussing the strengths and weaknesses of these clusters, this section makes a case for amending the framing literature without dismissing the research results of the other perspectives.

Scholarship on *instrumental causes* for war focuses strongly on the salience of success in waging war (Eichenberg, 2005; Feaver and Gelpi, 2004), national interest (Auerswald, 2004; Page and Barabas, 2000) and low casualty numbers (Mueller, 1973). The latter has been analysed from various perspectives, factoring in type of war (Baum, 2004; Gelpi et al., 2005; Jentleson, 1992) and elite consensus (Larson, 2000). This literature shows that instrumental causes can make a difference for a nation's support for war. Yet, it suffers from two important drawbacks. First, utilitarian assumptions loom so large that war justifications other than instrumental causes do not feature in these accounts. Second, authors overlook the critical role of communication. They assume that it is, ultimately, material reality (e.g. casualty numbers) that does the talking. Spin, however, matters. Certain interlocutors make certain intersubjective interpretations — in Gartner's (2011: 545) words, 'images' — prevail rather than others.

Research on *justice causes* shows that considerations of what makes for a just war contribute to publics supporting wars in general (Berinsky, 2007; Fanis, 2011; Goetze, 2008; Welch, 2012), and humanitarian interventions in particular (Gilboa, 2005; Robinson, 2005). Yet, this perspective, too, has its shortcomings. First, it also settles for an analytical focus that is too narrow. While the perspective excels at demonstrating that justice causes matter, it overlooks other war justifications. Second, most authors shy away from in-depth investigations of the communicative processes through which leaders fail or succeed to make a justice cause stick with a nation. Those authors who have paid close attention to communication from the start move in the opposite direction of such in-depth investigations. They trace media effects across different levels, for instance, from the national to the regional and from the regional to the global (Gilboa et al., 2016). This is an important endeavour but it does not provide additional leads for the question under scrutiny in this study, that is, how leaders garner the support of their nations to go to war.

Scholarship on demarcation is not about causes of war presented to nations, be they about utilitarian or justice considerations. Rather, it deals with the making and unmaking of identifications, most importantly, the *demarcation* of one's own nation from significant others.<sup>2</sup> Klemperer (1947) and Burke (1974: 191–220) made seminal contributions to this research strand. Mobilising the nation for war involves drawing a clear-cut line between Self and Other, glorifying Self and vilifying Other. What defines this demarcation varies. In extreme cases — this is what Klemperer and Burke analyse — it is constituted by beliefs of racial superiority vis-a-vis entire societal groups or nations. Oftentimes, the demarcation is somewhat less absolute and all-encompassing. It may, for instance, be mainly targeted at the leader of an enemy state (Keeble, 2000: 65; Lakoff, 1991: 28; Schostak, 1993: 85). All its important insights on demarcation notwithstanding, research

on demarcation is also analytically too narrow. The focus on demarcation comes at the price of neglecting the causes of war. Scholarship on demarcation provides some important hints at communicative processes. The portraits of enemies, for example, are very much communicated into being. Interlocutors draw from a repertoire in order to do so (Brewer, 2009). However, the questions of how this repertoire is configured and how interlocutors come to compose a compelling portrayal out of the clues of the repertoire are under-researched.

The research cluster on *framing*<sup>3</sup> examines how leaders make frames resonate with publics. Neither instrumental causes nor justice causes nor demarcation are *eo ipso* more compelling to an audience. Instead, it is of crucial importance whether the clues composing the frame are culturally congruent or not. A frame resonates with an audience if leaders take the clues for assembling this frame from a pool of ideas that are widely shared by the audience (Entman, 2003, 2004; Kuusisto, 1998; Olmastroni, 2014; Zellman, 2015). In contrast to the other perspectives, the framing literature provides an alternative to overly narrow scholarly compartments. Being located at a higher level of abstraction, its analytical focus is more inclusive. It leaves room for examining causes and demarcations presented by leaders. Framing research goes the furthest in examining communication in sufficient depth. The concept of cultural congruence is an important vehicle for analysing how frames resonate in communicative encounters.

## More on repertoires, framing and cultural congruence

Given these analytical opportunities, the remainder of this article looks at the concept of framing in further depth. It does so, however, not uncritically. Debates within the framing literature and criticism directed at it from the outside show that it has its own set of interrelated weaknesses to overcome. These pertain to conceptualisations of repertoires, components of framing processes and cultural congruence.

The literature does not pay sufficient attention to *repertoires*. The insight that there is no such thing as an ‘immaculate conception’ of frames (Mooney and Hunt, 1996: 179) is not contested. When Converse (1964) writes about the necessity of frames to be anchored in salient political priors, Burke (1969: 359–361) emphasises the importance of an underlying ‘grammar’ and Goffman (1974: 10–21) elaborates on cultural context, they allude to the critical role of repertoires. Interlocutors select clues from a repertoire in order to assemble frames. These clues form the familiar elements of a message in light of which the unfamiliar elements of a given situation — what interlocutors advocate for — become intelligible. Tilly’s (2008: xiv–xv) criticism, however, is still as valid as it was a decade ago. There is surprisingly little research on the nature of these repertoires. What constitutes a repertoire? What kinds of elements for composing framing processes do repertoires actually contain?

More research is required on the *components of framing*. Critics of the framing literature point out correctly that most authors equate frames with catchphrases (Lejano et al., 2013: 54). There are hints in the framing literature for how to move beyond this problem. Some time ago, Benford and Snow (1992) coined the concept of master frames, suggesting that there is a more general layer of frames than the one constituted by catchphrases. Yet, there is a need to dig even deeper. Catchphrases and master frames share in common that they are conceptualised in static terms. They are components of a frame that is

assumed to stay the same throughout a communicative situation. This assumption sits very uneasily with the emphasis by many authors that framing is a process (Benford and Snow, 2000; Borah, 2011; Goffman, 1974) and the key insight of communication theory that communicators adapt their messages over and over (Ivey and Hurst, 1971). Taking the process character of framing seriously requires being on the lookout for components of framing that are dynamic.

The concept of *cultural congruence* remains under-specified in the literature. On the one hand, it amounts to a very powerful analytical idea. Ancient rhetorical theory is already full of recommendations for the orator to embed what is argued for in well-known ideas. Aristotle (1975) referred to these as *topoi*. Cicero (2003) and Quintilian (2001) translated these as *loci* into Latin. On the other hand, this analytical idea requires further specification. Rhetorical theory has engaged in this kind of inquiry from the start. The aforementioned authors, for instance, disagreed about the production of cultural congruence. To Aristotle, *topoi* were concrete and widely shared commonplaces such as tropes. To Cicero (2003: 1.34) and Quintilian (2001: 5.10.20–22), they were more equally widely shared but more abstract classifications such as habit, feeling and interest. The framing literature circumvents such specific inquiries by resorting to overly generic formulations. Entman (2004: 14), whose seminal work on framing is very widely cited, writes that cultural congruence is about using ‘schemas that dominate the political culture’.

These three limitations of the literature are interrelated. Specifying cultural congruence further is not possible without further insights on what constitutes repertoires and framing. After all, cultural congruence is, very simply put, a ‘good match’ (Entman, 2004: 15) between the repertoire of an audience and the components of framing.

## Genre, themes and commonplaces

This section seeks to amend framing theory by inquiring into repertoires, framing components and cultural congruence in more depth. My endeavour is distinctly eclectic, linking hints provided by framing theory to insights borrowed from rhetorical theory.

Three layers of repertoires may be distinguished. The most foundational one is the *layer of genres*. It is the pool of available templates for what is to be invoked, with what emphasis and in what chronological order. The only student of framing who alludes to this layer is Steinberg (1999: 746), and he borrows it from rhetorical theory. A genre is ‘a kind of loose, multiform whole’ (Hoy, quoted in Steinberg, 1999: 746).<sup>4</sup> This notion of genre goes back to ancient rhetoric (Aristotle, 1975: 1358a–b; Quintilian, 2001: 3.3.14). The forensic genre, for example, was considered appropriate for presenting a case at court. It delineated what materials were to be highlighted at the beginning of the court proceedings and at the end, before and after opponents have spoken, before and after evidence is presented, and so on. The *layer of themes* stores something akin to generic compartments of taken-for-granted ideas. I borrow the concept of themes from Gamson (1992). He echoes Cicero’s and Quintilian’s understandings of *loci* when he illustrates themes empirically. He, too, writes about interest themes (Gamson, 1992: 144) and justice themes (Gamson, 1992: 10). The *layer of commonplaces* is the reservoir of concrete

ideas from which framers select their catchphrases, such as analogies and metaphors. When students of framing refer to repertoires, they usually have this reservoir of commonplaces in mind. The Aristotelian conceptualisation of *topoi* is similar, too.

Actors select clues from all three layers of the repertoire. This makes framing *multi-dimensional*. Framers fall back upon a genre that gives them directions about what basic categories are to be highlighted and when. Adding themes, they flesh out these categories. Adding commonplaces, they make certain aspects of these themes specific. Mooney and Hunt, as well as Pan and Kosicki, argue for something rather similar. There is a ‘foundation of ... interpretations’, there is something that ‘color[s]’ these foundations (Mooney and Hunt, 1996: 179) and, finally, these coloured slots are ‘filled with lexical elements’ (Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 62). Note that the selection of a genre makes framing dynamic. Clues taken from this layer include how to adjust frames by moving from highlighted category to highlighted category. Framing, therefore, is not synchronic; it is a diachronic phenomenon (Matthes and Schemer, 2012).

Since repertoires and framing are multidimensional, cultural congruence is, too. Full cultural congruence encompasses the *congruence of genre, themes and commonplaces*. Framers fall back upon a sequence of emphases on basic categories that are in sync with the repertoire of the audience, and elaborate on these by using themes and commonplaces that are equally in accord with this repertoire. It is up to in-depth empirical research to determine the extent to which a particular framing process is culturally congruent or not. This extent should matter. The more culturally congruent framing is, the more likely it is to resonate with an audience.

The remainder of this article engages in such a detailed analysis in order to probe the plausibility of this theoretical framework. I investigate how Tony Blair justified two of his major interventions (Kosovo and Iraq) to the public. I do so because of the puzzling record of Blair and his spin doctors — above all, Alistair Campbell — in succeeding in this endeavour. At a time when Blair was still quite new in office and his public relations machinery had no prior experience in managing the information flow during an international crisis, the prime minister was highly successful in winning over the public to go to war over Kosovo.<sup>5</sup> Blair never put more effort into talking the public into war than during the Iraq crisis. After months and months of failures to make his pro-war message resonate with the public, he only secured an approval of intervention at the onset of war.<sup>6</sup> Why was Blair so successful to make the nation go to war over Kosovo? Why did he struggle for such a long time to make it support war against Iraq? Why did he eventually succeed in this case, too?

Due to my theoretical focus on culture, I conduct an interpretivist framing analysis (Downs, 2002; Van Hulst and Yanow, 2016). I proceed in two steps. First, I conduct a descriptive analysis of the dominant British repertoire on intervention. Focusing on domestic debates during the Suez Crisis, Falklands War, Gulf War and Bosnian War, I examine whether there was a genre, themes and commonplaces for framing war prior to the Kosovo crisis.<sup>7</sup> I examine whether particular sequences of cause and contrast (genre), and particular causes — that is, instrumental or justice — and contrasts — that is, all-encompassing or targeted — (themes) were put to use again and again. Since commonplaces are more easily accessible for the analyst, comparable heuristic devices are not

necessary for identifying them. Second, I follow up with the explanatory analysis. Addressing the crises in Kosovo and Iraq, I identify the components of Blair's framing, discuss the extent to which they were culturally congruent (genre, themes, commonplaces) across time and link this congruence to the degree to which his messages resonated. Similarly to Entman (2003), I infer resonance from replications of (parts of) a leader's framing (here, Blair) by other political elites and journalists, as well as from public opinion data on agreements and disagreements with his framing. The empirical data presented in the sections to follow were gathered for a larger research project. What follows is a concise summary of my findings.

## **Continuity and change of the dominant repertoire**

The descriptive analysis of the dominant British repertoire yields three key findings. First, there was a military intervention genre in the repertoire. It was structured by a sequence: before actually resorting to war, the genre privileged cause; at the onset of war, the genre moved to emphasising contrast; and during the war, the primary emphasis on cause returned. Second, the repertoire also featured themes. It moved away from instrumental causes towards justice causes while targeted contrasting — as opposed to an all-encompassing one — persisted. Third, there was a range of commonplaces, such as the role understanding of Britain as guardian of international order, the anti-appeasement analogy and the unwavering determination to support British troops engaged in war.

The military intervention genre was firmly established. Pre-intervention debates were structured by a *primary emphasis on causes*. Which causal themes to employ had not yet been equally established by the 1950s. Pre-intervention debates about Suez pitted instrumental and justice causes against one another. The government, advocating for war in order to secure oil supplies, relied on the former category (Crossman, 1956; Eden, 1956a; Raikes, 1956). The opposition, taking a more cautionary approach in order to uphold international law and the United Nations (Gaitskell, 1956a; King, 1956; Stewart, 1956), employed the latter. The media were equally split (Parmentier, 1980: 441). By the time the Falklands Conflict escalated, the repertoire had settled for a *justice theme*. Thatcher's case for war was about freedom (Franck, 1983). The opposition and some newspapers such as the *Daily Mirror*, albeit taking a more critical stance, did not contest this theme (Glasgow University Media Group, 1995: 92–96). The justice theme also prevailed prior to the Gulf War. There was a wide consensus on countering aggression and occupation among political elites (Howell, 1990: 760; Hurd, 1990; Kinnock, 1990: 750; Major, 1990) and journalists (Philo and McLaughlin, 1995). During the Bosnian crisis, the debate was equally dominated by the justice theme. The Major government failed to defend its anti-interventionist stance by invoking instrumental reasons about the costs of intervention (Hurd, 1994: 145; Major, 1993). Proponents of intervention, ranging from Robin Cook to Margaret Thatcher, condemned inaction amid refugee flows, rape and ethnic cleansing. They won the public debate and put pressure on the government to move towards intervention (Wybrow, 2003: 45–51).

Commonplaces frequently attached to the primary cause of war revolved around a self-understanding of Britain as the *guardian of international order*. The need for



the *United Nations* to authorise the use of force (Parmentier, 1980: 441), the *right to national self-determination* (*Economist*, 1982a; Pym, 1982; Thatcher, 1982a) and *human rights* (*Economist*, 1994a, 1994b; *Independent*, 1992, 1993) were linked to this self-understanding. In addition to the primary emphasis on cause in pre-intervention debates, there was also always a *secondary emphasis on contrast*. The prevailing contrasting theme was *targeted demarcation*. Actors vilified the leader of the opponent state. They often did so by using commonplaces borrowed from the Second World War. The Munich analogy featured very frequently. A dangerous dictator must not be appeased; they must be confronted before it is too late. This analogy put the targeted leaders, that is, Nasser (Crossman, 1956; *Illustrated London News*, 1956; Waterhouse, 1956), the Argentine *junta* (Hughes, 2014: 91–116), Saddam Hussein (Critchley, 1991: 793; Howell, 1991: 761; Major, 1990: 33) and Milošević (Cook, 1994: 315; Winnick, 1994: 321), into the vicinity of Hitler.

At the onset of war, the military intervention genre channelled debates towards a *primary emphasis on contrast*. When British troops moved into action in Suez, the debate became much more emotional. The *targeted demarcation* from Nasser and the glorification of British troops moved centre stage (Parmentier, 1980: 445). Even many newspapers that had previously cautioned against intervention moved towards contrasting and supporting the ‘boys’. Those that did not were sharply criticised, such as the *Manchester Guardian*. Its circulation dropped sharply (Brown, 2001). At the onset of the Falklands War, even quality news magazines (*Economist*, 1982b: 16) echoed Thatcher’s vilification of the ‘Argentine junta’ (Thatcher, 1982b: 980). There was again a major rush to support British soldiers, including by politicians (Foot, 1982: 485) and newspapers such as the *Daily Mirror*, who had previously opposed going to war. The *Sun* attacked the *Mirror*’s turnaround as too little, too late. It branded its rival newspaper a traitor (Greenslade, 2003: 447). When the Gulf War began, Major (1991) vilified Saddam Hussein and spoke very proudly of Britain’s ‘servicemen and women’. Neil Kinnock (1991), the leader of the opposition, and quality newspapers such as the *Guardian* (1991a), followed suit. The contrasting was even stronger than usual at the onset of peace enforcement in Bosnia. Political elites stuck to the theme of targeted demarcation, vilifying Milošević as the perpetrator of mass murder and genocide, as well as praising the integrity and professionalism of the British troops (Cook, 1995; Major, 1995a). Some tabloid newspapers moved beyond this theme towards an all-encompassing demarcation from the Serbs (Hume, 2000: 70).

The preceding already gives away some of the key commonplaces used for specifying the theme of targeted demarcation. *Praising and positively identifying with the British troops* — the ‘boys’, the ‘lads’ and so on — was omnipresent. This was often juxtaposed to an enemy leader who was likened to Hitler. Commonplaces used to specify the primary emphasis on contrast ranged from the *appeasement analogy* (Sumberg, 1991: 64) to the *holocaust analogy* (Patrick, 2016: 147). The latter commonplace was closely linked to the move from targeted to all-encompassing demarcation from the Serbs at the onset of the intervention in Bosnia. In addition to the primary emphasis on contrast, a secondary emphasis on cause remained in place. At the onset of the Suez intervention, the debate on instrumental versus justice causes continued (Eden, 1956b, 1956c;

Gaitskell, 1956b). As far as the other interventions were concerned, actors continued to invoke justice causes as secondary emphasis. Interlocutors frequently used commonplaces borrowed from international law, such as the *prohibition to wage a war of aggression* (*Economist*, 1991a, 1991b; *Guardian*, 1991a) and *human rights* (*Independent*, 1995).

In the midst of war, the military intervention genre restructured the debates yet again. The primary emphasis *moved back to the causes* discussed earlier. These causes were invoked in order to evaluate the success of the war. During the Suez intervention, the prime minister was criticised severely, no matter whether communicators invoked instrumental or justice causes (Parmentier, 1980: 446). During the Falklands War, interlocutors celebrated the quick progress of British troops in re-establishing justice. The tabloids, with the exception of the *Daily Mirror*, did so in sometimes exuberant language (Cull, 2003: 124). Quality newspapers formulated the re-establishment of justice in somewhat more differentiated terms but they, too, celebrated it. During the Gulf War, several cover pages of the *Times* (1991a, 1991b) were about British soldiers moving closer and closer to re-establishing justice. Some critical questions about what success actually ought to mean were asked as well: what should be done with Iraq once Kuwait is liberated? What should be done with the Middle East (*Guardian*, 1991b)? A similar pattern prevailed during peace enforcement in Bosnia. The primary emphasis on justice returned (Major, 1995b). Quality newspapers did not counter this emphasis (genre) or justice causes (theme), but merely asked in-depth questions about these justice causes. The *Independent* (1995b), for example, asked about the aftermath of intervention.

Commonplaces invoked to specify the justice theme echoed the ones used in pre-intervention debates. During the Suez Crisis, more and more actors became critical of the intervention, stressing the need to uphold international law and the *United Nations* (*Economist*, 1956a, 1956b, 1956c; Gaitskell, 1956c). Television coverage put a strong emphasis on these commonplaces during the Gulf War as well (Morrison, 1992: 77). The *right to national self-determination* continued to feature prominently during the Falklands War (*Economist*, 1982c; Thatcher, 1982c), and debates during the Bosnian intervention again focused primarily on *human rights* such as the right to return for refugees and the protection of minorities (*Independent*, 1995b). The atrocities of the Bosnian War came to sink into the repertoire. Epitomised by the Srebrenica genocide, they became commonplaces that actors could select in future debates on war and peace (Hartmann and Vulliamy, 2015; Phytian, 2007: 129). The *secondary emphasis on contrast* continued during the war but wound down towards its end. Oftentimes, cause and contrast were interwoven while success in pursuing the cause was highlighted more. The *Sun* (1982), for example, ran the following headline after the sinking of a major Argentine battleship: 'Gotcha. Our lads sink gunboat and whole cruiser'. There is demarcation, that it, '[o]ur lads' versus them. However, most of all, there is celebrating success, that is, the sinking of a 'gunboat and a whole cruiser'.

This concludes the descriptive analysis of the dominant repertoire. By the mid-1990s, this repertoire had come to encompass the military intervention genre (cause–contrast–cause), themes (justice causes, targeted demarcation) and a number of commonplaces, ranging from analogies with the Second World War to key provisions of international law. The following two sections follow up with the explanatory analysis: to what extent

did Blair make use of the genre, themes and commonplaces of the dominant repertoire when he framed the Kosovo and Iraq crises? What repercussions did this have for his efforts to make his framing resonate with political elites, the media and public opinion?

### **Blair's smooth sailing to Priština**

Throughout the Kosovo crisis, Blair's framing was highly culturally congruent. He selected the dominant repertoire's military intervention genre, its themes of justice (cause) and targeted demarcation (contrast), and a range of its commonplaces. This high degree of cultural congruence helped make his framing resonate widely.

Prior to the war, the prime minister engaged in shuttle diplomacy while his foreign secretary, Robin Cook, became the leading advocate for war domestically. This advocacy came into full swing after at least 40 Kosovo Albanians had been killed near the village of Račak. Its primary emphasis was on a cause of war. The cause was defined by a justice theme and invoked atrocities committed in Bosnia as commonplaces. There was a humanitarian imperative to put an end to 'the past decade of ethnic conflict', which was 'all too full of such atrocities' (Cook, 1999a: 565). The perpetrators ought to be brought to justice. This humanitarian cause was closely linked to the secondary emphasis of demarcation. Cook stressed how 'repelled' he was by the recurrence of Serb atrocities. He distanced himself strongly from the Milošević regime. George Robertson (1999a: 10), Blair's defence secretary, argued in a very similar vein.

Closer to the onset of war, Blair became more involved in garnering domestic support himself. The primary emphasis of his framing was on targeted demarcation. Blair portrayed Milošević as a gruesome, irrational and deceitful dictator. The prime minister linked this demarcation to a justice cause for war: 'We must act: to save thousands of innocent men, women and children from humanitarian catastrophe, from death, barbarism and ethnic cleansing by a brutal dictatorship' (Blair, 1999a: 162). Cook and Robertson also hiked up contrast at the onset of war. Robertson, for example, praised British troops and juxtaposed them to the Serb paramilitaries: 'Milosevic may randomly kill, but we operate to higher standards' (Robertson, 1999b: 1206). The defence secretary linked contrast closely to the justice cause when he vowed that the Serbs' 'most horrific crimes against humanity ... must not go unpunished; and most of all they must not continue' (Robertson, 1999b: 1206).

In the midst of war, the Blair government adapted its framing again. The primary emphasis on the just humanitarian cause returned.<sup>8</sup> Blair (1999b) made a doctrine out of humanitarian intervention. His Chicago speech was about conceptualising just war in terms of humanitarian motives and applying this conceptualisation to Kosovo. States should not be allowed to do terrible wrong within their borders: 'We cannot let the evil of ethnic cleansing stand' (Blair, 1999b). Despite the worsening situation on the ground, Blair displayed utmost determination to succeed: 'Success is the only exit strategy that I am prepared to consider' (Blair, 1999b). Cook and Robertson again backed Blair up. They, too, stressed the successful pursuit of the humanitarian cause. Contrast, more precisely targeted demarcation, remained a secondary emphasis. Blair's key aides vilified Milošević, putting his doings into the vicinity of those of Hitler and Stalin (Cook, 1999b: 573; Robertson, 1999c: 664).

All of this amounted to a highly culturally congruent frame. Blair selected the military intervention genre from the dominant repertoire. He sequenced the framing in terms of primary emphases on cause (prior to war), contrast (onset of war) and cause (during war). His framing was also highly congruent as far as the themes of his framing were concerned. He privileged justice causes and targeted demarcation. Last but certainly not least, his government also used plenty of widely shared commonplaces. This included Second World War analogies (Hitler and Stalin) and more recent historical experiences (Srebrenica).

Other political elites, for the most part, did not contest this framing. They tended to replicate it. Prior to the war, Members of Parliament emphasised the urgent need of military intervention to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe (Bell, 1999; Clwyd, 1999; Howard, 1999a; Lewis, 1999). This focus on a justice cause was accompanied by demarcation targeted against Milošević (Austin, 1999; Bradshaw, 1999; Emery, 1999; Wicks, 1999). At the onset of war, their framing came to privilege targeted demarcation. Milošević, having committed 'the worst evil possible' (Livingstone, 1999: 570) and 'barbarous handiwork' (Mahon, 1999: 576), being 'intrinsically evil' (Hancock, 1999: 579) and an 'extremely evil person' (Maples, 1999: 609), and likened to a 'Nazi dictator' (Woodward, 1999: 590), was vilified. Britain's intervention and especially its troops involved were praised (Anderson, 1999: 548; Campbell, 1999: 544; Howard, 1999b: 541–542; King, 1999: 554). During the war, parliamentarians reverted back to an emphasis on the justice cause. They debated to what extent the intervention fulfilled its purpose, that is, preventing a humanitarian catastrophe. Although looking through a similar frame, the evaluation of success differed significantly along party lines. The Tories criticised Blair for not doing enough (Blunt, 1999; Robathan, 1999: 640; Tapsell, 1999; Viggers, 1999: 632). There were only few critics who deviated from the dominant frame. Benn (1999: 564) rejected the category of justice causes for war as a matter of principle. A number of critics relied on commonplaces about the legal permissibility of the resort to war. Referring to the United Nations Charter, they branded the intervention as illegal (Benn, 1999: 566; Corbyn, 1999; Mahon, 1999: 576). However, these voices remained at the margins of the debate.

The media did not contest much of this framing either. Prior to the war, the *BBC News Analysis* (1999) called for 'firm action' to be taken by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in order to avert a 'second Bosnia-Herzegovina'. The *Guardian* (1999a) put it very similarly but used more drastic words for the secondary emphasis on targeted demarcation: the military intervention amounted to a 'showdown with the killer' (Milošević). The *Daily Mirror* (1999) went a step further, vilifying Milošević as a 'butcher' and 'bloody tyrant', but even here, the primary emphasis was on preventing a humanitarian catastrophe. At the onset of war, the strong demarcation from Milošević, coupled with the praise of British troops, was even more ubiquitous than the justice cause (Hammond, 2000: 124). Comparative studies (Nohrstedt et al., 2000: 394) show that British newspapers demonised the Serb leader even more than newspapers in other European states. The media continued to mirror Blair's framing during the war. Yet, they, too, debated whether Blair's policies were *en par* with the framing. The *Telegraph*, for example, similarly to some Tory deputies, called for ground troops in order to succeed (Nohrstedt et al., 2000: 394). At times, even the *Guardian* (1999b) joined this advocacy.

**Table 1.** Public approval for Kosovo intervention.

	26–27 March 1999	1–2 April 1999	30 April –1 May 1999
Right	55	76	70
Wrong	27	16	21
Don't know	19	8	8

Only in few cases did the criticism against Blair's policies call into question the intervention as such (Richards, 1999).

Given this strong societal convergence on how to frame the unfolding events in Kosovo, it is not surprising that public opinion was in favour of humanitarian intervention as well. Using available public opinion data, Table 1 shows the approval of intervention from late March to early May 1999. In late March, 55% of the public considered it already right to go to war against Yugoslavia. A week later, the approval jumped to 76%. By early May, the approval decreased slightly to 70%.<sup>9</sup> The popular support even went beyond what Blair dared to advocate publicly at the time. By early April, 52% approved of a NATO ground offensive while 40% disapproved of such an escalation of the war (MORI/*Mail on Sunday*, in Everts and Isernia, 2015: 320).

### Blair's rocky road to Basra

Throughout his framing of the Iraq War, Blair made use of the military intervention genre. Prior to the war, however, his framing was less culturally congruent as far as themes and commonplaces were concerned. Only when he switched to more cultural congruence on these dimensions did the resonance of his framing increase significantly.

Blair's first inkling was to fall back on the justice theme again. On 10 September 2002, he had the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) publish a report entitled 'Saddam Hussein: Crimes and human rights abuses' (Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 2002). It listed the Iraqi leader's human rights abuses and atrocities. Thus far, the framing was highly culturally congruent. The framing process started with a primary emphasis on cause. The theme invoked was justice. Widely shared commonplaces revolving around human rights specified the justice cause.

Shortly after the publication of this report, however, Blair received legal counsel that such a humanitarian justification could not be reconciled with international law. The Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith, advised that it was permissible to aim for regime change in order to disarm Iraq but not for humanitarian reasons (Committee of Privy Counsellors, 2016: 245–246). Following this advice, Blair and his spin doctors changed the emphasis of their framing to an instrumental cause about pre-emption. They claimed that Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were a threat to British and international security. Thus, he would have to be disarmed. In his foreword to the dossier *Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Assessment of the British Government*, published in late September, Blair wrote that Saddam Hussein's 'military planning allows for some of the WMD to be ready within 45 minutes of an order to use them' (British Government, 2002). The same day on which the dossier was published, Blair (2002) gave

a speech in the House of Commons where he stressed his 45-minute claim. He also posulated that any disarmament would be authorised by the United Nations. A similar report, entitled 'Iraq: Its infrastructure of concealment, deception and intimidation' (British Government 2003), followed in early February 2003.

In between these reports — late September to mid-February — things went from bad to worse for Blair. There was plenty of frame contestation in Parliament. Initially, critics focused on dismissing the pre-emption cause (Baker, 2002: 89; Cook, 2002: 105; Galloway, 2002: 61; Kilfoyle, 2002: 441–442; Ruddock, 2002: 105–106; Sheridan, 2002: 22; Wareing, 2002: 103). It is telling how an outspoken opponent (Maples, 2003: 331) of the war *ex post facto* reflected upon this rejection:

Interestingly, the United States Government do not have the same problem, because they basically said ... 'This is an extremely unpleasant individual, who is murdering millions of his own citizens and destabilising the region, and we are not going to put up with it any longer.' If the Prime Minister had come here and said that, I would have supported that.

This quote highlights how difficult it is to make a culturally incongruent frame resonate with an audience. A justice cause constructed along humanitarian lines, similarly to what Blair had done prior to the Kosovo intervention, would have been a powerful vehicle for swaying the domestic audience. An instrumental cause focusing on pre-emption, which was outside the dominant repertoire, was not.

From January 2003 onwards, another frame contestation gained more and more support. Largely due to France's skilful diplomacy, the diplomatic pathway had come to be defined by two resolutions. One — UNSC 1441 — was about the threat to resort to war. If this resolution did not make Iraq comply, a second resolution would authorise the use of force. Blair, although backed by the American president, failed to make the Security Council adopt such a second resolution. This, in the eyes of many critics, violated a key commonplace that Blair had always invoked himself, that is, to disarm Saddam Hussein in accordance with international law. Many deputies criticised the prime minister for violating the United Nations Charter (Hogg, 2003: 33; Kennedy, 2003a: 786; Kilfoyle, 2003; Mahon, 2003: 364; Marshall-Andrews, 2003: 349).

The media, too, played their role in taking Blair's framing apart. The pre-emption claim was subject to severe criticism. The February 2003 dossier on WMD was quickly dubbed the 'doggy dossier'. The *Spectator* (2002) criticised Blair for making up threats: '[W]e are awash in a rising tide of paranoia'. Some journalists actively participated in anti-war protests, which gained more and more momentum from January onwards. On 21 January, for instance, the *Daily Mirror* launched a No War Petition. On 15 February, when a million protesters marched on the streets of London, *Mirror* journalists participated very visibly (Tulloch, 2007: 47–48). Other newspapers such as the *Sunday Independent* and the *Guardian*, increasingly often invoking international law, were rather critical, too (Goddard et al., 2008: 24).

After the protests of 15 February, Blair's framing changed significantly.<sup>10</sup> In a speech in Glasgow on 15 February 2003, there was a primary emphasis on neither instrumental nor justice causes. They were balanced. When he addressed the protesters, he focused on the justice cause, that is, the need to rid the Iraqis of a murderous regime (Blair, 2003a).

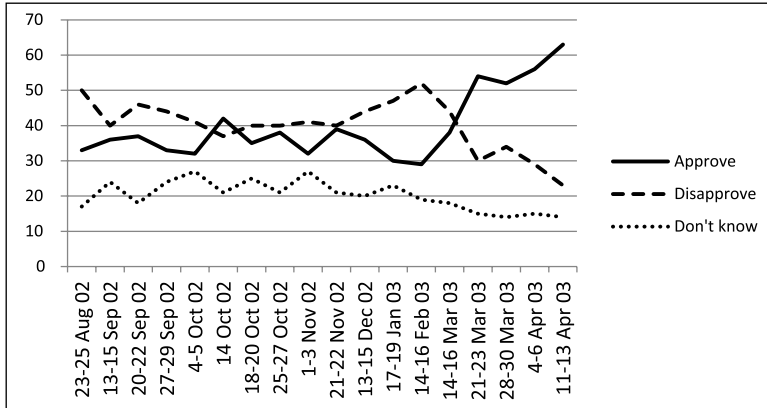
At the onset of war, he hiked up contrast. Blair emphasised ‘my detestation of Saddam’. He gave a broad overview of human rights violations committed by the Iraqi leader, addressing ‘death and torture camps’, ‘barbaric prisons’ and ‘routine beatings’. He also provided very specific narratives about the suffering of Iraqis: ‘Just last week, someone slandering Saddam was tied to a lamp post in a street in Baghdad, his tongue cut out, mutilated and left to bleed to death, as a warning to others’. Towards the end of the speech, his message culminated in the postulate that the suffering of the Iraqi people would have to end. Their ‘only true hope of liberation lies in the removal of Saddam Hussein’ (Blair, 2003b). On 21 March, three days after his speech in Parliament, Blair (2003c) gave his televised speech to the British people, replicating the primary emphasis on contrast and, very much linked to it, the secondary one on the just humanitarian cause. He also praised the ‘boys’. On the one hand, there are ‘dictators like Saddam, terrorists like al-Qaida’. On the other hand, there is the ‘courage and determination of British men and women, serving our country’.

During the war, Blair completed the switch to the humanitarian motive. Similarly to the Kosovo War, Blair chose a summit with the US president as the stage for keeping the mobilisation of the public up. The summit happened on 8 April 2003 at Hillsborough in Northern Ireland. The shortest paragraph of the press statement he distributed was dedicated to the original cause of war. Three short sentences dealt with the commitment to ‘disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction’ (Blair, 2003d). Contrast featured more strongly than the original cause of war. Yet, what featured in the press statement at greatest length was the humanitarian cause of war. The following quote, the central element in the press statement, is well worth quoting at length:

And there is no reason whatever why we need to be back into the wrangles we have over, you know, the so-called second resolution. If people keep in mind *the key objective*, which is the well-being of the Iraqi people — whatever is — the past is the past. But this country is in the process of being liberated. (Blair, 2003d: emphasis added)

Blair’s switch towards culturally more congruent framing helped him garner support. In Parliament, political rivals (Jenkin, 2003a; Johnson, 2003) and friends (Hoon, 2003; Soley, 2003) concurred with the justice motive. Some critics remained. Wareing (2003), for example, accused Blair of applying the ‘law of the jungle’ instead of international law. Yet, the ritualised battle cry to support British troops (Keetch, 2003; Kennedy, 2003b; Thomas, 2003) silenced many critics. During the war, the primary emphasis on contrast gave way to a primary emphasis on cause again. While all war proponents welcomed that the Iraqi people were about to be liberated from Saddam Hussein, some Conservatives also reminded Blair of the instrumental cause to remove WMD (Jenkin, 2003b; Mitchell, 2003).

The media followed Blair’s habitual rallying cry to the nation at the onset of war. The media made clear that they stood behind the ‘boys’. This even included the *Daily Mirror* (Goddard et al., 2008: 24). Most politicians discontinued their critical stance when the war actually began. Those who did not paid a heavy political price. Robin Cook, for instance, portrayed almost heroically by some media for his opposition to war prior to the actual resort to war, was condemned as soon as ‘the boys’ were in action (Murray



**Figure 1.** Public approval for the Iraq intervention.

et al., 2008: 20). Overall, the media hardly covered protests and critics any more. They were pushed outside the ‘sphere of legitimate controversy’ (Murray et al., 2008: 8). On the streets, the number of protestors dwindled from a million (prior to war) to about 100,000 (during war).

Public opinion data show the turnaround of support very clearly. ICM/*Guardian* asked the following question from August 2002 to April 2003: ‘Would you approve or disapprove of a military attack on Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein?’ (from 21 March onward: ‘Do you approve of the military attack?’). Figure 1 summarises the results. Blair’s pre-emption argument never really took off. Things looked very dire for Blair in mid-February when the gap between opponents and proponents of war amounted to over 20%. However, when Blair moved away from his instrumental theme, public opinion changed significantly. By mid-March, things started to look a bit better, with 38% of the people approving war, 44% remaining opposed and 18% undecided. When Blair hiked up contrast at the onset of the war, he finally secured majority approval: 54% were in favour, only 30% were opposed and 15% were undecided. This approval rating stayed stable during the war except for the last weeks of the war. Towards the end of the war, the approval rate even came to approximate two thirds (63%).<sup>11</sup>

## Conclusion

This study addressed a research question that is examined more and more frequently in International Relations: how do leaders generate public support for going to war? Being sceptical about the compartmentalisation of instrumental reasons, justice reasons and demarcation, the starting point of my theoretical framework was the framing literature. A key concept of this literature — that is, cultural congruence — shows a way out of this compartmentalisation. Instrumental causes, justice causes or demarcation are not *per se* more compelling. What matters is whether their usage is culturally congruent or not. I then proposed amendments to our understanding of cultural congruence. I contended that



cultural congruence is much more than widely shared catchphrases. Cultural congruence has three dimensions: genre, themes and commonplaces.

The empirical findings yielded evidence for this theoretical framework. Throughout the Kosovo and Iraq crises, Blair's framing was culturally congruent as far as the genre was concerned. Along with most other interlocutors, he fell back on the deeply taken-for-granted military intervention genre. Even actors contesting Blair's framing hardly ever moved away from it. If so, they paid a heavy price. This happened to Robin Cook when he continued to question the cause of the intervention at the onset of war although the debate had moved on to emphasising contrast. However, Blair's framing was not always culturally congruent when it came to themes and commonplaces. When it was, that is, during the Kosovo crisis and in the latter stages of the Iraq crisis, he was very successful in making his framing resonate widely. When it was not, that is, in the earlier stages of the Iraq crisis, he experienced major setbacks in doing so.

This study makes two contributions to existing literatures. The first one relates to the literature on how leaders generate support for war. The three main clusters of this literature have succeeded in showing that instrumental causes, justice causes and demarcation matter. However, the next step has to be to *link them together analytically*. Research on framing provides opportunities for the analyst to do so. In this article, it is especially the findings pertaining to genres that show that interlocutors move back and forth between what scholarly compartments all too often keep strictly separate.

The second contribution pertains to the framing literature. In International Relations, foundational (Joachim, 2003; Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Price, 2003) as well as recent work on framing (Charnysh et al., 2015; Holland, 2012; Peoples, 2014) converges on the significance of the linkage between what this article referred to as cultural congruence and resonance. Given this convergence, it is all the more important to put the properties of cultural congruence that bring resonance about under scrutiny. This study's key finding boils down to *digging underneath the surface* of the communicative divergences and convergences we study. The congruence of commonplaces is located in the foreground. This makes it easy to detect for the analyst. The congruence of genre and themes, by contrast, is situated in the background. Thus, it is much more difficult to uncover these dimensions of congruence. Yet, they are very important. Incongruent genres and themes pose problems of generating resonance by themselves. However, the empirical findings suggest that they underpin additional problems. When Blair settled for an incongruent theme before the Iraq War, commonplace congruence eluded him as well. When he moved towards a congruent theme, his messages also came to be congruent as far as the commonplaces were concerned. In other words, background congruence appears to be ontologically prior to foreground congruence.

Expanding on these contributions points towards a threefold agenda for further research. First, more empirical research is warranted on the processes that link the three dimensions of cultural congruence to resonance. This includes cases other than the UK, other than limited wars and, indeed, other than war. It also includes empirical research on frames that emanate from interlocutors other than government, as well as studies that focus on framing contestation within a government, political party or social movement. Of particular interest are comparisons of cases in which cultural congruence varied on all three dimensions, including the genre. Second, further research should inquire in more

detail into how the three dimensions of cultural congruence relate to one another. This requires paying careful attention to the processes of how interlocutors select clues from the repertoire to form a message and how this message is received by an audience. Context seems to matter in these processes. The genre appears to circumscribe themes, and themes predispose actors to put to use certain commonplaces. However, agency matters, too. Actors are able to revisit their framing and make it more culturally congruent. Third, more systematic work is required on linking research insights on the power of messages and the power of messengers. This article was concerned with the former but, of course, the latter matters as well. For research on framing, it is especially the more hidden forms of hierarchies that are important. They make it appear natural to some actors to speak out while they make it equally self-evident for others to look up to the speaker. These hierarchies, too, are deeply ingrained in the repertoires that structure communicative encounters (Kuus, 2013; Pouliot, 2016).

Taken together, these three items strongly point towards a broader and more eclectic research agenda on political communication. It may not always be easy to cross entrenched scholarly divides. However, in order to improve our understanding of the multifaceted phenomenon of communication, pursuing such a research agenda is well worth the effort.

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### **Notes**

1. On background and foreground, see Kornprobst and Senn (2016). On visibility as a vehicle to distinguish between the two, see also Campbell (1998: 384). On background conceptualised as narrative rhythms — something akin to what I refer to as genre — see Bal (2009: 98–103).
2. While studies on justice causes and contrasting form distinct clusters of research, there are overlaps between them (see, e.g., Brewer, 2012).
3. To be more precise, the literature I review is the sociological literature on framing. The psychological one, which I have addressed elsewhere (Kornprobst, 2011), is very relevant for the study of leadership, especially how leaders come to assemble certain frames, but less so for this investigation on how messages emanating from leaders come to win over the masses.
4. When Tilly (2008: 15) defines the repertoire as a reservoir of available scripts, he hints at something quite similar.
5. The public was even in favour of a ground invasion at a time when Blair did not dare to advocate for one publicly. By early April, 52% approved of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ground offensive, including British troops (MORI/*Mail on Sunday*, in Everts and Isernia, 2015: 151).
6. For a compilation of data from different polling institutes, see Everts and Isernia (2005: 320).

7. This inquiry yields something akin to the dominant 'security imaginary' (Guzzini, 2011: 338; Weldes, 1999: 11) or 'British foreign policy tradition' (Bratberg, 2011: 331–334).
8. This emphasis continued until the end of the bombardments with the exception of late May 1999. Trying to mobilise the nation for more determined action (at the time, Blair started considering sending ground troops, albeit only in private), Blair (1999c) reverted to his strong emphasis on contrast. Blair also made an instrumental case for war. Intervention was to prevent a spillover of the conflict into other states. Yet, he never placed much emphasis on this instrumental cause.
9. Unfortunately, no comparable data are available prior to the intervention.
10. On this shift, see also Strong (2015).
11. These data are compiled by Everts and Isernia (2005: 320). The authors also provide more nuanced surveys on the role of United Nations authorisation. These show that the public took the commonplace Blair initially invoked very seriously. In January 2003, 61% were in favour of a United Nations-authorized intervention while only 15% were in favour of an intervention that was not authorised by the United Nations.

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