Grand nations, grand ideas?

Guiding principles in the foreign policy of Britain and France

Masteroppgave i statsvitenskap
Institutt for statsvitenskap
Universitetet i Oslo 3. mai 2005

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"Så rystet Æsop sin lange smale krop borte ved gruven, det klirret i dens halsbånd, den gapte og logret, og jeg sprang op efter disse tre, fire timers søvn, uthvilet og fuld av glæde over alt, alt.

Således gikk mangen nat."

Knut Hamsun, Pan (1894)

Abstract

This thesis finds its thematic focus in *the foreign policy of Britain and France*. Drawing on assumptions of social constructivism, it aspires to outline an independent vein within the analysis of ideas in foreign policy. *Guiding principles* is the pivotal concept in our investigation, referring to *collectively held ideas embedded in national-political culture*. By way of historical study we attempt to seek out a set of guiding principles in post-war French and British policy; these principles are presented as a set of variables where France and Britain diverge. The second part of the thesis evaluates this typology against empirical data. Material is taken from debates preceding the invasion of Iraq in 2003, restrained to the *political elites* of government and parliament and focusing on textual sources. The analysis shows that while traditional French/British contrasts are largely supported by data, there was also intra-national variation over Iraq. This is particularly the case in Britain, where the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is seen as expanding the British discourse by reuniting a French-derived *moral activism* with a British penchant towards *efficiency* and *enforcement*. In France, meanwhile, the President, Jacques Chirac, as well as the national assembly, are portrayed as champions of a *selective* approach to the Iraq issue, highlighting certain traditional principles while neglecting others. Our analysis concludes with a theoretical observation; while *guiding principles* pose a foundational *framework* to national interest definition, they are sufficiently abstract to allow for a fair amount of *political engineering*.

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"La victoire guidant le peuple" (Eugène Delacroix, 1798-1863): The embodiment of French revolutionary spirit.

Acknowledgements

1. Introduction

> *Foreign policy is unavoidably bound up with a nation's view of itself. The larger and more powerful the country, the more important the idea of its international role as a part of its national myth.[1]*

The *function* or *meaning* of politics may be conceived of in many different ways. However, whether we analyse it as pursuit of personal/partisan interest or search for the common good, democratic politics is characterised by the building of majorities. In the visions presented to voters an important concern is thus to forge unity out of plurality, harmony out of a disorganised and often conflictual world. This logic is inherent in political rhetoric, and there is one domain where it appears with particular clarity – that is in questions of foreign policy. Furthermore, as external relations are at the roots of a nation's sovereignty; images of *independence* are intimately connected with the foreign policy domain.

When an independent foreign policy has such a powerful attraction to the national mind, it is not only because vital interests may be at stake. This thesis builds on the claim that there is more to foreign policy than the purity of 'national interest' as objectively defined. Foreign policy is also about national identity, about self-perception and the international role to which a nation sees itself as suited[2]. It is directed – although loosely – by some *guiding principles* embedded in the political culture. Aggestam (2005:6) thus points to a paradox; regardless of Europeanisation and increasingly marginalized national government, "the legitimacy of foreign policy is still firmly grounded in the politics of identity on national levels". As *vehicle of national consensus* and *outlet of identity abroad*, the significance of foreign policy goes beyond immediate material interests.

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[1] Christopher Tugendhat & William Wallace 1988:9.
[2] A central argument in the 'ideas and foreign policy' current is thus that foreign policy is one of the last domains where a national political identity can be put to play.

This thesis largely bypasses the broad conceptual schemes for defining causes and influences on foreign policy. Nevertheless, a schematic causal model could be conceived as the following:
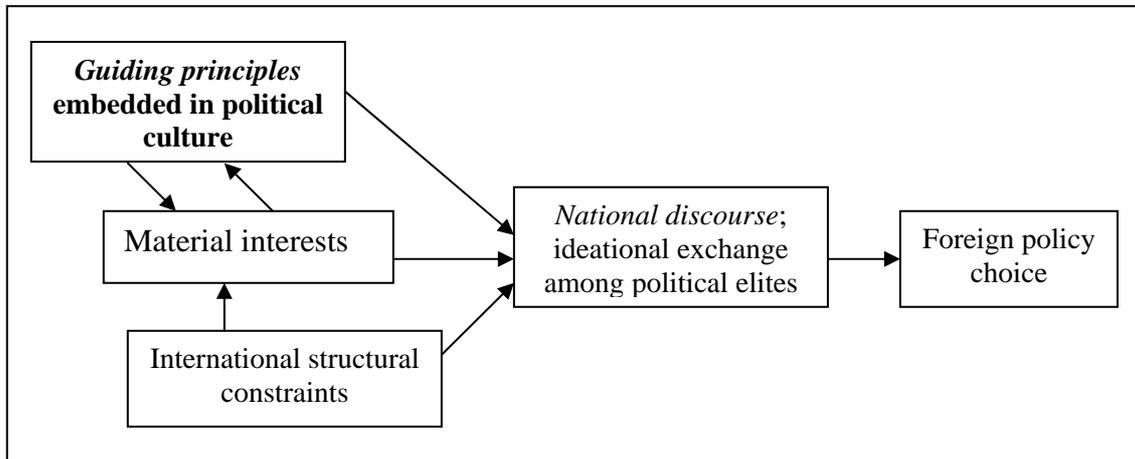
Figure 1.1. Line of causation behind the formulation of foreign policy: A tentative model.

My focus is directed towards *guiding principles* in a nation's foreign policy, in the sense of *collectively held ideas and priorities embedded in the political culture* of that nation. Guiding principles point to variables such as primary national aims and ambitions, the merits of supra-national institutions or international law, or the lessons assumed from history. The thesis thus builds upon the argument that *national historical experience influences the form and content of contemporary debates*, whose output is foreign policy formulation. Foreign policy debates, in which we expect traditional ideas to reappear, are quintessential to our empirical investigation[3].

The topic to be examined is **the foreign policy of Britain[4] and France**. Seen in a historical perspective we endeavour to extract a set of ideas in the French and British foreign policy traditions. On this basis, we will arrive at a matrix of French-British *ideational* as well as *institutional* contrasts relevant to the foreign

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[3] One may add that our way of approaching foreign policy formulation is strictly elitist and maybe old-fashioned against the dominant vein of research. However, as will be argued in this thesis, foreign policy largely remains within the domain of high-level decision-makers – primarily in government, secondly in parliament.

[4] In this thesis, *Britain* is consistently applied as reference to the United Kingdom.

policy domain. French-British contrasts thus perceived will then be applied in a comparative case study of debates preceding the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. The concept of a *foreign policy tradition* necessitates a long chronology and a certain amount of simplification. Furthermore, the focus on *stability* and *consensus* may be less fruitful than studies of disruption and change[5]. On the other hand, defining a set of recurring ideas may clarify the significance of contemporary foreign policy by perceiving it in a broader perspective.

Our approach to the topic will thus be twofold:

1. *To what extent can we define a set of principles and ideas in French and British foreign policy, along which the two countries clearly diverge?*
2. *Applied to the international issue of Iraq, were such guiding principles prevalent in debates preceding the invasion?*

The general **hypotheses** of the thesis suggest the following:

H1: *There are certain guiding principles to be defined in the foreign policy of post-war Britain and Fifth Republic France (post-1958).*
H2: *A range of these principles may be meaningfully presented as French-British contrasts or dichotomies, alongside institutional characteristics.*
H3: *Such key ideational characteristics were recognisable – and crucial – in French and British debates over the issue of Iraq.*

1.1. Outline of the thesis

This introduction is followed by **chapter 2** on theory and methodology, in which we briefly discuss the *theoretical basis* found in the avenues of social constructivism. Furthermore, the issue of *research design* is debated, notably the choice of case study as approach and the validity of the chosen source material. **Chapter 3** gives the *historical background* intended to establish a set of ideas or guiding principles in the foreign policy of Britain and France. This overview culminates in a summary framework of French/British contrasts. **Chapter 4** gives a brief overview of the significance of Iraq in French and British politics. **Chapter 5** begins with an attempt to operationalise the ideational contrasts from

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[5] See e.g. Checkel (1997) for a seminal study on the significance of ideas when fundamental change of policy occurs. Risse et al. (1999:159) add to this avenue by designing a causal model where the direction of causality between *identity* and *interests* depends on the firmness and clarity of each of the two.

our historical analysis to debates over Iraq. It is followed by the empirical analysis itself, which is formed as parallel case studies of the political debates in Britain and France. Material is taken from (i) speeches and statements by the respective heads of government and from (ii) parliamentary debates[6]; analysis is thus comparative in a double sense. The conclusive **chapter 6** sums up empirical findings and evaluates the quality of our general hypothesis and the more specific assumptions developed underway. The following illustration recaptures the logical structure of the *raisonnement*:

(I)   ***Theoretical basis:*** *Ideas have a (relatively stable) impact on foreign policy. Ideas are reflected in political discourse.*

(II)   ***Empirical fact:*** *France and Britain often diverge in foreign policy, in spite of similar material characteristics.*

(III)   ***Hypotheses:***
     a) *France and Britain differ in ideology and political culture, as expressed in the **guiding principles** of foreign policy. This ideational difference is a major cause of foreign policy divergence.*
     b) *French/ British contrasts in ideas may be represented as a set of dichotomies....*
     c) *...which will be reflected in discourse, i.e. in debates over a specific foreign policy issue where the two countries diverge.*

(IV)   ***Historical analysis*** *to evaluate hypothesis in (IIIa)*

(V)   *Dichotomisation of assumed foreign policy contrasts - typology on the basis of (IV).*

(VI)   *Choice of foreign policy case to test typology empirically.*

(VII)   ***Empirical analysis:*** *Evaluation of typology of French/British contrasts by comparative case studies.*

(VIII   *More fundamentally: Evaluation of hypotheses in (IIIb) and (IIIc)*

     Figure 1.2. The logical structure of the thesis

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[6] For a full discussion of the empirical source material applied in the thesis, see chapter 2.2.3.

2. Theory and methodology

2.1. Theoretical basis

In the rich literature on international relations theory, there is a range of studies analysing the role of values and ideas in foreign policy. During the last decade and a half such contributions have reached broader audiences by way of constructivist and reflectivist approaches, with Alexander Wendt (1992, 1999) as a common point of reference. The theoretical tension between this 'linguistic turn' in political analysis and more traditional, rationalist perspectives has set the terms for much scholarly debate[7]. According to Laffey & Weldes (1997:194), the gulf between positions has often been overstated, the novelty representing "a minor modification of the rationalist tradition, rather than a serious challenge to it". Goldstein & Keohane (1993) likewise apply ideas as a *supplementary* variable to explain foreign policy; in this perspective

> *[i]t is not something intrinsic to ideas that gives them their power, but their utility in helping actors achieve their desired ends under prevailing constraints.[8]*

Other scholars are more emphatic in their inclusion of ideas. Christopher Hill (1978:22) perceives foreign policy as "the way in which a country expresses its individual heritage and character to the outside world". History is regarded as a background variable in this process, foreign policy "reflecting what the [national] actor conceives to be his 'self'" (Hanrieder 1971:115).

2.1.1. Social constructivism and the impact of ideas

According to Alex McLeod (2002:67), the study of foreign policy in constructivist clothing has not yet acquired the status of theory. Nevertheless, the constructivist approach is typically considered a bridge between rationalist and post-rationalist approaches (Checkel 1998; Adler 1997); this was also the intention of Alexander Wendt (1992). Constructivism does not refute the material facts of international relations; however, the firm objective-interest perspective of rationalism is heavily revised. Of particular significance is the inclusion of

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[7] As typically argued, the social sciences, in occupying the hinterland between cultural and natural science, may provide fertile soil for such methodological discussion.
[8] Garrett & Weingast 1993:178.

ideas and *identity* to the notion of national interest. This widening of analytical scope is based on the view that *interests follow broadly from collective beliefs, which thus set the framework for political choice* (Adler 1997:325). This approach represents a synthesis of materialist and idealist assumptions of foreign policy. *Identity* – a conception of who we are and what we want to achieve – is thus perceived as analytically prior to the definition of *interest*. The aims and ambitions of an actor follow from the images he forms of himself (McLeod 2002:68). *Coherent foreign policy hence results from a mutual adjustment of interests and ideas.* In times of consensus on these issues, conditions for an effective and coherent policy prevail[9]. When serious crisis occurs, however, dominant ideas are likely to be reoriented and priorities consequently changed. National policy thus finds a new equilibrium of interests and ideas (McLeod 2002:78).

Arguments over the role of ideas in foreign policy well precede debates of the 1990s. A common perception in these arguments is that *collective ideas and guiding principles help fill a gap in the analysis of foreign policy*; while there is no clear line of causation from ideas to policy, the former affect the latter by posing a framework, thus commending some policies and excluding others. American scholars such as Rosenau (1971) and Holsti (1970) explicitly included beliefs and ideas in causal models of policy-making, though consistently within a rationalist framework. However, as noted by Carlsnaes (1986), studies have often suffered from a lack of consensus on concepts; 'ideas' or 'ideology' have e.g. referred to variables at *personal* as well as *social* or *national* level. In the realist paradigm ideas take the role of manipulation and interests in disguise[10]; others perceive ideology as relevant only to certain types of regimes. In the classic perception, however, *foreign policy is perceived as the "expression of [a*

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[9] As is commented by Hill & Wallace (1996:8), "[e]ffective foreign policy rests upon a shared sense of national identity, of a nation-state's 'place in the world', its friends and enemies, its interests and aspirations". These are "assumptions [that] are embedded in national history and myth, changing slowly over time".

[10] Curiously, this conception of ideas returns in one of the anti-theses to the realist approach, namely *critical discourse analysis*, where ideational rhetoric is seen as a vehicle of power relations.

nation's] ideology", an *"'ideological' extension of [its] values into the international arena"* (Carlsnaes 1986:4). This may be regarded as a point of departure in the present thesis.

In place of conceptual models we may – more straightforwardly – consider the significance of *history* and *tradition* to foreign policy. However, while historical reference is a common feature of political discourse, there is a clear ambiguity with regards to the past; history may be evoked instrumentally – as ammunition to an argument – or it may decide the scope and direction of the debate itself. Valérie-Barbara Rosoux (2000) thus makes a useful distinction between the *weight* and the *choice* of the past, notions that are valid to individual political leaders as well as national debates[11]. The *weight* of history is visible in the constraints it presents to foreign policy scope of action; the *choice* of history involves the construction of narratives to serve political needs. Public memory is based on continuous adjustment of the past; Christopher Hill (1988:25,30), in a historical account of British foreign policy, comments that "some legacies from history are shaken off more easily [than others]" and adds that in foreign policy, "[t]he 'weight of the past' is mediated through the preferences and capacities of each government".

A third way of conceiving of ideas in foreign policy is by *role theory*, which has a long pedigree in foreign policy analysis. In the framework posed by the Cold War, K.J. Holsti was one of a few scholars to go beyond roles objectively inferred from the international system to look at "policy-makers' own perception of national role" (1970:240)[12]. Lisbeth Aggestam (2004) follows very much the same theoretical vein in her study of role conceptions and identity in Britain,

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[11] Rosoux's terms are *le poids du passé* and *le choix du passé* respectively. At the individual level, she refers particularly to the selective historical approach of de Gaulle and Mitterand, and how each of them applied specific representations of French history to legitimate foreign policy.
[12] According to Holsti, foreign policy-making is a dynamic process of internal and external role *prescription* for a particular state. The result is a consistent role *performance* akin to the individual acting in a group.

Germany and France, perceiving role enactment as a way of bringing national identity into play[13].

The central concept of the present thesis, however, is what we refer to as *guiding principles*, to which we will return in the historical study as well as the empirical analysis of debates on Iraq. As research programme, the study of ideas has often suffered from underdeveloped methodology and little scope for generalisation (Checkel 1997:ix). Such shortcomings may be redressed by ambitious causal modelling; general models, however, also carry a danger of overstretch. We will attempt to avoid that problem by resting primarily within the confines of French and British foreign policy. The methodology, meanwhile, is common to a broader theoretical universe.

2.2. Methodology

Time and space confine us to a rather summary account of the methodological considerations of this thesis. First, concerns for statistic representativeness sometimes push social research towards more units, fewer variables than what is feasible in a comparative analysis based on qualitative data. However, analytical quality lies not as much in numbers as in a well-considered study. This is a discussion with implications for comparative analysis as well as for the *case study*; the usefulness of both to our investigation is our main focus here. Second, we will discuss the concept of *discourse* and the usability of *content analysis* to our research.

2.2.1. The virtues of case study

Case studies entail obvious advantages as well as drawbacks. Among the former is the fact that "[c]ase-oriented studies […] are sensitive to complexity and historical specificity", often quintessential to social science research (Ragin 1987:ix)[14]. However, as argued by Andersen (1997), the case study has often been regarded as a poorer cousin of statistically oriented methods; more artistic

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[13] Aggestam (2004:77) defines role conception as ***"images that foreign policy-makers hold concerning the general long-term function and performance of their state in the international system"***.

[14] Ragin, along with Lijphart (1971), also sees the case-study method as intimately linked to comparative analysis, where in-depth historical knowledge is essential.

than scientific, albeit useful with complicated empirical data. Andersen protests against this condescending notion of case study; in doing this he leans heavily on Robert Yin (1994). According to Andersen, while *a-theoretical* case studies aim to interpret the single case, more refined versions attempt to *generate concepts* or hypotheses or even *test hypotheses* or theoretical assumptions against data[15]. These latter approaches are what the researcher must choose from when aspiring to generalise beyond the single case. From this departure the researcher may work *inductively* – building theory from the exploration of a case – or by way of *deduction*, starting out with clear theoretical assumptions to be tested against empirical data. A useful combination of the two, however, is found in the 'extended case method', where the aim is re-construction rather than falsification of existing theory. Accordingly, one attempts to *generate or adjust theoretical assumptions* on the basis of pre-defined views, avoiding the pretension of starting out *without* theory. The analytical work in this thesis is pursued in line with this logic; concurrently *generating concepts* and *adjusting assumptions* against empirical data.

The 'few cases, many variables' problem of comparative case studies may be mitigated by choosing strategically. Yin (1994:30) refers to *analytic generalisation*, which builds upon a strategic selection of case(s). Here, validity lies not in crude numbers but in the *analytical value* of the object[16]. There are two conventional ways of doing this, the concern of both being to isolate the variables relevant to our analysis. According to the *most similar*-design the units should be similar on as many variables as possible except on the phenomenon we investigate, thus eliminating a range of variables as possible causes. The *most different*-design refers to the choice of units that are different in most aspects yet similar in terms of 'end result', thus limiting the causal analysis to variables

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[15] Ragin (1987) likewise considers case studies as ideal for *constructing theories and concepts*; such theory-development could well be done by generating hypotheses to be tested statistically (Nissen 1998:411).

[16] What defines the analytical value of a case may vary; important criteria would be the prevalence of particular qualities we wish to study, the scope for constructing theory or typologies, or the choice of a *critical* case, i.e. where the risk of falsification of existing theory is maximised.

where the units correspond. Notably, 'most similar' and 'most different' are methods of comparative *causal* analysis, which may surpass the potential of this thesis. Broadly conceived, however, the typology is relevant, as Britain and France share a number of characteristics in terms of great-power heritage and military/economic strength yet diverge on some key international issues. The case of Iraq represents such an issue; research thus approximates the 'most similar'-design, with *guiding principles* as a potential causal variable[17].

2.2.2. Research design

According to Holsti (1969:68), "[a]mong the most interesting and challenging research problems are those about the causes and effects of communication", such as "[w]hat motives, values, beliefs, and attitudes are revealed in a person's writing or speech". In our approach, we choose to focus precisely on the *communicative* side of politics. This is the domain in which identity is constructed and maintained, especially within the national framing (Jørgensen & Philips 1999:56). What is the 'French' or 'British' foreign policy perspective is thus generated by domestic exchange of ideas.

2.2.2.1. The relevance of discourse

'Discourse' may be straightforwardly defined as *a way to talk and conceive of (a segment of) the world* (Jørgensen & Philips 1999:9). Hence, we can refer to a *French* as opposed to a *British discourse on foreign policy*, built upon contrasting sets of political values. Such a discourse works as "a structural frame" or "constraint that shapes the foreign policy of a state" (Larsen 1997:21, 27). Bergström & Boreus (2000:18-19) refer to discourse as a set of *conventions*, defining what can be said within a specific social unit; Neumann (2001) on his side stresses the linkage between discourse and *identity*. One of the ambitions of discourse analysis is thus to analyse *how language works in a given community*

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[17] One may discuss as well whether Iraq may represent a *critical case* to the hypothesis that ideas and identity matter in foreign policy. Based on the assumption that ideas prevail in issues of 'low politics', dominant in a post-Cold War setting, Iraq could be a critical case in presenting the parties with a 'high politics' matter of security, where national interest considerations rather than ideas would respond.

to solidify and maintain specific world-views[18]. The relevance of discourse is derived from the assumption that *ideas are reflected in communicative practice or discourse*, which is therefore a natural object of analysis when ideas or guiding principles is what we trace. In the empirical part of this thesis, we will investigate the presence of certain ideas in what we perceive as a *national discours*e among political elites in Britain and France. The assumption of national consensus probably holds more truth in the foreign policy domain than over domestic issues. However, we do not suggest that French and British debates over foreign policy are fundamentally *consensual*. What is suggested is that national political history puts forward a set of guiding principles we may expect to recur on both sides of political debate.

2.2.2.2. A content-analytical approach

The analysis of foreign policy debates on Iraq will benefit from devices of *content analysis*, applied to give a quantitative description of the content in texts. As argued by Bergström & Boréus (2000:46), content analysis is the linguistic approach that comes closest to positivist-empirical science. Focusing on manifest textual content, measured by quantitative data, it scores high on *reliability* criteria. Furthermore, content analysis applies an explicit methodology, which must be regarded as an advantage in otherwise confusing terrain. However, *validity* requires a sound basis in theory and contextual knowledge, as numbers and frequencies as such are insufficient to draw conclusions from texts (Holsti 1969:122).

2.2.2.3. Tracing the presence of ideas

In their handbook on textual analysis, Bergström & Boréus (2000) refer to *ideational content analysis*, which traces the appearance of ideas and normative values in political discourse. Here the significance of a single text rests on it expressing ideas that are common to a greater family of texts. With regards to research design for ideational analysis, the authors discuss the merits of (i) *ideal*

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[18] As part of the post-modernist movement, discourse analysis may also imply a world-view where all knowledge is subjective and the world primarily a linguistic construct. Furthermore, language may be perceived in the context of *power* and dominance. These perspectives subscribe to the 'linguistic turn' in political science, which is not the avenue pursued in this thesis.

types as opposed to (ii) *analytical dimensions*. *Ideal types* are characterised by precision and utility for generating typologies. However, applying them as analytical categories requires meticulous preparation to capture the essential qualities empirically. *Analytical dimensions*, on the other hand, are general and open-ended, thus not in risk of 'closing' the text by leaving out important data but neither offering much help to the researcher. Our empirical analysis of debates on Iraq applies an *ideal-type* analysis on the basis of foreign policy *guiding principles*. Much depends, then, on the operationalisation of these principles, which will be further discussed in chapter 5.1.

2.2.2.4. Reliability and validity concerns

Validity is crudely defined by Holsti (1969:142) as "the extent to which an instrument is measuring what it is intended to measure". While validity broadly considers the correspondence between the research question on one side and the selected data and method on the other, **reliability** refers to the manner in which the investigation itself is pursued. Content analysis poses some interesting dilemmas as far as validity and reliability are concerned. Ideally, content analysis should be replicable in all its detail; this requires a coding system that is neatly defined, with little scope for interpretation. While *reliability* may thus be strengthened, *validity* could suffer as a result. Firstly, the idea of counting occurrences in a text implies that *higher frequency means greater substantial importance*, a claim which is dubious in many cases (Bergström & Boréus (2000:78-84). Single statements may be of disproportionate significance; moreover, the *manner* in which an idea is evoked may be as important as *frequency*. What remains *un*spoken in a text may also be of relevance, clearly so if it testifies to systematic exclusion of certain attitudes or ideas[19]. Secondly, the use of neat theoretical categories, while simplifying coding, may just as well close the text for other information than the one prescribed by the researcher. *Ideal-type* analysis, then, puts enormous stakes in the construction of pertinent categories. All in all, the perception of textual research as scientific could easily

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[19] This argument is clearly related to *critical discourse analysis*, focusing on structural power over the accepted terms of a 'discourse' or debate.

lead to disillusionment. Words and utterances must be considered in context to make sense; a pragmatic approach to the validity issue points towards broader interpretation, in which crude numbers are embedded in a wider interpretative framework[20].

2.2.3. Source material

The selection of sources informing a thesis is obviously of primary importance to any evaluation of its validity. To our investigation of French and British foreign policy a wide array of source material is potentially relevant. However, for the purpose of reliability sources should be clearly confined. Drawing on discourse as part of the methodology points us to textual sources; with a focus on national political elites, the potential range of sources is further confined. In sum, with regards to source material the thesis follows a two-section structure. The historical study of French and British foreign policy (chapter 3) applies mainly evaluative secondary sources to give a summary account of ideas recurring in policy. Much in the vein of a literary review, this part of the thesis should be uncontroversial with regards to validity. The empirical analysis of debates on Iraq (chapter 5), however, is of a rather different nature. This part finds its sources in two specific domains, spanning the time period from September 2002 to March 2003: (i) Speeches and official statements from the heads of government (Prime Minister Blair and President Chirac respectively) and (ii) selected parliamentary debates over the issue of Iraq. Additional background sources are provided by a selection of articles from daily newspapers.

2.2.3.1. Critical evaluation of sources

The material pointed out for analysis represents only a small selection of a very extensive range, which demands more elaborate justification. As a general rule one may expect a positive relation between validity and the extension of sources. The scope of generalisation will increase accordingly, as sources cover broader aspects of the foreign policy debates. There are three reasons why such a strategy has not been chosen for this thesis. Firstly, reliability is strengthened by a well-

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[20] The practical side of these issues is briefly discussed in chapter 5.1-2., directly preceding the empirical analysis.

defined, reflected selection. In this view a broad, but floating intake of source material will be to the detriment of scientific intent. This leads to the second reason for limiting our sources: A sufficiently thorough analysis demands that material does not exceed capacity of analysis. Thirdly, embedded in the methodological and analytical concerns there is a theoretical rationale: Our focus of investigation is the political debates at the level of political elites. This conception of a national discourse is intended to be narrow, perhaps artificially so, in order to arrive at a feasible confinement of *national debates* and *guiding principles*. In order to understand one is easily inclined to simplify or schematize social reality. While this thesis may be an easy target for such criticism, it should be noted that *realism* is a scientific virtue as well; better, then, to opt for understanding of a well-defined segment than a universal model of political life.

3. French and British foreign policy history

3.1. Britain and France in a comparative perspective

The purpose of this chapter is to give a brief political-historical outline of Britain and France to consider the degree to which they qualify as comparable entities. We will focus on a few key aspects of each nation, concerning their political institutions and political culture. To what extent do Britain and France differ in (i) historical experience, (ii) institutional structure and (iii) cultural outlook? What are the main qualities *uniting* them as well as *distinguishing* the one from the other?

Table 3.1. Some basic characteristics of Britain and France[21]

	Britain	**France**	Germany	USA
Size	**242.500 sq.km**	**543.970 sq.km**	357.000 sq.km	9.640.000 sq.km
Population	**59.2 million**	**59.5 million**	82.6 million	291.5 million
GNP total	**$ 1486.200 mill.**	**$ 1342.700 mill.**	$ 1870.400 mill.	$10110.100 mill.
GNP pr. habita	**$ 25.250**	**$ 22.010**	$ 22.670	$ 35.060

3.1.1. Global actors, reduced capabilities

The France and Britain of 2005 share a number of characteristics, as medium powers with self-perceived global mandates due to their imperial past. Both nations faced the challenge of decolonising their empires after the Second World War, a process that caused much agony at certain times and places[22]. In a broader sense as well, British and French governments found themselves in dramatically changed circumstances after the War. By relative terms, the power basis of both nations had been steadily crumbling in the inter-war period; yet, the destructions of 1940-45 proved fatal to the remains of great-power pretensions. Nevertheless, each nation managed to restore important levers of power, benefiting not only from occupation status in Germany alongside Soviet and American forces, but also from permanent seats in the UN Security Council. In what was to become

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[21] Based on data from *The Europe World Yearbook 2004* (London: Europe Publications/Taylor & Francis Group) and *Bilan du Monde. Edition 2004* (Paris: Le Monde).
[22] Britain thus found itself in difficult considerations over India (independent 1947) and a number of African states (notably the rebellion in Kenya and prolonged presence in Zimbabwe). Yet, fights over decolonisation have a different flavour in France, where colonial wars in Indochina and Algeria were central to the demise of the Fourth Republic in 1958.

the Western bloc, Britain and France were envisioned central roles in safeguarding Europe as its sole nuclear powers. However, the two countries were led into diverging foreign policy courses during the 1950s and 60s. Influence and position could be achieved by different strategies; to British policymakers, the choice was made swiftly after the War to follow American leadership and tie US interests to Britain. In France, having suffered their third destructive invasion from Germany in 75 years, closing the book of continental rivalries was the primary concern. Furthermore, French self-respect and *indépendance* did not allow American influence to gain any momentum. The French mission was embedded in Europe and the forging of peaceful co-existence with Germany.

Policy towards *European integration* and *American influence*, quintessential factors in post-war Europe, go to illustrate some of the deeper ideational differences between Britain and France. To lean on America was a considerable step to a political community once described as "divided from the rest of the world, insular both in situation and in mind" (Bagehot 2001). Yet it was a victory to British pragmatism and the perceived kinship of Anglo-American thought in opposition to the continent[23]. Historically, the British political elites were always cautious about political upheavals on the continent, typically nurtured by ideologies that were "foreign-produced, intellectual [and] antipathetic to traditional British concerns" (Chuter 1997:107). This perspective was epitomised in the 1789 Revolution and its links with French radical political thought. *Geopolitics*, furthermore, added a different flavour to administrative and military policy of the two countries. France, in the midst of Europe, developed a large conscription army and a strongly centralist, intellectually bent administration. In Britain, on the other hand, civic freedoms and opposition to strong executive government was the rule. The prospect of war, to Britain often a matter of choice, was to France a question of national survival (Chuter 1997:109). France was committed to the continent to secure its *economic*

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[23] As summed up by Roskin (2004:150), "[t]he British pride themselves on pragmatism, the French on principle". This has implications for foreign policy debates, in which the French persistently consider "the *grandes lignes* of foreign policy and the need to define and redefine France's attitude", whereas "the predominant style of successive British governments has been to avoid too sharp a definition of purpose" (Wallace 1978:38).

viability as well; the conception of a common European fate led to a long tradition of international or supra-national schemes[24]. In Britain, meanwhile, there was no perceived need or desire for involvement in European federalism; the Empire and trade pointed towards global rather than European concerns.

3.1.2. Economy, defence and diplomacy

While France and Britain both went through a relative post-war decline, in *economic development* Britain met the gravest problems of stagnation. France made use of central planning and European integration to propel economic growth during the first post-war decades. Since then, however, economic development has stabilised at moderate levels in both countries. With Germany holding a primary position among EU economies, both of the two lag somewhat behind in sheer size. Since 1999, the euro has further embedded the French economy in common EU governance; Britain as yet retains her pound sterling.
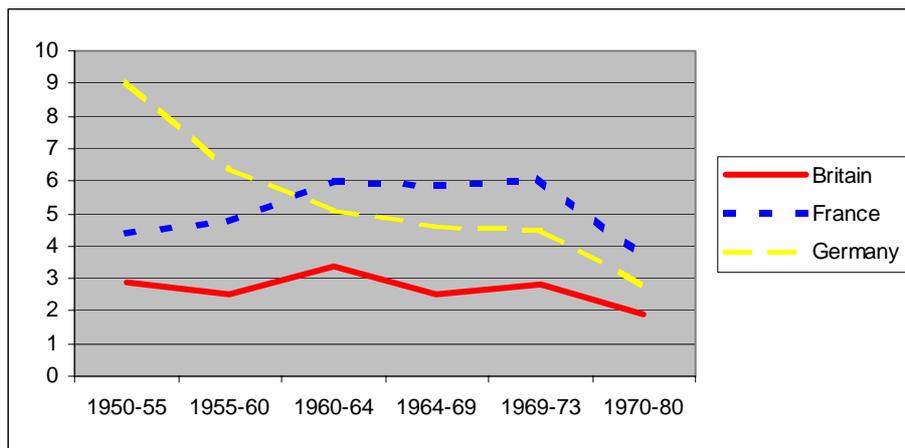
Figure 3.1. Annual economic growth rates 1950-1980[25]

In *military policy* Britain and France are the only European powers today with "a wide spectrum of defence capabilities and a global reach" (Chuter 1997:119). Nuclear power is, furthermore, coupled with conventional armed forces and arms industries of considerable size. During the 1990s France revised its independent stature in NATO (dating from the 1960s) and abolished military conscription, thus approaching the British position on these issues. While France has

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[24] Note for instance the initiatives of theorists as St. Simon (1815) and Proudhon (1860s) and practitioners as Briand (1920s) and Monnet (1950s) to promote European unity.

[25] Data based on table in Pearce, Malcolm & Geoffrey Stewart (2002). *British political history, 1867-2001. Democracy and decline*. Third edition. London: Routledge), p. 642.

championed the idea of a common EU defence policy, British attitudes have been cautious; both nations, however, keep national forces of strength.

Table 3.2. Annual military expenditure (2003)[26]

Country	Military expenditure	
	Absolute numbers	**Percentage of GDP**
France	$ 45.240 million	2,6%
Britain	$ 42.840 million	2,4%
Germany	$ 35.063 million	1,5%
USA	$ 370.700 million	3,3%

This military policy is coupled with a global presence in the diplomatic and military spheres. In total numbers French and British embassies are surpassed only by the United States; we may add to this the *cultural* segment of their diplomacy, aiming to enhance the prestige and consciousness of France and Britain abroad[27]. Diplomacy, meanwhile, may be led by *bilateral* and *multilateral* channels. While Britain has been a guardian of traditional Commonwealth ties, France has led an activist and contributory policy towards the 'broader' Third World as "a mediator between Europe and Africa, between Christianity and Islam" (Aldrich & Connell 1989:10). Following the end of the Cold War, France has heralded an increasingly conscious support of multilateralism, mainly pursued through the UN. The fact that France in the 1990s became the largest single contributor to UN missions bears witness to this more activist approach (Howorth 1997:43), although in finances both nations are confined to medium position:

Table 3.3. Financial contributions to the UN[28]

Country	Budget contribution		Percentage	
	2003	**2004**	**2003**	**2004**
France	**$ 87 million**	**$ 87 million**	**6,2 %**	**5,9 %**
Britain	**$ 75 million**	**$ 88 million**	**5,3 %**	**5,9 %**
USA	$ 341 million	$ 363 million	24,2 %	24,5 %
Japan	$ 263 million	$ 280 million	18,7 %	18,9 %
Germany	$ 132 million	$ 124 million	9,4 %	8,4 %

As observed by P.M.H. Bell (1997:6, 297), British relations with Europe have often been perceived "in terms of relations with France", while the French, for

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[26] Numbers cited from *Central Intelligence Agency. The World Factbook* [http://ww.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html], accessed 15 January 2005.
[27] The number of French and British embassies are 149 and 153 respectively; cultural representation is conducted by the *British Council* and *Centre Culture Français*, the numbers of which come close to the embassies (*Britain: FCO. Facts and Figures* [http://www.fco.gov.uk/], accessed 14 January 2005).
[28] Numbers cited from *Global Policy Forum* [http://www.globalpolicy.org/finance/tables/reg-budget/assessedlarge04.htm], accessed 10 January 2005.

geographical as well as political reasons, have looked towards eastern and southern neighbours. French-German partnership in the EU has added to the British self-perception of isolation. Correspondingly, cooperation across the Channel has often remained cautious and restrained since the Second World War. As the French-British declaration of friendship – *l'Entente cordiale* – celebrated its centennial birthday in 2004, Robert Tombs (2004:13) observed:

> *[A] century of almost unbroken alliance, marked by shared dangers and common sacrifices, has not created a solid foundation of trust, affection of instinctive common purpose… There is less than ever a 'special relationship' or 'axis' across the Channel comparable with those that span the Atlantic and the Rhine. For this, the weight of history, ancient and modern, is largely responsible.*

3.2. The British foreign policy tradition

We are a world power and a world influence, or we are nothing.
Harold Wilson, British Prime Minister (1964)[29]

In accounts of Britain's post-war foreign policy there is a concept typically present alongside *decline*[30], namely that of *continuity*. Indeed, the case could be made that the prevalence of tradition in foreign affairs has been of particular significance in Britain[31]. This conservative penchant is combined with a predominantly *pragmatic* outlook; in the image of "floating easily downstream", decision-makers have habitually evoked a mixture of historical precedence and common sense[32]. Furthermore, a preference for pragmatism has also been accompanied by the absence of explicitly stated aims and principles in foreign policy[33]. Towards the end of the Cold War one could thus claim that no reformulation of national priorities abroad had been stated since Churchill's

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[29] Wilson quoted in Frankel 1975:156.

[30] The concept of *decline* is often applied in 20th-century accounts of Britain and France, in spite of – or because of – its lack of precision. The concept, generally stated, denotes a loss of political, economic or military power relative to other actors on the international stage.

[31] The notion of post-war consensus and consistency in British foreign policy is not, however, shared by all historians. Bernard Porter (1987:139-140) thus sees Britain as wavering "from an outmoded imperialism in the 1950s, to a reluctant Europeanism in the 1960s and 1970s, and then to a passionate Atlanticism in the 1980s, with no thought at all for consistency".

[32] In the words of Lord William Rees-Mogg (2004 [interview]), Britain's foreign policy follows "a *pragmatic* and *liberal* tradition… in the sense that it defends the liberal causes of the world, but with a clear conscience of the limitations of its power – of anyone's power – to make the world a better place".

[33] Notably, there is no annual British government statement on foreign policy. The closest equivalent would be the Defence White Paper, which concerns the national security domain (Tugendhat & Wallace 1988:6).

vision of 'the three circles' in the wake of the Second World War (Tugendhat & Wallace 1988:2). What Churchill referred to was Britain's strategic position at the convergence point of three circles – Europe, Commonwealth and the Atlantic. Drawing on history and its uniquely global role, Britain would thus act as a bridge or interlocutor between the three great communities, privileged by its relations but not embedded in either of the three.

3.2.1. Churchill's guiding principle

The Churchill doctrine does in fact serve as a useful starting point for a review of post-war British foreign policy. Churchill's model clearly illustrates the extension of British commitments after the War and the dilemma with which successive governments would have to struggle. Britain had been a world power, and could not easily carve out for itself a modest role on the international scene.

Britain left the Second World War physically debilitated, yet on the winning side of a table around which there were many nations in deeper moral anguish. In the burgeoning years of a new international order, British policy-makers were determined to keep American interests committed to Europe – arguably from a economic and strategic point of view just as much as a perception of cultural kinship[34]. With support from her Atlantic ally, Britain reduced – or postponed – the dangers of overstretching herself while opting for the maintenance of influence based on Britain's historical role. The humble beginnings of the post-war Western alliance were thus "principally an Anglo-American endeavour" (Rees 1991:145). 'The three circles' doctrine served as a corollary to the commitment to American power. A "masterly ideological mystification", the self-perception it represented served to legitimise British hesitation over priorities and direction during the following decades (Gamble 1974:85). Paul Sharp (1997:20) is one of a range of scholars deploring this failure to make the

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[34] Thus, Britain became a main benefactor of American aid through the Marshall Plan from 1947. In the military domain, there were British aspirations that the United States would help sustain British commitments overseas, a concern that was brought to the fore by emerging expansionism on the part of the Soviet Union. This reached a crucial point in 1947, as British requests for American help in Greece and Turkey worked as rationale for the Truman doctrine, which would offer American help to peoples subdued under the Communist threat.

hard, but necessary choices in a developing post-war world – leaving British interests "undefined, […] foreign affairs […] something that Britain was expected to do, and to do well, but to what end no one was quite sure". While relying on *the special relationship* for strategic support, Britain's mediating role between the three circles became increasingly precarious in the post-war decades – often ritualised rather than given actual content (Sharp 1997:6).

3.2.2. Britain and Europe: The limitations of 'friendly terms'

If a reading of history was ever needed for a deeper understanding of foreign policy, British attitudes towards *the European continent* are a fine example. The roots of British insularity are long and remarkably resilient. Firstly, the image of Britain as offshore and isolated has been regarded as a *security* – understandably so, as numerous attempts at invasion have been fought off since 1066 and the salient military threat thus perceived has been "the achievement by a single state of domination on the European continent" (Tugendhat and Wallace 1988:62). This approach has been coupled with predominantly traditional notions of security in a geopolitical framework. British aims were often stated as those of co-existence and containment – with Britain acting as benign superior, balancing European powers and controlling the seas[35].

Secondly, the *philosophical* gulf constituted by the Channel should not be neglected. An important part of its legacy can, undoubtedly, be traced in the French Revolution of 1789, which epitomised so many qualities abhorred by British political tradition: philosophical hubris, extremism, moralism, experimental activism and aggressive foreign policy. The very concept of ideology was further discredited in Britain by French excess; thus, Edmund Burke's *Reflections*, canonising conservative thinking by condemning the Revolution, became as much a statement of a general British approach[36]. Supporting the British-continental gulf was a whole range of perceived value

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[35] Thus, the nineteenth-century working rule of British military naval capacity was to equal the size of the next two naval forces in Europe – France and Russia initially; later Russia was substituted by Germany.
[36] Frankel (1975:112) thus claims "[t]he meaning of pragmatism" to be "most easily explained by contrasting it with continental traditions of attachment to principle".

contrasts. These were seemingly reinforced in the 20th century by the experience of total war, as occupation and collapsing regimes threatened national foundations in Europe. Britain, on the other hand, heroically resisted German aerial bombardment, thus confirming its myth of insularity and disqualifying any identification with the integrationist visions arising in Europe. Emanating from these perceptions, the European Free Trade Area (1959), established as a response to the European Community, manifested core values of the British approach: Limited to free trade and peaceful co-existence, and aiming to counter any alliance-building at the European continent (Acton & Crowe 1991:129-131).

Thirdly, and irrespective of ideational disputes, Europe has been regarded as too small an arena for Britain; this aloofness was visibly maintained in the post-war era. Thus, Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary, could state in 1952 while the project of European integration was well underway:

> *[B]ritain's story and her interests lie far beyond the continent of Europe… [W]ithout [this approach] we should be no more than some millions of people living on an island off the coast of Europe, in which nobody wants to take a particular interest*[37].

3.2.2.1. British strategy towards European integration

In Churchill's vision of a united Europe Britain was to play the role of arbiter; nevertheless, it was clear that post-war reconstruction of the continent must be done by common effort and strengthening of cross-national trade. In this process the British government played a remarkably passive role[38]. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) soon proved the first step of an integration project to which the whole of Western Europe was invited to adhere. Britain remaining passive, six continental member states met in 1955 to deepen and widen integration. Their negotiations concluded in 1957 with the establishment of the European Community (EC); Britain was henceforth firmly placed on the sidelines in Europe.

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[37] Eden quoted in Frankel 1975:118.
[38] In part, British indecisiveness over Europe reflected the assumption of a *zero-sum game*, where opting for Europe would be fundamentally negative to the cherished Commonwealth and US relations (Lee 1996:129).

British abstention from the early phase of the European Community has been criticised from contrasting viewpoints – firstly, from integrationists deploring the lack of European vision and, secondly, from a nationalist perspective arguing that British interests would have been better served by playing a role from the start. With the development of a continental customs union, Britain was in danger of losing out on important European markets; furthermore, growth rates within the member states steadily increased. These were the decisive factors in pushing Britain towards membership, only to receive a double French veto from General de Gaulle in the course of the 1960s[39]. With de Gaulle's departure from power, Britain – together with Ireland and Denmark – would finally enter the Community in 1973. Adhesion, however, was almost exclusively instrumentally perceived, guided by "no clear vision of [Britain's] role and purpose…beyond commercial advantage" (Bell 1997:6). This perception was solidified by Margaret Thatcher's premiership (1979-90), and it has made it intrinsically difficult to depart from the 'us against them' rhetoric of British EU politics.

3.2.3. The impact of ideas in British policy

Summarising accounts of British foreign policy, it appears that the following elements have been given more or less persistent priority: (i) privileged American relations, with NATO as corollary, (ii) insular reserve towards the European continent, and (iii) a maintained global presence with special preference for previous colonies. What values or ideas have guided these priorities on the international scene? The question of ideational impact on British politics is fascinating, as *tradition* and *precedence* seems more often evoked than *ideas*. According to Christopher Hill (1988:24-25), British foreign policy "cannot be explained without careful attention to the dual impact of the past"[40]. History influences politics through the "notion of enduring, timeless interests", summed up as Britain's *global extension*, its *basis in commerce* and consequent *reliance*

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[39] De Gaulle's refusal responded to the applications for British EC membership submitted by the Macmillan (1962) and Wilson (1967) governments. The 'Trojan horse' argument (American influence through British participation) was central to de Gaulle's position, which could also be seen in the light of French leadership aspirations and de Gaulle's imperious political line.

[40] The 'dual' impact refers to the parallel influence of events and "conceptions of history held by decision-makers". Cf. Rosoux's distinction between the *weight* and the *choice* of the past discussed in chapter 2.1.1.

on the navy (Hill 1988:28-29). This entanglement of material interest and ideas goes to illustrate how norms often acquire their position from usefulness, which is visible in many areas of British political culture[41]. Nevertheless, values and norms may also be precedent to emerging interests. Thus, even *materialism* and *individualism* had a pre-industrial relevance in British culture, guided by a blend of personal utility and moral virtue. This tradition, putting its imprint on the New World through Puritanism and the 'Protestant work ethic', adheres to a predominantly Anglo-American approach. Such ideological remnants may carry great virtues – however, they may also constitute barriers towards reform[42].

As Britain administered a global empire throughout the nineteenth century - and the first half of the twentieth – she had rather singular opportunities to leave a normative impact on the world. To which extent British rule was benign and progressive, however, has been a matter of debate. Mark Curtis (1995) seems to represent a minority view in his critique of exploitative British policy; more dominant is the perspective of Tugendhat & Wallace (1988:2), who claim the prevalence of "profitable trade and cheap diplomacy" – a policy well founded on self-interest yet "happily in conformity with moral dictates". Likewise, Porter (1987:142) points to the beneficial effects of *a commercial basis* to empire, to which wars and aggression were seen as destructive. However, the pursuit of British foreign policy also involves a heavy *military* element alongside its celebrated civil and commercial base. Though traditionally defensive in balancing power, British military doctrine exceeds cautious defence in contributing towards the image of British *glory* abroad (Frankel 1975:130). Military power is perceived a source of strength in Britain's great-power image, as witnessed by post-war interventions in Suez (1956) and the Falklands (1982).

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[41] Notably, the liberal belief in free trade, a cherished goal of British foreign policy, was also the *material interest* of a burgeoning industrial class, as Victorian Britain profited grandly from export-driven trade. At the same time, self-sufficiency was never considered an option in this country raised in the virtue – and necessity – of exchange.

[42] David Marquand (1988:7) thus refers to Britain as "prisoner of its nineteenth-century past" - unable to adapt its economy and public ethos to modern circumstances.

In spite of this military element, among the persistent ideas in British foreign policy, *liberal materialism* shows particular pre-eminence. Abroad, this notion acted in the notion of *free trade imperialism*, according to which the Empire was fundamentally a framework for commerce (Porter 1987:118). In this environment, opportunity was great for individual entrepreneurs; liberalism was coupled with *individualism*, a belief in the virtue of personal liberty in material as well as spiritual domains (Marquand 1988:221). At home, the same values embedded even the working class, who never attained the *doctrinaire* socialism of their French and German counterparts. *Equality of opportunity* rather than of outcome has typically been stated as ideal; this notion of individual autonomy flows from a broader vein, within which we may trace even the Tory notion of 'One nation Conservatism'[43]. At the social level, meanwhile, liberalism is traditionally negatively defined as freedom from governmental abuse. In this perception the *symbolic significance of Parliament* weighs heavily. Parliament's historical role in checking royal power is distinctly British – safeguarding economic and religious freedom as well as the political domain. Consequently, *parliamentary* sovereignty is still conceived as vital to *Britain's* sovereignty, as seen in debates over the European Union (Clarke 1992:5-6).

3.2.4. Developments from Thatcher to Blair

On this historical basis, how should we interpret more recent developments under the premiership of Margaret Thatcher (1979-90), John Major (1990-97) and Tony Blair (1997-)? Conservative rule under Mrs Thatcher was indeed perceived as revolutionary in many areas of *domestic* policy. However, even in this domain the principal rupture occurred *vis-à-vis* the preceding Labour government's discredited economic policy. Mrs Thatcher claimed to reinvigorate what was known as Victorian virtues, such as individual liberty and entrepreneurship, industriousness and personal responsibility. Her principal enemies were the overprotective 'nanny state', swelling taxes and trade union demands. The neo-Conservative agenda was largely consistent with that of Ronald Reagan; indeed,

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[43] Benjamin Disraeli, Victorian prime minister, was the author of this concept, which sought to reconcile the bitter class divisions of Britain's industrial economy (Marquand 1988:221).

during the 1980s the Anglo-American consensus in economic matters appeared united against the moderate liberalism of Germany and France. In the *foreign policy* domain, however, Thatcherism was hardly revolutionary. Among its primary aims was the re-establishment of British prestige abroad, partly by affirmative military strength. Thatcher's approach was thus distinctly traditional; Thatcherite Britain acted from a national-patriotic footing. With regards to European integration, the Prime Minister championed a further development of the common market, yet remained staunchly nationalist in questions outside the economic domain. Ideally, the Europe supported by Britain would *broaden* its area of free trade rather than *deepen* integration into social or foreign/military policy. All in all, Thatcher's international approach was conservative – its emphasis put on liberating the forces of international capitalism while maintaining a military balance in Europe (Rees 1991:145; Porter 1987:134).

Whereas John Major's seven years at the post of Prime Minister did little more than moderate the most controversial Thatcherite stances on Europe, the rise of New Labour to government in 1997 was perceived as a watershed. The end of the Cold War and bipolarity cried out for a renewal of British foreign policy doctrine. New Labour did indeed bring a new language to the domain of British foreign policy; what followed in substance, however, is a matter of debate. Toynbee & Walker (2001:122, 141) claim an ascension of human rights and multilateralism during Mr Blair's first four years as Prime Minister, partly ascribed to Foreign Secretary Robin Cook. The policy of debt relief privileged relations with Third World countries, as did constructive peace efforts in several African nations. Mr. Blair's government was seemingly acquiring a taste for multilateral UN diplomacy and even harmonisation of EU foreign policies[44]. The resulting ambiguity was on full display in the Kosovo crisis in 1999. Claiming to act on moral grounds, Britain was heavily engaged in diplomacy, yet resorted willingly to arms in what became a NATO-coordinated bombing campaign

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[44] Blair's concessions to Europe were especially clear at the St.Malo summit in 1998, giving principal endorsement to the aim of fulfilling a European foreign and security policy dimension.

against Serbia. Thus, the *Atlantic alliance* rather than any European or multilateral commitment was what seemed to hold sway. Blair's internationalism and American preference were further highlighted in the wake of 11 September 2001; the Prime Minister seemed to confirm a perception of foreign relations where enforcement, British autonomy and *the special relationship* prevailed.

The alleged revolution of New Labour, then, has implied no fundamental shift in British political culture. This culture has known several shifts in domestic emphasis, as Britain has moved from a post-war consensus of Keynesian welfare via Thatcherite reforms to Labour's *third way*; in external relations, however, the consistence in policy is striking. Pearce & Stewart (2002:648) thus still refer to Britain as "a genuinely world oriented country that no other European state could claim to be". Likewise, Kennedy-Pipe & Vickers (2003) stress the maintenance of British symbolic influence abroad. While the world has changed, the effects of these changes have often been belatedly absorbed in Britain. Parliament remains the cornerstone of British sovereignty, integration still stigmatised as *surrender*. To a certain extent, British politics is indeed a prisoner of its historically superior political approach.

3.3. Principles of French foreign policy

> *Our independence responds not only to our own expectations and claims, but to those of the rest of the world.*
>
> Charles de Gaulle, French president 1958-69[45]

French foreign policy could, it may well be argued, be studied just as much in the perspective of *rupture* as of *continuity*. Indeed, French political history is characterised by brisk and fundamental changes of regime and political outlook[46]. However, while institutional – and even constitutional – design has been subject to tumultuous change, continuity is what characterises many of the *ideological* elements of French politics. Political ideology has rarely been

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[45] De Gaulle quoted from his *Mémoires d'éspoir* (Paris:Plon, 1970). Author's translation.
[46] More fundamentally, France has been a laboratory of constitutions. The quest for constitutional perfectionism marks a deep contrast to the British political system, which almost 800 years after the Magna Carta has yet to be laid down in a written constitution.

consensual in France; rather, the contradictory strands of political thought often leave judgement in the eye of the observer. In order to give a balanced account of French foreign policy, we will do wisely to consult its *historical background* (Sundberg 2003:4). Here we will consider the constitutional framework as well as the influx of ideas – and the personal impact of one particular leader: President Charles de Gaulle.

Following this line of thought, the natural starting point in evaluating French foreign policy of the post-war epoch is 1958 rather than 1945. The rise to presidency of de Gaulle, the Constitution establishing the Fifth Republic; there is ample reason to suggest a new era began in 1958. Arguably, de Gaulle represented a break as well as reunion with France's political past. According to the General himself, the Constitution washed away the symptoms of weakness and division to return to the ancient, grander vision of France. Undoubtedly, the Fifth Republic marked a resolute break with executive impotence and factionist parliamentary power. Foreign policy set a pattern in the new order by becoming part of the President's *domaine séparé*. At a time of great distress, caused especially by the colonial war in Algeria, this provided vital leadership to France. However, in a longer perspective, de Gaulle applied foreign policy in an effort to forge a *new political consensus*, primarily by reuniting with or refining ideas of a longer national pedigree. The formulation of *doctrine*, bestowed with considerable prestige in French foreign policy, was given a new impetus by de Gaulle. It is hence appropriate to look more closely at the Gaullist tradition in foreign policy and the guiding principles by which it has been conducted.

3.3.1. Ideological legacy: Republicanism versus Bonaparte

The institutional balance established in 1958 appeared at the time to defy republican tradition in France. French political history had wavered between parliamentary dominance on one hand and charismatic-authoritarian rule on the other. In the Fourth Republic (1946-58), much like the Third (1871-1940) in this respect, the balance was indeed towards the National Assembly, in which a broad spectrum of political parties battled for power and prestige. On the margins, the

Communists and Gaullists embodied heavy, anti-regime forces. Hence, parliamentary rule was never coupled with a low-tension, two-party system as in Britain. The presidential mandate, meanwhile, remained largely ceremonial with the premier minister acting as *de facto* executive. According to Roskin (2004:113), "[g]iven French parties and political style, a pure parliamentary system may never work well" – a view that is supported by proceedings in the inter-war and early post-war periods. France was in need of stable leadership[47].

The 1958 constitution made a resolute break with parliamentarism by introducing a semi-parliamentary system characterised by presidential predominance. Legislative influence was sharply curtailed by the new Constitution; nevertheless, de Gaulle was less of a break with French political tradition than what has often been claimed (Gordon 1993:4-5). Authoritarian in style, the President still claimed to incarnate elements rooted in French republican history. According to de Gaulle, France was in need of unity more than anything to *re-establish* republican ideals. International prestige was perceived as one of these ideals – suggesting that affirmative foreign policy would be a cornerstone in Gaullist politics. Presidential rule was translated as strong and institutionalised leadership; the General endeavoured to act as the unitary force in a nation of political strife, "historically divided, politically weak, and yet culturally strong, […] and potentially 'great'" (Cerny 1980:2).

3.3.2. De Gaulle's perception of *grandeur*

Charles de Gaulle was a man of rhetorical ability, which is not a rare characteristic in France. Rhetoric may be characteristic of inefficient party squabbling; in the case of de Gaulle, however, it aimed towards reinstalling national self-esteem. The President's consistent reference to a set of principles provided French foreign policy with an ideational framework. Though established in the Cold-War setting of the 1960s, much of the essence of these

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[47] Note, however, that there is no universal consensus as to whether minority government and parliamentary dominance was a peril. Early post-war France was able to cope efficiently with reconstruction, the burgeoning European integration and international institution-building in NATO and the UN. Decolonisation presented the gravest problems for the Republic – indeed it was the war in Algeria that brought it to the edge of collapse.

ideas has survived, though ideas have been adjusted to progressive European integration and the fall of a bipolar world (Gordon 1993). Let us start by pointing out some aspects of what we perceive as the Gaullist foreign policy consensus.

First, de Gaulle's external policy was one of French *grandeur* and *exceptionalism*. A central tenet to Gaullist ideology was – and is – that France is a nation of great historical and philosophical value, which justifies a vigorous global presence (Cerny 1980:3). In the formative years of the Fifth Republic this point was of great importance to de Gaulle's project of national renaissance. Notably, external relations and their rhetoric appeared more important to de Gaulle than any domestic problem (Kulski 1966:14). The vision of France as a nation of superior value was not a novelty to the French mind; its expression dates back to the Age of Reason and beyond. De Gaulle, however, gave a voice and direction to these sentiments, which formed an essential part of his political philosophy. In the foreign policy domain *grandeur* was put into action through the *pursuit of independence* and the sense of a French *civilising mission*.

As far as independence goes, French foreign policy contains strong elements of *realpolitik* and manoeuvring in defence of national interests. Nevertheless, the Gaullist approach was far from pragmatic in the reference to guiding principles. De Gaulle's was a clear vision of nation-states as the building blocs, organised in a clear-cut hierarchy in which France would aspire for a high position. Veto power in the UN Security Council is one parameter of prestige; in de Gaulle's logic, France should sit aside the USA and Britain as a major power of the West[48]. Independence, however, was also a conscious contribution to *a multipolar world*, in which France would play an independent, assumedly constructive role in world politics. According to Cerny (1980:270), de Gaulle was ahead of his time in "consistently attempt[ing] to break the vicious circle of

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[48] This particular French perspective is reflected in de Gaulle's suggestion of a NATO triumvirate as well as his prospects for the European Community (notably the so-called Fouchet Plan suggesting French-German dominance). Furthermore, de Gaulle allowed himself a relentless pursuit of French interests even within the EC, as shown by France's boycott of Council meetings of the mid-1960s.

Cold War politics". Such endeavours hardly enhanced the stability of the western bloc; they included French withdrawal from the integrated military structure of NATO (1966) and development of a nuclear *force de frappe*. Seldom has French post-war independence been more clearly evoked than in military affairs; France's national defence has thus been invested with considerable symbolic significance, in particular the independent nuclear deterrent (Howorth 1989:16).

3.3.3. France and Europe

One of the paradoxes of de Gaulle is that while defiantly guarding French national interests, he also laid the basis for more conscious pursuit of multilateral – and especially European – aspirations. The General gave his contribution to what, in Gordon's words (1993:68), "may have been the most unified French nation since before the Great Revolution". Among the few distinct adjustments pursued by his successors, Pompidou (1969-74) and Giscard d'Estaing (1974-81), was a more cooperative approach to Europe, based on the understanding that France alone could only play a limited role on the world scene. De Gaulle's legacy proved sufficiently flexible for adaptation; the acid test of Gaullism's tenacity was the change of regime as François Mitterand and the Socialist Party attained majority control and presidential power in 1981. In foreign policy *continuity* and *Europe* are keywords of the presidencies of Mitterand (1981-95) and Chirac (1995-). Tighter EU integration constitutes an adjustment of the nationalist side of Gaullism – yet it is more in line with de Gaulle's vision of the world than immediately conceived. This is particularly clear in the French pursuit of *global influence through Europe*.

To France, the balance of power with neighbouring nations has always been a grave concern. Relations with Germany played the central part in France's external relations during the twentieth century. Moreover, French-German relations provided, as we will see, the foundation stone for post-war European integration. According to Cerny (1980:135), it was Charles de Gaulle who restated the role of France "as a leading force in European civilization". However, aspirations for continental leadership have longer roots in French

political thought, and so has the philosophical justification[49]. Rather than Cerny's argument, one could observe a tension in the French political mind between de Gaulle's *national-republican* and Monnet's *federationalist* approach to Europe (Wise 1989:39-40). Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, were firmly placed within the tradition of French *political entrepreneurs*, seizing a situation of constraint (post-war distress, fears of German recovery) to promote a solution favourable to France (integration of coal and steel, subsidies to French agriculture), yet firmly rooted in a European vision. This project was well under way before de Gaulle's rise to power in 1958. The French could not as Britain choose to opt out of Europe; the question was how cooperation could be resolved. In the evolving European project French-German partnership became the engine - the idea has persisted in France that only when France and Germany stand together will Europe move forward (Sundberg 2003:11).

With the adjustment of de Gaulle's nationalist approach a delicate compromise has been forged, according to which French power and influence is intrinsically linked to that of the *ensemble* of Europe (Cole 1994:150). This portrayal should be seen in the perspective of France promoting a multipolar world[50]. In this frame of reference France excels as the spokesman and leader of the European Union, resting on a basis of values and institutions heavily influenced by France. Again, elements of realism underpin French strategy, as opting for Europe is linked to the recognition that France alone cannot sustain a consistent global reach.

3.3.4. Values and ambition: For humanity and France?

To a country with a self-perception as demanding as that of France, a certain divergence between image and reality is inevitable. To Aldrich & Connell (1989:14), "France is the only country that wants to express its foreign policy in universal, logic terms [while aspiring] to a global role". This is no small task.

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[49] Notably, the Revolution and following warfare marks the beginning of morally justified French expansionism. Later supra-national initiatives were typically in the vein of St. Simon; democratic federations for the promotion of peace, nevertheless on the basis of universal rights embedded in the Revolution.

[50] Thus, foreign minister Hubert Védrine could state in the National Assembly in 1999 that "talking of a multipolar world is irrelevant unless Europe is one of its poles" (Vedrine quoted in Kessler & Charillon 2001:114). Author's translation.

However, according to a fundamentally French perspective, there is no contradiction between promoting *French interests* and *universal ideas*. This reconciliation of interest and idealism is derived from revolutionary history and the French guise as "homeland of human rights" (Thumerelle & Le Prestre 1997:135). *Promotion of human rights and democracy* remains central to French foreign policy, accompanied by support for multilateral institutions, a distinct presence overseas and mastering of *la francophonie*, the global French-speaking community. Conflicts between *multilateral cooperation* and *maintenance of French influence* abroad may occur. However, the two principles are rarely in conflict; typically, they are seen as mutually reinforcing, as is lucidly illustrated in the French *preference for the United Nations*.

3.3.4.1. French multilateralism and international prestige

The UN may be regarded as the primary vehicle of multilateralism on a global scale. Its legitimacy is dependent, however, on support from the largest nation-states as represented in the Security Council. France has maintained its position as permanent member defined by the international balance of 1945. According to Tardy (2002:932), the UN provides concurrently the virtues of (i) a forum to promote the French universal message and (ii) an institution in which French prestige is maintained. France may thus pursue a position of power while simultaneously supporting progressive (and seemingly disinterested) causes. This French connection between national influence and liberal ideas is exemplified by French-led initiatives for UN interventions and peace-keeping missions. In a historical perspective, these are firmly placed within a tradition of French activism abroad, where the republican tradition aims to reform and improve. The French belief in *universal moral principles* lends some credence to *humanitarian intervention* and *international law*. Intervention, however, is a contested instrument, much dependent on UN legitimacy in the French perspective.

Historically, what may be called a French *civilising mission* was a fundament of colonial policy. Characterised by centralism and administrative prestige, this framework differed fundamentally from the more commerce-oriented British

colonialism (Leveau 2002). Imperialism to France acquired a peculiar flavour, symbolised by the "civil servant rather than the merchant", and perceived as a matter of "spreading France's universal values rather than as a source of wealth" (Cerny 1980:76). While de-colonisation itself was a difficult affair, during the following decades a series of measures have served to uphold French influence overseas. Among the levers of such influence, the system of development aid to previous colonies is essential; on a global scale, French cultural and post-colonial influence is especially maintained through *la francophonie*. This community of French-speaking nations has benefited from regular summits and cultural programmes to "become a roughly parallel organisation to the UK Commonwealth" (Aldrich & Connell 1989:190).

3.3.4.2. France as the promoter of ideas

Frédéric Charillon (2002:916-18) distinguishes French foreign policy as characterised by *projection*, its rhetoric driven by symbolic postures, claims to exceptionalism and universal values to export. In this respect France has typically rivalled the United States, which has grown to become a superior rival. Nevertheless, the French approach has contributed to maintaining the nation's international stature. This imposes tasks and obligations, as when President Mitterand commented why France would take part against Iraq in 1991: *"La France ne peut pas être la Suisse"*. However, maintaining such a role has allowed France to prolong a global ambition – less powerful, but more audible than China, less rich, but more present than Germany (Charillon 2002: 918).

According to McLeod (2002:81), the end of the Cold War is one of the rare historical events disposing for a realignment of national identity; since the crumbling of the Soviet empire, French political identity has thus been adjusted towards the values of *international institutions* and *the construction of Europe*. The sum is, if not a change of direction from the Gaullist foreign policy consensus, at least a re-consideration of France's position in Europe and in the world. Multilateralism has thus become a resort to promote French interests, increasingly perceived as synonymous with Europe. The marginal popular

acceptance of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 showed the strength of opposition to this perspective. With Maastricht surmounted, however, France has continued to play a predominant role in the European Union. Furthermore, multilateralism is increasingly seen in the light of balancing, or opposing, the dominance of the United States. Cultural and political independence from America has been a central French concern throughout the post-war period; with the Cold War ended, this priority has attained even higher priority. France thus regards itself as a bulwark against American dominance and a promoter of (i) international law, (ii) the prevalence of the Security Council, and (iii) a collective human rights responsibility against the rule of force (Charillon 2002:928-29). A conscious institutional strategy to support these aspirations has followed logically.

France since 1958 has represented a foreign policy approach of ambition and activism, seemingly rigid in its moral assumptions yet subtle enough to be thoroughly updated underway. Gradually – and only partially – accepting its own demise as a great power, France has heralded the European Union as alternative outlet for French values abroad. What has been more difficult to swallow, however, is the supposed demise of cultural superiority in a world increasingly inclined to Americanisation. To a nation with a universal message, the idea of universal influence can never be fully abandoned.

3.4. A summary of contrasting characteristics

We may attempt at this point to sum up in a few keywords a set of contrasts between French and British approaches to foreign policy. This section concludes with an attempt to define such a list. Obviously, the qualities ascribed to Britain and France will be non-exhaustive. Neither do they give any full evaluation of the foreign policy of the two nations. What is attempted is a simplified representation of Britain and France by focusing on some key principles that arguably affect their foreign policy. How can this schematised version be helpful to our research?

3.4.1. Ideal types as analytical device

Andersen (1997) refers to the *creation of typologies and hypotheses* as alternative ambitions of case study research. Typically, new concepts as well as theory are generated from case studies, where time and space are sufficient to go in depth. Andersen (1997:79) mentions typologies as *Gemeinshaft/Gesellschaft* and Max Weber's model of bureaucracy as examples. Weber worked by organising his concepts in *ideal types*, ignoring the more intricate properties of empirical data by "accentuat[ing] essential tendencies" which worked as a guidance to empirical research (Weber 1949:92). Thus, he could work hermeneutically, going from the particular to the essential and back to the particular, making and remaking hypotheses to capture core qualities of the data (Bergström & Boréus 2000:158). Hence, *concept-formation* was a central concern social science itself seen as "a continuous process passing from the attempt to order reality analytically through the construction of concepts" (Weber 1949:105).

Our research follows a similar logic by presenting a set of ideas and principles assumedly guiding French and British foreign policy. These *guiding principles* have been sought out in historical-political accounts – they are presented here as *variables* (e.g. *National identity*) along which the two nations diverge. Variables are organised in four different *dimensions* of foreign policy thought[51]. Table 3.4 provides the function of heuristic device, a door-opener or framework for further research. Our typology as presented in the table will henceforth be tested against empirical data in the form of political debates over Iraq.

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[51] It should be noted here that the distribution of variables in *dimensions* is pragmatically conducted and does not draw upon factor analysis or any similar quantitative device. Distinguishing between different dimensions is expected to facilitate the empirical analysis and the interpretation of its results.

Table 3.4. French-British contrasts in guiding principles affecting the conduct of foreign policy.

Dimension	Variable	France	Britain
Nation and sovereignty	1. National identity	Continental, French-European	Insular, British/Atlantic
	2. Sovereignty approach	Semi-federalist – national and European interest seen as corresponding	Traditional, nation-state exclusiveness
	3. Focus of political sovereignty	Nation, ideational legacy	Parliament, formal independence
Values And ideas	4. Character of tradition	Timeless - spiritual	Nostalgic – institutional
	5. Prominent ideals	Philosophical integrity, Idealism	Entrepreneurship, materialism
	6. Dominant ideology	Doctrinaire, progressive	Pragmatic, conservative
Foreign policy approach	7. Operating procedure	Multilateral, rhetorical	Bilateral, direct
	8. Salience of international law	High: Theoretical, focus on legality	Moderate: Practical, Case-dependent
	9. Stated values and ambition	Moral progress, inter-national reform: Missionary	Free trade, coexistence: Moderate
	10. Strategy towards the United States	Counterbalance, confrontation	Influence through friendship
Political culture	11. Relevance of parliament	Since 1958: Limited role, especially in foreign policy	Strong symbolic value as centre of legitimacy
	12. Party culture	Fractionist, conflictual - ideological	Bipartisan - adversary, but pragmatic ('loyal opposition')
	13. Legitimacy of head of government	Direct - elective or plebiscitaire	Indirect – parliamentary

4. Political debates preceding the invasion of Iraq

This chapter is designed as a summary preparation to the case studies of French/British debates; it provides a brief account of Iraq's presence in international politics and its place in French and British political history.

4.1. The Iraq issue in French and British politics

With regards to Iraq, policy divergence between Britain and France appears to be a fairly consistent affair, due to strategic and financial interest as well as international prestige. Britain has been the more directly involved in the region by way of colonialism; France has been present by intimate commercial and strategic ties, historically via the bridgehead represented by Syria. Formerly a part of the Ottoman Empire, today's Iraq was occupied by Britain during the First World War, in line with the (not exclusively British) perception of "territorial gains […] as a political asset in themselves" (Tripp 2002:31-32). In 1920 the League of Nations assigned the area to a British mandate; the throne was promptly reserved for King Faysal, a British protégé. The importance of the Middle East to Britain rested primarily in securing waterways to India – however, the prodigious potential of oil added significant interest. According to Amirsadeghi (1981:vi) "the British looked upon the Gulf as their 'lake' [and] 'legitimate' sphere of influence" – furthermore, except for Persia, all the Arab Gulf states were designed by London. No wonder, then, that British politics would leave significant traces in the Arab world – and vice versa.

Formal Iraqi independence, obtained in 1932, led to no dramatic shift neither in British indirect rule nor in foreign financial influence. The Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) was the vehicle of controlling the nation's oil reserves. Western influence was channelled through British, American, British-Dutch and French companies, as equal shareholders in IPC (Brisard 2003)[52]. The British-friendly Iraqi monarchy was maintained throughout the 1930s and –40s, in spite of wavering legitimacy and occasional uproar. In 1958, however, the regime was

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[52] The companies referred to were (i) the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, (ii) Cartel Nedac, (iii) Royal-Dutch Shell and (iv) CFP respectively.

swayed into history by a communist-inspired *coup d'etat* urging stronger links with Nasser's Egypt as well as the Soviet Union. Iraq now threatened the regional order designed by Britain in the Middle East, in which Iran and Saudi Arabia were the stabilising pillars against Arab nationalism and Marxism (Campbell 1981:5). Things were to worsen in 1968, as another coup swept the *Baath* party to the summit of Iraqi power politics. Saddam Hussein, a deputy leader of the new regime, stood behind the nationalisation in 1972 of the Iraq Petroleum Company (Brisard 2003). Khomeini's revolution in Iran would then provide a trigger for Iraq's expansionist regime; the war between the two lasted from 1980 to 1987, dealing with territory, oil and ethnicity – and consolidating Saddam's regime in Iraq. War brought disastrous consequences to Iraq's economy. Over-armed but on the verge of bankruptcy, Saddam in 1990 opted for invasion of Kuwait, a small but well-endowed country on Iraq's southern border.

The invasion of 2 August 1990 was universally condemned – furthermore, Iraq was met with a total trade embargo drawn up by the UN. As demands for Iraqi withdrawal were fruitless, an emerging international community finally reunited on military intervention. Sanctioned by the UN Security Council, the invasion of Kuwait began on 17 January 1991. Operation "Desert Storm" featured American leadership at the head of a grand coalition of 27 nations and 600.000 troops. Another disastrous campaign ensued for Iraq, slowly withdrawing while causing enormous damage to infrastructure and oil installations in Kuwait. With ceasefire declared 28 February 1991, rebellions erupted in the Kurdish North as well as the Shia-dominated southern Iraq; they were crushed by Saddam's regime while foreign troops halted at the Iraqi doorstep[53]. The following story of Iraq is one of commercial embargo, UN weapons inspectors (ensuring the absence of weapons of mass destruction of which Saddam had shown himself capable), occasional bombing raids and a heavily suffering population. UN Security Council

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[53] The American President, George Bush, was central to the decision of restraining allied efforts to the liberation of Kuwait. While this passivism caused some controversy, its rationale in *realpolitik* seemed irreproachable enough; civil war and instability could easily spill over to neighbouring states as well as Iraq.

Resolution 687 (1991) demanded recognition of Kuwait and destruction of non-conventional weapons; the following month UN's Special Commission on Disarmament paid its first visit to Iraq (Tripp 2002:xiv). Relations between Iraq and the UN were intrinsically difficult over the next years; from 1996, Iraq was allowed a limited sale of oil each year for the purchase of vital foodstuff and medicine. Two years later relations reached a crisis as the "Desert Fox" operation, conducted by the United States and Britain led to Iraq ending all cooperation with the UN[54]. The following years new inspections regimes were repeatedly introduced – and allegedly sabotaged by Iraq. Tension would rise further with the terrorist attacks of September 11 2001 and the consequent affirmative turn in American foreign policy. In his State of the Union Address in January 2002, president George W. Bush declared Iraq as part of the 'axis of evil' against which the world would have to act. Throughout 2002 speculations suggested that the United States was preparing for unilateral military action towards Iraq, although the President, in a speech to the UN General Assembly in September, championed UN's legitimating role in a possible intervention.

4.1.1. Iraq in the light of principles and ideas

Iraq, location of ancient civilisation and mystique, has in more recent times acquired a particular strategic character due to geopolitics and oil.[55] Britain and France, while sharing a tradition of colonial rule, fostered different relations with the Arab world. To France, the North African *Mahgreb* region represented an essential colonial asset from the late nineteenth century until the 1950s. The epoch of Charles de Gaulle involved a transition of French imperial gist towards political equality coupled with French cultural leadership. Thus, Arab subjects became *partners* in an innovative framework of French influence abroad. Immigration, however, has since the 1970s provoked resentment and conflict in France, channelled through the far-right party *Front National* and difficult to

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[54] According to Tripp (2002:263), aerial bombardment aimed towards forcing Saddam to compliance as well as weakening his regime. This mixture of objectives confused any public justification for the campaign, a feature that would be seen again in debates preceding the 2003 invasion of Iraq.
[55] The immediate post-war period was of great importance in defining the strategic asset of the Middle East. Israel/Arab conflicts and Cold War rivalry ensued while the global dependence on oil supplies would only increase. Already in 1951 the coming president Dwight Eisenhower declared the Middle East as the most strategically important region in the world (Amirsadeghi 1981:5).

escape from even in the relatively constrained foreign policy domain. To Britain, meanwhile, Arab colonial possessions were of a more recent nature and of a larger distance to home. As we have seen, the First World War was the departure point of much of Britain's Arab efforts, with the exceptions of Egypt and Sudan. Immigration from the Arab world, furthermore, has been scant compared with the influx of Commonwealth citizens of West Indian, African or Asian origin.

4.1.1.1. The case of France

In a broad perspective, a non-discriminatory policy towards the Middle East was in concord with French ideas. Still, Saddam's regime was not of the kind that a country of humanitarian principles could endorse. The Gulf War of 1991, while heralding the arrival of a global community, caused much anguish to France. Reinforcing the UN was a stated French ambition, as was the idea of multilateral efforts. Yet, military action against Iraq proceeded under American leadership and represented armed intervention in an Arab country of commercial preference to France. The war thus "called into question a number of key tenets of French foreign policy, such as anti-Americanism, national independence, and France's traditional pro-Arab stance" (Cole 1994:149). In pursuit of justification, President François Mitterand referred to UN legitimacy and the importance of French presence in the new world order being formed:

> *"France cannot withdraw from the field where international law is defended without losing some of what it has historically obtained... France went to war in 1792 having defined some fundamental principles to itself, which were soon to become the ideas of a whole world. It is [equally] in the French interest to take part in the formation of international rules today..."[56]*

The French position was difficult, however, in what appeared an Anglo-American pursuit. As shown by the Iraq issue throughout the 1990s, France represented a strategy of diplomacy and negotiation directly opposed to the American approach[57]. Divergence was manifest not only in Iraq, however, but also with the recurring crises in former Yugoslavia. Again, the United States

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[56] Mitterand quoted from his speech to the French people on 9 January 1991. Author's translation.
[57] France thus blocked the strengthening of UN sanctions in 1997 and chose non-participation in aerial strikes. Furthermore, president Chirac hosted an official reception of the Iraqi foreign minister as late as February 1998 (Kessler & Charillon 2001:112).

would provide the military assistance as the bottom line of French diplomatic efforts. Iraq, then at the threshold of a new century, was to France an object for international law and negotiation – yet, it could also represent a case for humanitarian intervention for which France had made itself a spokesman.

4.1.1.2. The British approach to Iraq

As former ruler of Iraq, Britain clearly had a special history in the area; this was evoked by the Iraqi regime itself when referring to the annexation of Kuwait as redressing colonial injustice (Tripp 2002:253). To Britain, a firm reaction to Iraqi aggression in 1991 was essential, also in view of reinforcing the relationship across the Atlantic. The British rationale to fight this war was more immediate, the moral restraints less visible than in France. Chuter (1997:109) makes a key observation of the British pragmatic position:

> *"[T]he common suggestion in 1990-1 that the Gulf War was being fought to secure the oil supplies of the West was not greeted with the kind of horrified disavowal which was the case elsewhere, because such motives are comprehensible in terms of British history, and are widely regarded as acceptable."*

Britain's emphatic approach to Iraq was prolonged in the 1990s, firmly rooted in the Anglo-American partnership. Since 11 September 2001, however, some observers noted a change in British policy, with the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, emphasising the international *community* and Britain's *uniting* or recruiting role. In his endeavours to form a global coalition against terrorism, Blair thus seemed to "advance a new foreign policy agenda based on the notion that by multilateral means the international community can defend human rights and support the rule of law" (Kennedy-Pipe & Vickers 2003:323). However, the belief in grand coalitions and consensus hardly implied a turn towards pacifism; put differently, common efforts were not coupled with a neglect of force, as was shown in the united efforts against Afghanistan in 2001. Again, Britain's approach was un-compromising in preferring *affirmative action* to *appeasement* or withdrawal. Thus, while international activism had taken on increasing importance in British foreign policy, the belief in enforcement and efficiency appeared to prevail.

5. Empirical analysis

The first part of this chapter is devoted to methodology as applied in the content analysis of French and British political debates. A number of problems could be raised concerning the reliability and validity of our research. However, as will be argued here, a conscious research design should mitigate some of the shortcomings of content analysis. Among the issues to consider are operationalisation of concepts, coding of data and interpretation of the results.

5.1. Operationalisation

Operationalisation refers to the conversion from theoretical to empirical concepts – that is, from concepts that are *theoretically* conceived to categories or variables against which *empirical* data may be measured. Operationalisation holds particular significance to content analysis - which, however, does not lay down any standard operating procedure for its pursuit (Bryder (1985:58). On the contrary, according to Holsti (1969:104), "in the absence of standard schemes of classification the [content] analyst is usually faced with […] trial and error methods". It must be regarded a problem, then, that the validity of research is critically dependent on the way that theoretical categories have been operationalised.

5.1.1. Analytical categories

In practical terms, operationalisation for content analysis implies the creation of a *coding scheme* to define the empirical categories where textual units should be coded. With regards to analytical categories, we turn our focus towards (i) *recording units* and (ii) *context units*; the former referring to the segments (word, opinions, themes) that are registered, the latter pointing at the textual frameworks where these segments are traced. More tangibly, the *recording units* in our analysis are derived from the *guiding principles* pertaining to Britain and France; context units refer to speeches and statements in the debates over Iraq. According to Bryder (1985:61-62), the chance of significant findings increases by choosing as small a recording unit as possible. We may add that the *reliability* of the investigation (the possibility of tracing and re-conducting analysis) should

increase with small and well-defined units. Ideally, coding should be intersubjective, in that any qualified researcher will arrive at the same result when categories have been defined. How should we make empirical categories of the French/British guiding principles we have arrived at by historical review?

5.1.2. French/British ideational contrasts

The following list is an attempt to operationalise our list of French and British principles as presented in table 3.4. We maintain the *analytical dimensions* – such as 'Nation and sovereignty' – as organising concepts. Operationalising the *guiding principles* are a range of standardised statements – such as *'Europe must find a common voice...'* as we may expect them to appear in political debates. These recording units are given as contrasting pairs; hence, a reference to a 'British' principle will normally imply opposition to its 'French' adversary. It should be noted at this point that analysis is confined to explicit content in the texts – hence, coding does not involve any reading between the lines. Reference to a principle – now a recording unit – will be noted each time as it appears in a statement or speech (a context unit). The following table gives an exhaustive list of recording units; these are approximate and do leave a certain room for interpretation when conducting the coding. In the accounts of speeches and parliamentary debates we will refer to them interchangeably as *values*, *ideas* or *principles* from the French and British foreign policy traditions.

Table 5.1. Operationalisations. Principles derived from French tradition in bold font (1.01, 1.02…), 'British' principles in italics (1.11, 1.12…).

1. NATION AND SOVEREIGNTY
1.01 **Europe should find a common voice in foreign policy.**
1.11 *It is important to maintain the Atlantic alliance.*
1.02 **We should focus on promoting international solidarity.**
1.12 *Choice of policy depends primarily on our national interest.*

2. VALUES AND IDEAS
2.01 **Our national history is represented primarily in the ideas that we promote.**
2.11 *Our national history is embedded in our institutions.*
2.02 **We have a vision of the world, a set of ideas, to help resolve the Iraq issue.**
2.12 *A practical solution should be found to restore peaceful relations and trade with Iraq.*
2.03 **War is morally abhorrent, can only be justified as last resort.**
2.13 *War may be necessary, to retain credibility diplomacy must be backed by force.*

2.04 **Choice of strategy towards Iraq should state an example, put down a moral principle; could be turned to a step towards moral progress in international relations.**

2.14 *Choice of strategy towards Iraq should be made on criteria of efficiency (minimising damage) and stability in the world.*

2.05 **The world should intervene against evil; policy towards Iraq should be bold and support our ideas.**

2.15 *Prudence; we should be cautious not to act as missionary to transform the world; policy should be limited and restrictive.*

3. FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH

3.01 **Legitimacy of military action requires endorsement by the UN Security Council.**

3.11 *The UN is a preferable approach, but not an exclusive source of legitimacy.*

3.02 **Any intervention in Iraq must be in accordance with international law.**

3.12 *Legal principles should not alone constrain the choice of strategy.*

3.03 **Legitimacy requires negotiation and deliberation to avoid a military solution.**

3.13 *There has to be an end to negotiation when time-consuming and inefficient.*

3.04 **The USA must be balanced if we wish to influence their policy towards Iraq.**

3.14 *The USA is our ally and is only influenced through partnership, by friendly advice.*

3.05 **Our nation should work towards a multipolar world.**

3.15a *Our nation should work in a traditional western alliance, with friendly relations towards the rest of the world.*

3.15b *To find the best solution, the Americans need us to work with, not against them.*

4. POLITICAL CULTURE

4.01 **Our executive alone represents the nation in foreign policy.**

4.11 *Executive policy must be anchored and justified in parliament.*

4.02 **Where we disagree ideologically, the government does not merit parliamentary support.**

4.12 *In difficult times parliament must unite in support of our nation.*

4.03 **The head of state justifies his policy directly to the people.**

4.13 *The head of state must defend his views primarily to parliament.*

5. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF IRAQ QUESTION[58]

5.01 **Controlling Iraq represents a question of <u>containment</u> (thus defying Iraqi aggression by way of sanctions and negotiation rather than by military means).**

5.11 *Deferring to Iraqi non-compliance would be a matter of <u>appeasement</u> (which will only strike back on ourselves).*

5.10 ***Our nation has a global responsibility as great power of the past and/or member of UN Security Council - we will form our opinion independently/act accordingly.[59]***

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[58] The national resonance of appeasement and containment could be thus perceived: In **Britain**, *appeasement* is a spiteful term in light of Chamberlain's misguided attempts to appease Nazi Germany in 1938; the lesson assumed never to give in to expansionist, violent regimes. In **France**, on the other hand, the defensive concepts of *containment* or *dissuasion* are endowed with a certain positive value, stemming in particular from the Cold-War nuclear shield. The evolving national image of non-violent, 'civilised' conflict resolution may also be worthy of consideration here.

[59] The principle embodied in 5.10 is considered common to both foreign policy traditions.

6. OTHER ARGUMENTS (added through experience with data)[60]
a) Legitimacy in global support
6.01   Our view is legitimate by support from a majority in the world
b) Perception of the significance of Iraq
6.02   Iraq represents a unique case (in terms of threat/in terms of brutality)
6.12   Iraq is only one of many such regimes
c) Usefulness of inspections
6.03   Inspections are working
6.13   Inspections are futile
6.04   The judgement by weapon inspectors is the key to choice of legitimate action
6.14   Inspectors are a help in determining the threat, but cannot hold the ultimate decision on policy.
d) Aims of policy in Iraq
6.05   The ultimate aim in Iraq is to trace and destroy the weapons of mass destruction.
6.15   Disarmament is the aim, but regime change is desirable.
e) Effects of intervention in Iraq
6A   Intervening against Saddam will dissuade other regimes that may pose a threat.
6.B   Invasion will cause regional unrest and/or a break-up of the anti-terrorist coalition.
6C   Invasion will have grave humanitarian humanitarian consequences.
f) Various arguments
6X   (Most frequent occurrences: We must focus on restoring the Middle East peace process; The
        choice of outcome lies with Saddam; UN must play a role in reconstruction; The people in Iraq is
        on our side; The potential of a peaceful solution is not exhausted; Saddam is rational/irrational;
        There is/isn't a link with Al-Quadea; Iraq is/isn't an immediate threat).

5.2. Observing the Iraq debates in Britain and France

The issue of how to respond to the potential threat from Iraq took centre stage of
public debate in many European countries. This was no less the case in Britain
and France, two countries with a tradition of leadership in international affairs.
Interestingly, the Iraq question awoke a considerable share of cross-national
solidarity - especially in the anti-war coalition, as manifest in the parallel peace
demonstrations of 15 February 2003. The broader popular currents, though of
clear analytical value, are not our primary focus here; debates among political
elites, defined as government and parliament, constitute our terrain. In this
respect, position towards the choice of action in Iraq differed considerably
between the two countries. First, government policy placed France and Britain on
two opposing strands, France as a leader of a European anti-war bloc and Tony
Blair's government as primary ally of the United States. Second, however,
parliamentary as well as public opinion was not unitary in any of the two
countries. British debates were characterised by strong opposition against
invasion, visible in popular mobilisation as well as the press, and present in

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[60] Arguments united under *6. Other Arguments* were all coded as 'Arguments not linked to any of the two traditions: Others'. See table 5.2. and 5.3 for summaries.

Parliament right to the centre of government[61]. French disputes leaned more towards the strategic merits of open opposition to the United States, as bonds of loyalty in the Atlantic alliance were seriously put to the test. Apparently, the moral case of the French refusal was less in dispute than the potential dangers of French isolation.

5.2.1. How the coding was conducted

One of the underpinnings of our research is that traditional guiding principles of foreign policy will be present irrespective of position on the issue of Iraq. Hence, whether or not a French parliamentarian was in support of invasion, (s)he would be likely to evoke ideas that are prevalent in the French foreign policy tradition. This poses obvious methodological difficulties, not only because of the different balance of opinion in Britain and France but also because a clear position on the invasion issue was rarely stated in debates. Thus, we have little analytical evidence of the significance of the Iraq position for certain ideas to be evoked, and of whether French and British principles respectively pointed towards particular positions on the Iraq issue. We will briefly return to these questions in the conclusive chapter (6).

Coding requires a fair amount of interpretation; what may be done to compensate is to give as full as possible a report of the method applied. Foreign policy principles from the two traditions were operationalised to designate expected statements in speeches and debates. How and where to raise the borders between ideas expressed in speeches is notoriously difficult. By experience the way to resolve this was by qualified judgement; as was found by analysis, several principles or ideas could be evoked in a single sentence of speech. An example could be given here, quoted from the French President:

> *France, faithful to her principles […], will continue to act for the just and peaceful resolution of crises; by collective action, through the UN, the only legitimate forum for peace in Iraq…[62]*

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[61] Thus, *Clare Short*, Secretary of State for International Development and *Robin Cook*, Leader of the House of Commons, were among the political casualties of the Iraq issue. Both resigned during 2003 in protest against their government's policy in Iraq.

[62] Declaration at the outbreak of war, Paris 20 March 2003. Author's translation.

Three principles were registered for this textual segment:

2.02   We have **a vision of the world**, a set of ideas, to help resolve the Iraq issue.
3.01   Legitimacy of military action requires endorsement by the **UN Security Council**.
3.02   Any intervention in Iraq must be in accordance with **international law**.

In other parts of the texts specific values or principles could be rare, or references could be irrelevant to the principles we had conceived. However, speeches as well as debates were generally of a high comparative quality[63]. The different context of speeches, interviews and press conferences (heads of government) and parliamentary debates could cause come problems. In some cases, the questions posed would direct the speaker towards certain themes; this was no major problem, however, as answers showed high consistency with principles otherwise emphasised. Furthermore, the operationalisations of our coding scheme were pitted as oppositional pairs; thus, a negative reference to one principle would typically mean endorsement of its adversary. All considerations taken into account, coding as conducted was endowed with high intra-subjective reliability; how reliable in *inter*-subjective terms is a more difficult matter. That, however, is a point where perfection is hardly conceivable in analysis of this genre.

5.3. Government statements

Traditionally a royal prerogative, the maintenance of external relations has remained an important governmental task; the legislative assemblies are thus reduced to a body of evaluation and debate. There is, of course, some variance as to what extent of influence may be exerted by the legislative. All things equal, one would expect foreign policy to be more firmly rooted in the legislative in a parliamentary democracy such as Britain than in the semi-presidential system of France. This assumption is strengthened by the respective national traditions. However, contrasts should not be overstated – in Lijphart's

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[63] A poignant example in this respect are the speeches by Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac to their respective diplomatic corps in January 2003. Both maintaining a great-power heritage, the two leaders yet expressed rather contrasting global visions: US partnership vs. Europe, pragmatism vs. international law.

(1999) *Westminster* model of democracy, executive dominance over Parliament is in fact one of the fundamental criteria[64].

In leading the foreign policy of a nation, the government fills a double function. Firstly, it must defend and promote the national interest abroad; secondly, the government, with a view towards re-election as well as parliamentary critique, must work proactively towards public opinion at home[65]. It is on this basis that we begin our empirical analysis with government statements in Britain and France. In the strict sense, the Prime Minister and President respectively represent the *makers* of foreign policy, supported by their foreign ministers. Thus, we must expect them to reflect in their speeches the general lines of government policy – a policy that draws on specific interests as well as the kind of guiding principles previously discussed.

5.3.1. Source material

The statements studied are of a rather heterogeneous nature, in representing a series of speeches, press conferences and interviews conducted between September 2002 and ultimo March 2003, variously dealing with the issue of Iraq. While differing in form and audience, the material nevertheless showed clear consistency in argumentation. In other words, a high degree of comparability seemed to be represented in the statements of Blair and Chirac. What appeared more problematic was the projected study of foreign ministers Straw and de Villepin, whose speeches suffered from differences in form and content[66]. Data from the two foreign ministers's speeches and statements will therefore not be subject to an independent analysis; focus, then, remains exclusively with Blair

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[64] The last two decades, furthermore, have seen the rise of what is allegedly a strengthened premiership in the British system – manifest in the the claim that *presidentialism* is emerging in Britain (see Smith 2003). As early a scholar as Walter Bagehot (2001:99), however, referred in his famous thesis (1867) to the House of Commons as "the assembly which chooses our *president*" (italics added).

[65] Again, the basic contrast between a parliamentary and presidential system applies. While Tony Blair is condemned to muster parliamentary support, at least from his own majority party, Jacques Chirac can act in the knowledge that only the popular vote at the end of a five-year presidential term is applicable to his position. Hence the assumption of (primarily) parliamentary vs. popular justification in their speeches.

[66] In support of the assumption that British foreign policy is *parliamentary* rooted, resources on the British foreign secretary indicated that his few essential speeches on Iraq were given to Parliament.

and Chirac. In the empirical analysis we will refer to our coding scheme as presented in chapter 5.1.

5.3.2. Blair: "This is not the time to falter…"[67]

Tony Blair is a leader enshrined by much ambiguity. His stature as British prime minister for two consecutive terms cannot be neglected; neither can his pretensions to international leadership. Yet there are stains attached to the PM's reputation; typically, he is accused of betraying the traditional left by his moderate, centrist political approach. However, prudence at home has been accompanied by a *bolder* approach abroad, of which Foreign Secretary Robin Cook (1997-2001) as well as Tony Blair has been a prominent spokesman. New Labour, it was argued, represented a progressive, moral approach to foreign policy, one that would justify military intervention on ethical grounds as well as in defence of national interest. In Blair's vision of the world the two would often be seen to correspond – firm responses to the challenges of Kosovo (1999), Sierra Leone and Afghanistan (2001) could thus be defended concurrently by humanitarian motives and *realpolitik*. This tied together rather different strands of British foreign policy tradition: the idealism frequently displayed by Labour in opposition; the assumption of a civilising responsibility; the global extension of British influence; and the view that Britain must take part internationally to safeguard her interests. In the deeper layers of Blair's rhetoric references to common sense and *realpolitik* never ceased to persist. What seems less prevalent, however, is the traditional British prudence in foreign affairs.

Iraq presented Tony Blair with an international mission, prolonging the British engagements of post-9/11 to foster a global coalition against terrorism. In the eyes of the Prime Minister, the Iraqi regime tied together the predominant threats of the 21st century: A rogue state with possible terrorist links and potentially equipped with weapons of mass destruction[68]. Iraq, furthermore, had been a

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[67] Speeches by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, were accessed from the website service of 10 Downing Street [http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page3109.asp] on 10-12 February 2005.
[68] *Weapons of mass destruction*, a phrase so common in the debates over Iraq, normally refers to atomic, biological and chemical weapons, all inhibited by international law.

consistent theme in British and American politics throughout the 1990s; a firm stature towards Iraq was thus in line with established British practice. The challenge would be to act on those beliefs, and not least – to reunite an international coalition responding to Blair's pretension of leadership.

Analysis of Blair's political discourse on Iraq revealed in particular the *activist* character of the Prime Minister's approach. In our schematised coding system, a remarkable proportion of the Prime Minister arguments were found along the dimension of **Values and ideas**:

> ***This is not a time for British caution or even British reserve, still less for a retreat into isolation... This is a time for us to be out in front; engaged; open; creative; willing to take bold decisions… Now is the moment to make our future as exciting in impact, if different in character, as our history.***[69]

Invasion of Iraq was often justified in *moral* terms. What clearly distinguished Blair's argumentation from more cautious voices in Europe, however, was the *affirmative* and pre-emptive stance against Iraq. This was particularly shown by Blair's steady insistence on value 2.13: *War may be necessary; diplomacy must always be backed by force*. Blair's uncompromising approach to the Iraqi regime was furthermore coupled with a strongly *instrumentalist* view of the UN, in sharp contrast with the French position. The perception that the UN must prove its *capability* was repeatedly argued by Blair. Speaking in September 2002 the Prime Minister proclaimed:

> ***If the challenge to us is to work with the UN, we will respond to it.. But if we do so, then the challenge to all in the UN is this: the UN must be the way to resolve the threat from Saddam not avoid it.***[70]

Hence, Blair's arguments along the *Values and ideas* represented an original mingling of ideas, bringing together an *idealist* and *moralist* perspective derived from the French tradition with *enforcement* and *efficiency* in a British traditional vein. Blair's speeches gave particular attention to 2.02: *We have a vision of the world to help resolve the Iraq issue*; this was accompanied by advocacy of a bold and moral approach to Iraq rather than a 'British' penchant towards efficiency

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[69] Speech at Foreign Office conference for British diplomats, London 7 January 2003.
[70] Speech at TUC conference, Blackpool 10 September 2002.

and prudence. In sum, the Prime Minister's rhetoric pointed to *a mix of British and French guiding principles, with a slight inclination towards the latter*. This was similar on the first dimension of our analytical scheme, namely **Nation and sovereignty**, where Blair's rhetoric was permeated with references to *promotion of international solidarity* (1.02), especially in the early phase of the debates. This value accounts for the 'French' predominance in Blair's arguments along this dimension, as the community of *Europe* (1.01) was a very rare occurrence in his speeches. Among principles of the British foreign policy tradition, the Prime Minister referred lavishly to the *Atlantic alliance* (1.11) and *national interest* (1.12), values to be expected from a British prime minister. However, these occurrences were not sufficient to balance the frequency with which *international solidarity* was evoked; hence, a preponderance in Blair's speeches of values from the French tradition.

Our third analytical dimension, **Foreign policy approach**, was heavily under-represented in Blair's discourse by comparison with Chirac. In his speeches Blair very rarely referred to *UN legitimacy* (3.01) and *international law* (3.02); instead, the Prime Minister expressed a pragmatic view of legality, preferring action to prolonged negotiation. Furthermore, Blair did not once raise the French-derived ideal of *a multipolar world* (3.04); on the contrary he maintained the importance of *working with* rather than balancing the United States. This dimension witnessed a distribution very much in line with a traditional British approach, with more than 80% of arguments leaning towards the British tradition. Similar results were seen for the two last dimensions of guiding principles, **Political culture** and **Historical significance of Iraq question**. The former was characterised by Blair's affirmation of parliamentary legitimacy, significant though only rarely explicitly stated. The *Historical significance…*dimension, dealing with the view of Iraq as a case of (successful) containment (5.01) vs. (potentially disastrous) appeasement (5.11), showed a strong presence of the *appeasement* argument in Blair's discourse. Clearly, the historical reference embedded in appeasement was perceived as important to the Prime Minister.

Table 5.2 gives a summary account of speeches and statements on Iraq. With regards to the British Prime Minister, the presentation hides a significant development over time, visible when separating statements of the September 2002 to January 2003 period from those of February and March 2003. On the **Nation and sovereignty** dimension, Blair appears to have made a considerable shift of emphasis from the French-side *international solidarity* argument (1.02) towards the importance of the *Atlantic alliance* (1.11) and *national interest* (1.12) in the weeks leading up to the invasion. On **Values and ideas**, however, Blair's movement is from 'British' to 'French' ideas, increasingly embracing the principle of *acting boldly* (2.05) rather than *prudently* and perceiving Iraq as a case for *moral principle* (2.04) rather than pragmatic consideration. Lastly, the idea of *Britain having a national vision* (2.02) was evermore present in Blair's speeches. The result of this contradictory course is *a hybrid version of what we defined initially as French and British foreign-policy traditions*. Blair thus advocated on the one hand acting with resolve, according to moral principle and a vision of the world; at the same time references went unambiguously towards national interest, strategic concerns and the "special relationship" across the Atlantic. The intermingling of two strands appeared to be resolved by the Prime Minister's own vision of global threats and the pertinent methods to face them. To other parts of the public, however, the Prime Minister's mixture of moralist arguments and *realpolitik* may have caused more confusion - as discourse aspired to reunite warm-blooded justice and cool efficiency, intervention abroad and national defence.

Table 5.2. Occurrence of arguments from separate political traditions in speeches on Iraq; numbers given in per cent.

a) TONY BLAIR	1. Nation and sovereignty	2. Values and ideas	3. Foreign policy approach	4. Political culture	5. Historical significance of Iraq…	Total
Arguments derived from British foreign policy tradition	**38% (14)**	**39% (43)**	**83% (25)**	**100% (7)**	**100% (15)**	**55% (104)**
Arguments derived from French foreign policy tradition	**62% (23)**	**61% (57)**	**17% (5)**	**0% (0)**	**0% (0)**	**45% (85)**
Sum	**20% (37)**	**53% (100)**	**15% (30)**	**4% (7)**	**8% (15)**	**100% (189)**
Arguments not linked to any of the two traditions	**Great power role: 5% of grand total (15)** **Others: 34% of grand total (106)**					**Grand total: 310**

b) JACQUES CHIRAC	1. Nation and sovereignty	2. Values and ideas	3. Foreign policy approach	4. Political culture	5. Historical significance of Iraq…	Total
Arguments derived from British foreign policy tradition	**30% (11)**	**15% (12)**	**9% (9)**	**50% (2)**	**0% (0)**	**15% (34)**
Arguments derived from French foreign policy tradition	**70% (26)**	**85% (66)**	**91% (92)**	**50% (2)**	**100% (2)**	**85% (188)**
Sum	**17% (37)**	**35% (78)**	**45% (101)**	**2% (4)**	**1% (2)**	**100% (222)**
Arguments not linked to any of the two traditions	**Great power role: 2% of grand total (8)** **Others: 34% of grand total (156)**					**Grand total: 386**

5.3.3. Chirac: "au nom de la primauté du droit"[71]

French politics is in some respects farther from Britain than the few miles of Channel water would indicate. The argumentation of the French President over Iraq goes some way to illustrate this fact. Contrary to the British Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac did not take moral progress and idealist policy to mean a proactive stance against Iraq. French intransigency in opposing military action caused much bitterness among British and American officials and was a primary reason that UN endorsement would not arrive. The fact that the French position pushed the UN towards the sidelines on Iraq is somewhat paradoxical, as championing *the UN as source of legitimacy and legality* was a recurring theme in Chirac's speeches. A brief observation of the President's statements between September 2002 and March 2003 reveals a consistent emphasis on UN legitimacy and international law. Rhetorically, the President was dressed in moralist and internationalist clothing – firmly within a French tradition in this respect, complemented by references to Europe and the desirability of coordinated EU action in international affairs.

On the first dimension of our analysis, ***Nation and sovereignty***, Chirac – as Blair – arrived with a majority of values derived from the French tradition. Similarity in aggregates, however, deludes significant contrasts; where Blair referred singularly to the international solidarity value (1.02), Chirac in his speeches split evenly between solidarity and the desirability of *Europe* finding a common voice (1.01). In fact, the latter accounts for the larger share in Chirac's arguments along this dimension[72]. The European flavour of Chirac's discourse, meanwhile, was ambitious in form, yet pragmatic in perceiving French interests as better promoted when embedded in the EU:

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[71] Speeches by the President, Jacques Chirac, were accessed from the presidential website service: [http://www.elysee.fr/index.php] on 16-18 February 2005. All quotes presented are author's translations.
[72] Surprisingly, the President equalled Blair in referring to the importance of Atlantic alliance (1.11). This lends credence to the Chirac's rhetorical flair, as his tending of Atlantic partnership was particularly prevalent before Anglo-American audiences - in interviews with *New York Times* (9 September 2002), *Time Magazine* (16 February 2003) and French television (10 March 2003).

> *Europe will not exist in the multipolar world unless she acquires a common security and defence policy... This does not pose a threat to France; French interests are deeply integrated with those of Europe. Whether we discuss Iraq […], development or globalisation, I am confident that the French position is supported by a majority in Europe.[73]*

The dimension of **Values and ideas** was relatively less emphasised by Chirac than by Blair; furthermore, with regards to traditional French principles, the President gave ample credit to some, while neglecting others. The *vision of the world* (2.02) and *war is the worst of all solutions* (2.03) principles were strongly supported by Chirac; as was the view of French identity as embedded in timeless values rather than institutions (2.01). However, on the two principles quintessential to Blair – Iraq as a case for moral progress (2.04) and – in particular – that policy should be bold and intervene against evil (2.05), Chirac remained delusive. Though referring to moral, he never followed Blair in championing a proactive stance; against 25 occurrences of 2.05 in the Prime Minister's speeches, the French President made no explicit mentioning. On the British side of traditional values, Chirac surprisingly matched Blair on the value of *efficiency* (2.14); he trailed far behind, however, when it came to accept the necessity of military *enforcement* where diplomacy fails (2.13).

The dimension of **Foreign policy approach** was where Chirac put the over-whelming thrust of his argument; two principles appeared to be of unrivalled importance, namely the key role of the *UN Security Council* in justifying military action (3.01) and the belief that action must follow *international law* (3.02). In Chirac's perspective the two typically operated in concordance:

> *We have the ambition of a more just and peaceful world, regulated by law under the UN, which incarnates international democracy; of a world where peace and war cannot be decided but in this nodal point of the international community.[74]*

The President's deification of the UN, his persistent focus on *UN legitimacy* and *legality* made a major point of contention with Blair, whose reference to these

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[73] Interview with *Le Figaro*, Paris 20 January 2003.
[74] Speech for the Algerian national assembly, Alger 3 March 2003.

values was negligible. A further conflict is found in Chirac's promotion of a multipolar world, with European autonomy. While Blair repeatedly warned against this idea – as when referring to "th[e] concept of rival poles of power" as "a profoundly dangerous concept"[75] – the French President used Iraq to visualise the need for an independent Europe, in "a multipolar world where it is evident that Europe will have a place"[76]. Disapproving of the Anglo-American approach, Chirac also maintained that the law of force was historically unproductive while deliberation and "*dialogue* between cultures, between civilisations based on mutual respect is a better way of resolving our problems"[77]

The two last dimensions of our analytical scheme, ***Political culture*** and ***Historical significance of the Iraq question*** appeared very rarely in the speeches and statements by Chirac. On the question of historical significance, Chirac rarely gave explicit reference to the merits of *containment*; this may well have been due to a weaker historical resonance by comparison with Blair's anti-*appeasement* appeal.

5.3.4. The two executives summarised

The British Prime Minster and the French President, while subscribing to contrasting political traditions, also embody two different rhetorical styles. As observed in the preceding analysis, differences are not clear-cut with respect to our analytical scheme. One of the reasons is the moralist verve of the British Prime Minister, putting the *Values and ideas* dimension centre stage and drawing on several ideas derived from the French foreign policy tradition. In his approach to Iraq, Blair made distinct connections between activism and enforcement. This mixture of idealism and *realpolitik*, of moral and national interests, gave a particular pattern of arguments. In his rationale behind firm action against Iraq the Prime Minister could choose from a variety of justifications: Saddam's

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[75] Press conference on Iraq, London 25 March 2003.
[76] Interview with *Time Magazine*, Paris 16 February 2003.
[77] Interview with *New York Times*, Paris 9 September 2002.

regime as a (direct or indirect) *threat* to the Western world; the *moral-humanitarian* cause of Iraq's submerged population; the need to take *action against cruelty*; the dangerous precedence of *appeasement*; the desire to maintain *privileged relations with the United States*. Moral activism, defined in our scheme as pertaining to the French domain, was consistently promoted by Blair in his speeches and statements on Iraq. However, when coupled with the British propensity towards swiftness and efficiency, Blair's was the case for action rather than French-style debate[78].

Both leaders displayed in their speeches a clear consciousness of a *great-power legacy* and the opportunities as well as tasks that it entails. Pretensions to leadership were also implemented in claims of a broader *vision of the world*, in which the issue of Iraq was to fit in a greater pattern. Here, a considerable part of the division between Blair and Chirac came down to substantial arguments external to both the French and British foreign policy tradition. A major point of contention concerned the *effectiveness* of inspections and whether disarmament could be peacefully obtained. Furthermore, disagreement was prevalent with regards to the *consequences of invasion*. There was a clear moral twist to this latter argument by Blair, testfying to a certain ambiguity on the goals to achieve in Iraq. While Chirac in referring to legality restricted the aim to disarmament, Blair was increasingly unwilling to accept this constraint. On 25 March 2003, five days after attacks had begun, the Prime Minister maintained:

> *We have had to operate within the context of international law and the demands of the United Nations which were for the disarmament of Iraq … I feel more comfortable with the position now where we are saying quite plainly to people the only way now to disarm him is to remove the regime.*

One may ask, then, to what extent the *moralist inactivism* of Chirac was in harmony with the French foreign policy tradition as defined in this thesis. How was opposition to invasion defended by the President? His emphasis on Security Council endorsement hardly responds to this question, as the French position

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[78] Interestingly, analysis of speeches by the Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, showed a relatively stronger preponderance of *Atlantic partnership* and *national interest* than in speeches by the Prime Minister.

itself was decisive in the failures to get UN support for invasion. With regards to international law, Chirac made an essential distinction – between (i) *intervention* and (ii) *interference* in a country's affairs; the former a highly dubious prospect with regards to international law, the latter a potential option when the case has been properly made[79]. Chirac highlighted *legality*, *negotiation* and *consensus*, traditional features of French foreign policy. However, while promoting French values he neglected any clear policy to implement them in Iraq. Prudence was a rising concern of the President; influence by "procrastination and delay" the conclusion drawn by some observers to the debate (Times 2003). In this perspective, Chirac's position owed as much to *realpolitik* as to any moral vision of international affairs[80]. On substantial issues, Chirac maintained that inspections were working and that war should not be an option as long as peaceful methods could be applied to disarm Iraq. This was a point where Blair fundamentally disagreed, one in which he evoked a poignant historical lesson:

> *[I]f the international community having made the call for his disarmament, now, […] at the point of decision, shrugs its shoulders and walks away, [Saddam] will draw the conclusion dictators faced with a weakening will, always draw. That the international community will talk but not act; will use diplomacy but not force; and we know, again from our history, that diplomacy, not backed by the threat of force, has never worked with dictators and never will…[81]*

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[79] Interview with *New York Times*, Paris 9 September 2002. Chirac further referred to the regime of weapons inspectors as an example of interference, while condemning invasion for imprudence as well as illegality.

[80] See e.g. the Orban's (2003) article for a critical account of French strategy on Iraq.

[81] Speech in the House of Commons, Westminster 24 September 2002.

5.4. Parliamentary debates

Parliaments suffer from obvious handicaps in the conduct of foreign policy, caused by constitutional requirement as well as diplomatic practice. Although influential at decisive moments (the declaration of war, ratification of treaties), national assemblies in themselves have little running influence on foreign affairs. This observation is valid in parliamentary as well as presidential regimes, though the rules defining levers of power may differ between the two.

In the *British* parliamentary system, government rules by royal prerogative in the foreign policy domain; Parliament[82]'s role is thus by convention evaluative and reactive. The absence of a written constitution, however, makes the balance of power in the British system a less than rigid affair. In critical moments of international tension, the specific context as well as public opinion may determine how the situation is met. Winston Churchill certainly set a precedence during the Second World War by securing a solid footing for government policy in the House of Commons – providing a blueprint for "how a war should be fought in a democracy" (Macintyre 2002). Moreover, Parliament benefits from its historical position as guardian of civil liberties. The quintessential legitimacy function of the House of Commons is acknowledged by Bagehot, who concedes five principal parliamentary tasks: The *elective* (of government), *expressive* (of public opinion), *teaching* and *informing* (the people) – and the obvious function of *legislation* (Bagehot 2001:99-102). The House of Commons is thus the pivotal institution in the link of governance between electorate, legislature and government. This is as true of foreign policy as of any other political domain; although government controls the running conduct of policy, its legitimacy is derived from the Commons. In Bagehot's words (2001:194):

> *The result of our electoral system is the House of Commons, and that House is our sovereign. As that House is, so will our Cabinet be, so will our administration be, so will our policy be.*

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[82] When speaking of *Parliament* with a capital P in this thesis, the reference is to *the House of Commons*, although the term technically refers to the sum of the two chambers at Westminster.

In *France*, as we have already argued, the Constitution of the Fifth Republic outlines a semi-parliamentarian system with foreign policy as a primarily presidential domain[83]. Strengthening the executive at the expense of parliamentary factions was a primary intention of de Gaulle. However, though parliamentary power in France was diminished during his presidency, it has been somewhat restated since. This has especially been the case in periods of *cohabitation*, where governments answer to *l'Assemblée* rather than to presidential dictate. Such intermissions have contributed to maintaining the assembly's relevance. However, its legitimacy as deliberative assembly is given by the liberal-constitutional setting and as such has not been threatened. In the French traditional tension between *presidential* and *legislative* supremacy, the former may have formalised an upper hand in 1958; however, parliament has yet to be eclipsed. This owes much to republican ideas of a democracy – sacralised in French political tradition – where parliamentary representation of the people retains a quintessential symbolic value.

5.4.1. Source material

Parliamentary debates produce extensive textual data. For reasons of practical necessity the empirical investigation was thus constrained to two pivotal debates on each side of the Channel. Albeit more narrow in focus than originally intended, this proved a beneficial solution for the quality of analysis. Furthermore, it made possible the comparison of two cross-national pairs of debates over Iraq; parallel in time and fully occupied with the Iraq issue. The first parliamentary debates chosen for analysis took place by late September/early October 2002, at a stage where optimism prevailed as to the possibility of restraining the United States to a UN strategy[84]. Our second pair of debates stem

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[83] Admittedly, in part the idea of a persidential *domaine séparé* is derived from constitutional *practice* as installed by de Gaulle's presidency (1958-69). Nevertheless, the leading role of the President is prepared for by his guardian role over independence and international treaties (article 5), denomination of diplomats and ambassadors (article 14) position as supreme head of the army (article 15) and right to set aside constitutional rule in cases of emergency (article 16) (see Duhamel 2003).
[84] Aspirations for a mutilateral American approach arose in the wake of President Bush's mid-September speech to the UN General Assembly, in which he stated the will to forge a UN coalition behind action against Iraq.

from 26 February 2003, a point immediately preceding the final build-up to war, where French-British tension had increased along with the stakes of the conflict.

Debates in national assemblies are deemed to represent a multitude of different views, which made the task of coding and analysis challenging. Whereas recurring arguments typically prevailed with Blair and Chirac, the House of Commons and *l'Assemblée Nationale* were both characterised by a broader range of views. Interestingly, debates appeared more extensive in the Commons, while in *l'Assemblée* deputies seemed to lean towards a more consensual position on Iraq. We will return to this observation in the comparative discussion in chapter 5.4.4.

5.4.2. The House of Commons: "peace, but not peace at any price"[85]

According to Risse et al. (1999:162), *Parliament*, the *Crown* and the *pound sterling* are the quintessential institutions of British national identity, thus putting centre-stage the *institutional* preponderance of the national credo[86]. Is this a role confined to the historical myth of Britain? Here as elsewhere suggestions of parliamentary decline proliferate, as imperious government, Europeanisation and international market forces take their toll. Nevertheless, the obvious fact remains that Westminster signifies the central debating chamber of the nation - arguably, more than ever justified in the case of emerging war. No systematic study was needed to get a sense of the public demand for debate on Iraq in 2002 and 2003. Parliament, for all its limitations, could provide the forum for such a debate; it was, however, met with reluctance by government. The first of the two parliamentary debates under scrutiny (24 September 2002) was conducted only after prolonged demands; when it came, furthermore, the pivot of debate, what was known as the Foreign Office's Iraq *dossier*, was circulated to MPs only the self-same morning.

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[85] Parliamentary hansard, giving full-text accounts of debates, was accessed from the website of the House of Commons: [http://www.publications.parliament.uk] on 15-20 March 2005.
[86] According to the authors, the above-mentioned institutions have performed complementary functions, with (i) the royalty symbolising 'external' independence towards Rome and the continent, (ii) Parliament defending the 'internal' sovereignty or civil liberties of Britons, and (iii) the pound signifying British imperial power.

Presenting a very rich empirical material, the British parliamentary debates set in motion *guiding principles* from all parts of the investigation's coding scheme. On our first analytical dimension, **Nation and sovereignty**, Parliament represented a stronger inclination towards British tradition compared with Blair. While the dimension as a whole was somewhat less emphasised, it was more than anything characterised by references to *national interest* (1.12):

> **This country has far too much to lose to be bounced into a war at the request of another nation, even at the request of such a strong and good ally as the United States[87].**

This far outweighed any emphasis on the *Atlantic alliance* (1.11), which was next to absent in the February debate. Among principles derived from the French tradition, *international solidarity* (1.02) was markedly present; the virtues of a common *European* approach (1.01), meanwhile, went almost unmentioned in both the September and February debates – similar in this respect to the Prime Minister's speeches.

The dimension of **Values and ideas**, so heavily emphasised by the Prime Minister, was given much attention also in Parliament, although to a slighter less degree. Aggregate numbers kept principles from the British tradition in minority on this dimension; the two debates in the Commons thus landed on a distribution fairly similar to that of the Prime Minister. Like Blair, Members of Parliament made much of the claim of a British *vision* to resolve the issue of Iraq. However, while this idea outscored every other statement in our coding scheme on 24 September, its presence was sharply reduced in March; emphasis then turned towards *war as last resort* (2.03), the wish to state a *moral example* (2.04), and, in particular, the need to *act boldly in support of our ideas* (2.05). Among the principles derived from British foreign policy tradition, statements highlighting *effectiveness* (2.14) and *prudence* (2.15) in policy towards Iraq were clearly more present here than in Blair's speeches:

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[87] Tony Lloyd, Labour MP, quoted from the debate of 26 February 2003.

Let us remember what the consequences might be of a US-led, US-inspired attack on Iraq with perhaps only Britain and one or two others alongside… This is not an easy "drop a few bombs and then walk away" exercise. It is difficult, dangerous and risky[88].

Foreign policy approach, the third dimension of our analytical scheme, is a key point of perceiving differences between the Prime Minister and parliamentary discourse on Iraq. Here, Parliament represented a sharp divergence from Blair in favour of principles from the *French* foreign policy tradition. In particular, the principles of *UN legitimacy* (3.01) and adherence to *international law* (3.02) were prevalent in the Commons debates. Appeals for *sufficient time to negotiate* (3.03) and – significantly – for *balancing the United States* (3.04) were also highlighted. Among principles derived from the British tradition, the *futility of negotation* (3.13) was clearly more prominent than concerns for the maintenance of *American friendship* (3.14-15). The latter were conspicuously scant in the second of the two debates. On the whole, *Foreign policy approach* pointed towards French-derived values; furthermore, the emphasis on this dimension was stronger than in Blair's speeches, although inferior to the French President and national assembly.

The dimension coined ***Political culture*** did by large measure correspond with our expectations for debates in the House of Commons. Firstly, considerable emphasis was accorded to this dimension among Members of Parliament. Secondly, principles referred to were predominantly from the side derived from British tradition. Confidence in the historical prestige vested in the House was manifest across the different parties. A range of speakers reproached the allegedly exclusivist approach of the government and made the case for parliamentary involvement; The argument of executive policy as *responsible to Parliament* (4.11) was thus a considerable constituent of the debates:

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[88] Chris Smith, Labour MP, quoted from the debate of 24 September 2002.

> *[N]o Government should commit forces to war without the authority of this House expressed on a substantive motion, so that those who oppose war can seek to change the policy by their vote. To commit Britain to war relying on the royal prerogative and without the explicit authority of this House seems to be an affront to democracy[89].*

Meanwhile, a few voices arose in support of Prime Minister and executive authority, pushing the sum of arguments towards a broad distribution. Often, arguments of Parliament's role were coupled with statements of the ***Historical significance of the Iraq question***. Albeit the frequency of such arguments did not equal that of the Prime Minister, the parliamentary material appeared richer due to the variety of arguments applied. About a third of the arguments along this dimension referred to the historical merits of *containment*, a value which we located on the French side of foreign policy tradition. *Appeasement* references nevertheless prevailed, drawing primarily on lessons of the 1930s. By convention, such arguments were concurrent with referring to Britain's *great power legacy* and the responsibility it entailed. Summing up a very typical British approach, Michael Ancram from the Conservative Party stated:

> *I have spent a significant part of my political life working for peace, but not peace at any price: not peace at the cost of evil and destruction; not peace at the expense of the overriding duty to protect our citizens; and certainly not an uneasy peace for the short term leading to a greater violation of real peace in the longer term[90].*

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[89] Douglas Hogg, Conservative MP, quoted from the debate of 24 September 2002.
[90] Michael Ancram, Conservative MP and spokesman for foreign affairs, quoted from the debate of 24 September 2002.

*Table 5.3. Occurrence of arguments from separate political traditions
in parliamentary debates on Iraq; numbers given in per cent.*

a) HOUSE OF COMMONS	1. Nation and sovereignty	2. Values and ideas	3. Foreign policy approach	4. Political culture	5. Historical significance of Iraq…	Total
Arguments derived from British foreign policy tradition	**47% (56)**	**43% (135)**	**38% (71)**	**81% (69)**	**66% (21)**	**48% (352)**
Arguments derived from French foreign policy tradition	**53% (63)**	**57% (181)**	**62% (116)**	**19% (16)**	**34% (11)**	**52% (387)**
Sum	**16% (119)**	**43% (316)**	**25% (187)**	**12% (85)**	**4% (32)**	**100% (739)**
Arguments not linked to any of the two traditions	**Great power role: 5% of grand total (55)** **Others: 30% of grand total (334)**					**Grand total: 1128**

b) ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE	1. Nation and sovereignty	2. Values and ideas	3. Foreign policy approach	4. Political culture	5. Historical significance of Iraq…	Total
Arguments derived from British foreign policy tradition	**31% (26)**	**23% (31)**	**14% (17)**	**75% (27)**	**100% (1)**	**27% (102)**
Arguments derived from French foreign policy tradition	**69% (59)**	**77% (102)**	**86% (101)**	**25% (9)**	**0% (0)**	**73% (271)**
Sum	**23% (85)**	**36% (133)**	**31% (118)**	**10% (36)**	**0% (1)**	**100% (373)**
Arguments not linked to any of the two traditions	**Great power role: 4% of grand total (22)** **Others: 26% of grand total (136)**					**Grand total: 531**

A few words should be said, finally, about the significance of *party affiliation* in the House of Commons. The Iraq question did much to disrupt the common lines of division within the House. Firstly, the Labour government met with considerable opposition within its own party. As a consequence, Labour's solid majority was somewhat reduced in votes over motions on Iraq. Secondly,

however, within the main opposition parties, the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives, much disunity occurred. The former were repeatedly attacked for inconsistency and excessively 'liberal' attitudes towards Saddam, while aspiring for a leading role in the anti-war coalition; the latter principally supported the Blair approach of enforcement, and found difficulty in carving out an independent position on which the party could unite. The Iraq issue, then, brought lively debates, but assumedly did less to promote party unity and efficiency. What the House of Commons achieved was the maintenance of its integrity as the national deliberative forum; its actual impact on policy was, by comparison, questionable.

5.4.3. L'Assemblée Nationale: "gardons-nous d'un messianisme […] qui voudrait imposer la démocratie par la guerre"[91]

At first glance, debates in the French national assembly over Iraq appear somewhat more conformist, or at best consensual, than their British counterpart. This could of course follow from (i) the relatively high degree of *consensus* on the French position, it could be due, more generally, to (ii) *parliamentary deference* to the executive in questions of foreign policy or (iii) a generally *non-conflictual culture* of deliberation in the assembly. The last of these suggestions goes against the grain of our previous arguments on French political culture and appears unlikely; which of the other two hypotheses, *consensus on Iraq* or *parliamentary deference*, is the more accurate, is a question to which we will return. In the pattern of our report from the House of Commons, however, we will first look into each of the analytical dimensions.

On what we termed as the ***Nation and sovereignty*** dimension, statements in the national assembly showed very much the same distribution as the speeches of Chirac – that is, more than 2/3 of references on this dimension were connected with values from the French foreign policy tradition. Equal weight was accorded to the significance of *Europe* (1.01) and *international solidarity* (1.02), in deep

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[91] Full-text reproduction of debates in *l'Assemblée* was accessed from the website of the assembly: [http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr] on 26-29 March 2005. All quotes presented are author's translations.

contrast to British debates where the latter consistently prevailed. As the same fundamental difference appeared between Chirac and Blair, we seem to have touched upon a general French-British divergence at this point[92]. References to Europe increased in the second of the two debates in *l'Assemblée*, a manifestation of the French desire to play the European card in a final phase of deliberation. In the idealist guise of French rhetoric, one could perceive a *mélange* of national, European and moral concerns – as in the regrets of Eduard Balladur, ancient Prime Minister of Chirac's UMP:

> *how far we are from a common [European] foreign and security policy, and how I regret that the median position defined by France has not yet been received by general agreement[93].*

On values derived from the British tradition, the focus on *national interest* (1.12) showed the stronger presence. This contrasted with Chirac's appeals to the *Atlantic alliance* (1.11), but was very much in line with the fellow parliamentary assembly in Britain. What is observed here, then, is a cleavage between *executive* and *parliamentary* discourse, cross-cutting the national divide; where the executive leaders make strategic consessions abroad, parliamentary discourse remains preoccupied with national interest. Finally, the *Nation and sovereignty* dimension was relatively strongly emphasised in the French debates, more so than in any of the other three objects under study.

The **Values and ideas** dimension showed a clear preponderance of values from the French tradition, though not fully as clear-cut as in the speeches of Chirac. The low emphasis accorded to this dimension corresponded with the President; French priorities were thus similar and constitute a foil to the British side, where *Values and ideas* was highly prioritised and differently apportioned. The principles of a *national vision* (2.02) and a foreign policy on *moral criteria* (2.04) were cherished by French parliamentarians. Significantly, this was not coupled with a similar emphasis on *bold action* to fulfil the national vision (2.05), which

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[92] Thus, while French discourse points distinctively to *Europe* to operationalise international commitment, British arguments refer to a community of nations in which *Britain* is to play a conscious and prevalent role.
[93] Balladur, UMP (Gaullist) deputy, quoted from the debate of 8 October 2002.

was such a conspicuous reference in Tony Blair's speeches. In general, deputies in the French assembly rarely referred to specific policy proposals. While speaking of moral and vision parliamentarians seemed to speak less eagerly about war; the perception of a somewhat reserved assembly appears to be supported by data.

The **Foreign policy approach** of *l'Assemblée Nationale* shows a very French distribution – somewhat less unequoivocal, however, than the speeches of Chirac. In contrast with the President, furthermore, references to *UN legitimacy* were less numerouss than those to *international law*. Whereas Chirac referred specifically to the UN Security Council as source of legitimacy, parliamentarians speak more broadly of legality. By its strongly legalist penchant, the French parliamentary assembly is alone among our four objects of study; Blair pays scant attention to either of the two, while British parliamentarians are prone to UN legitimacy more than international law. What is typically seen in French discourse, meanwhile, is a coupling of the legality argument with a French universal message of *justice* and *equality* on the international scene. Clearly, a strenghtening of legality also implied *restraining the United States*. According to François Hollande, chairman of the Socialist party (PS), time was ripe to promote a fairer organisation of the world, one based on multipolarity:

> *Faced with the present American strategy, which is nothing but a return to imperialism, or unilateralism - now with a personal element attached by Mr. Bush - it is right to get in place a multipolar world…*[94]

Moreover, the *Foreign policy approach* dimension represents some fundamental contrasts between the French and British debates. Among the principles derived from British foreign policy tradition, *American friendship* (3.14) appeared as almost the sole reference. This corresponded with Chirac's concessions to the United States, but was very different from British debates, where arguments were spread on different values. Furthermore, *l'Assemblée*, albeit again more moderately than Chirac, gave consistently higher emphasis to this dimension than was the case in Britain.

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[94] François Hollande (PS), quoted from the debate of 26 February 2003.

On the **Political culture** dimension the French assembly comes out very much like the House of Commons. The great share of references were derived from the British political tradition; however, behind the aggregate numbers some significant nuances appear. While in the British parliamentary debates the *anchoring of executive policy in parliament* was predominantly referred to, deputies in *l'Assemblée Nationale* shared attention between this value and the priority of *national consensus*; the latter was particularly prevalent in the second of the two debates:

> **Foreign policy should not be an object of polemic; it must be carried above and beyond partisan contingencies.**[95]

Thus, contrary to our expectations, it is *l'Assemblée Nationale* that comes out the more consensual on this criterium. Where the two assemblies are in concord is in the sum of arguments, both leaning towards a strong and argumentative parliament. This perception is strengthened by the solid emphasis accorded to the *Political culture* dimension. On the **Historical significance of the Iraq question**, however, difference is striking, as the House of Commons, with its strongly historical discourse, was countered by a French assembly in which references to *appeasement* and *containment* were next to absent. Similar to Chirac by this quality, *l'Assemblée* seemed to subscribe to a distinctively French manner of debate, in which broader references are *philosophical* or *principal* by nature rather than tied to historical events. Where the two assemblies were yet in concord, was in the presence of a *great power legacy* implying a special *responsibility* or *independence*. References to this principle abounded in parliamentary debates, were frequent with Blair but somewhat less prolific with Chirac.

5.4.4. The two assemblies summarised

To what extent does the assumption of national unity hold sway in debates over Iraq – and how did parliamentary debates differ from the speeches of Blair and Chirac as regards the *guiding principles* evoked?

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[95] Pierre Albertini of (liberal) UDF, quoted from parliamentary debate of 26 February 2003.

An immediate observation of the debates was the relatively balanced representation of views as compared with executive speeches. It goes with the territory of a national assembly to represent the spectrum of political views. Compared with the single voice of the President or the Prime Minister, parliament represents a manifold perspective. This was illustrated very clearly in debates over Iraq, where each of the two assemblies carried a mitigating effect to the national position. Thus, French-British divergence represented by Blair and Chirac was somewhat levelled out in parliamentary debates. The idea of a consensual *national discourse* on Iraq, however, appears somewhat simplistic when comparing debates and executive speeches. This is particularly the case in Britain, where arguments in the House of Commons largely diverged from that of the Prime Minister – not only by its broader scale, but also by the contrast in principles evoked. One interpretation of this divergence would be that it was Blair who departed from traditional values, whereas Parliament remained more distinctively within a nationl discourse[96]. Undoubtedlt, debates in the House of Commons gave a voice to a wide array of differing concerns for British policy towards Iraq. Without carrying this argument too far, British deliberation also appeared with clearer critical stringency than did debates in *l'Assemblée*.

Parliamentary debates presented some significant contrasting features. For example, whereas the French deputies argued almost exclusively along *legalist* lines on the issue of Iraq, British parliamentarians accorded solid portions of *pragmatism*. In the Commons, then, the perceived consequences of invasion – to the Middle East, to international solidarity, to other potential threats – were more debated than the legitimacy held by UN Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, whereas demands for parliamentary influence on foreign policy were common to both assemblies, these had the clearer emphasis in Britain. Clearly, the House of Commons could draw upon its strong traditions in this

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[96] In line with this argument, we could add the concordance between parliamentary debates and public opinion over Iraq, as well as the stated personal conviction and leadership ambition of Blair – who would, it appeared, attempt to *lead* rather than *follow* popular opinion along a chosen path.

domain. Historical reference finds fertile terrain at Westminster; *appeasement* was thus a recurring point of debate, applying the 1930s as a foil to the challenge posed by Saddam. In the French assembly, meanwhile, references often pointed to philosophy rather than historical events, to *principle* rather than *practice*. Accompanying this principle-oriented manner of argumentation were (i) a paucity of references to voters and constituencies and (ii) a striking absence of concrete historical evocation, two features so prevalent in British debates[97].We seem to have approached here a qualitative difference of argumentation in Britain and France, largely corresponding with national mythos. In parliamentary debates over Iraq the old stereotype of *pragmatism vs. principle* seemed to hold more than a grain of truth.

Vis-à-vis the executives, then, what did parliamentary debates represent apart from their moderating effects? The House of Commons seemed to draw more upon values derived from the British tradition than did Blair. On our first two dimensions, the sum of arguments pointed towards a less uncompromising attitude, one feeding more from *prudence* and *efficiency* than the bold moral position of Blair. There was a clear consistency in the Commons referring scarcely to Europe and critically to the United States; what predominated was a *national interest* concern and a consciousness of constituencies and voters. This lead the assembly towards values from the French tradition on *Foreign policy approach*, where prudence implied negotiation and national integrity rather than swift action and subservience to the United States. Though poorer in positive reference to America, debates in the Commons included much discussion on the *merits* of the American approach; this was representative of argumentation in the assembly, which came close to its reputation as a deliberative forum.

Debates in *l'Assemblée Nationale* confirmed the impression of a French relative consensus on the Iraq issue. While there was little fundamental disagreement,

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[97] With regards to historical reference, *l'Assemblée Nationale* was in concord with Chirac, who rarely referred explicitly to historical precedence in support of policy towards Iraq.

however, nuances appeared between presidential and parliamentarian argumentation. The assembly, like its British equivalent, inclined towards *national interest* concerns. However, in France this was coupled with rather abstract arguments about the nation, Europe, and moral, which would point towards a certain position on Iraq. This position was one of *legalist idealism*, typically devoid of the practical flair to international affairs presented by Chirac. *L'Assemblée* could, in sum, be perceived as conducive to a French national discourse on Iraq, largely supportive to government policy while maintaining a reserve towards the practical issues of the day. Considering the driving forces of French consensus (cf. 5.4.3), we find the *particularity of the Iraq issue* to be the most plausible explanation; however, *parliamentary deference* in foreign policy questions appears equally supported by data. A more authoritative account of this question would demand a broader comparative study of foreign policy issues debated in the assembly. However, referring to the *non-conclictual culture of the assembly* as reason for the paucity of disuptes over Iraq does not seem to hit the mark. Conflict prevail in debates of *l'Assemblée*, fuelled by great ideological divergence; however, where consensus is present, quarelling in itself is rarely perceived as productive. While French consensus appeared to contrast with British lively debate, then, this should not induce us to general conclusions on the argumentative culture of Britain and France.

6. Discussion and conclusion

As shown by foreign policy – its conduct as well as debates – politics can rarely be conceived of without its historical basis. In this thesis we have sought out by way of history a set of *guiding principles* in the foreign policy of Britain and France. Such principles, it has been argued, function as the vehicle through which historical experience affect today's foreign policy. They do this by posing a framework, an ideational space that politics will depart from only in exceptional circumstances. Thus, to the concept of *national interest* as objectively defined we should include a *subjective*, *ideational* segment, rooted in history and national self-perception.

In our approach to French and British foreign policy the following two questions were posed:

1. *To what extent can we define a set of principles and ideas in French and British foreign policy, along which the two countries clearly diverge?*
2. *Applied to the international issue of Iraq, were such guiding principles prevalent in debates preceding the invasion?*

They were accompanied by a set of hypotheses stating:

H1: *There are certain guiding principles to be defined in the foreign policy of post-war Britain and Fifth Republic France (post-1958).*

H2: *A range of these principles may be meaningfully presented as French-British contrasts or dichotomies, alongside institutional characteristics.*

H3: *Such key ideational characteristics were recognisable – and crucial – in French and British debates over the issue of Iraq.*

The "set of principles and ideas" we referred to were searched for in historical studies of French and British foreign policy; what resulted was a list of variables along which France and Britain diverge. Though unavoidably simplifying a more complex reality, these dichotomies seemed to capture some of the core qualities of French/British ideational conflict (table 6.1).

Table 6.1. French-British contrasts in guiding principles: A summary

Dimension	France	Britain
Nation and sovereignty	*National-European identity; semi-federalist approach to Europe; ideas as focus of political sovereignty*	*Insular and Atlantic identity; exclusivist approach to sovereignty – Parliament as pivot of independence*
Values and ideas	*Philosophical legacy as vehicle of tradition; ideology progressive and doctrinaire*	*Institutional legacy carries tradition; ideology pragmatic, liberal and materialist*
Foreign policy approach	*Multilateral, legalist, moralist, confronting towards the USA*	*Bilateral, pragmatic, oriented towards peaceful coexistence and trade; disentanglement*
Political culture	*Presidential, ideological, conflict-ridden*	*Parliamentary, deliberative, consensual*

With these ideational contrasts as basis, we proceeded with an empirical analysis of political debates preceding the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The investigation drew upon theoretical assumptions from *social constructivism*, focusing the importance of ideas and identity to foreign policy. Furthermore, we assumed that principles or ideas could be reasonably traced in political rhetoric by way of content analysis. A range of methodological issues was of pertinence here, related to the analytical device and the (more theoretical) conception of a *national discourse* as object of study. We argued that the shortcomings of content analysis could be mitigated by well-considered operationalisation of concepts and by a qualitative supplement to analysis. With regards, to *discourse*, we subscribed to a pragmatic use of the concept, where political identity and ideas are seen as reflected and constructed through language, the *communicative* side of politics. National discourse was further constrained to the level of decision-making elites. The empirical analysis, conducted concurrently of governmental speeches and parliamentary debates, brought a number of interesting results, to which we will now turn.

6.1. Britain vs. France

Between the two nations under study we may point to some general cleavages. *First*, the French-British distinctions reproduced in table 6.1 seemed by and large to hold sway in debates on Iraq, as *l'Assemblée Nationale* and Jacques Chirac had a clearer penchant towards French-derived values than had their British counterparts. However, this picture was ambiguous, as intra-national difference sometimes overshadowed contrasts between Britain and France. In the British case, as we have argued, this could in part be ascribed to the Prime Minister's hybrid argumentation, lending credence to selected values from the French tradition (such as bold and moral action to defend ideas abroad) and coupling them with traditional British principles of swift action and efficiency. President Chirac, by contrast, appeared very much a consensual guide in the French political landscape, although some variance did occur between the President and the national assembly.

Second, however, there was a distinct difference in *emphasis* between French and British debates on Iraq. French discourse developed predominantly along the dimension of *Foreign policy approach*, focusing elements of *legality*, *legitimacy*, and *strategy vis-à-vis the United States*. British debates, by contrast, showed a relative preponderance of *Values and ideas*, turning towards the dilemmas of *prudence* vs. *boldness*, *efficiency* vs. *moral*, *pragmatism* vs. *doctrine*. This contributed to the impression of more substantial arguments in the British debates, seen particularly in Parliament's deliberation. *Third*, where international references were made as part of argumentation, in France these pointed equally to *Europe* and the *international community*. British debates turned exclusively towards the value of international community, while aspirations for a common European approach were strikingly absent. *Fourth*, and finally, where French debates on Iraq turned largely towards arguments on *principle*, in Britain *historical experience* and perceived *effects of policy* were more frequently evoked. This was evident in the Parliament's discussions of *appeasement* as well as other elements of British political history. Moreover, the expected

consequences of invasion were evoked with a practical penchant corresponding with Britain's political culture. In France, meanwhile, historical reference was scant and often quasi-philosophical; references to policy effects were numerous, but often abstract and general by nature. Clichés rarely accord to scientific precision; however, at this point we seem to have touched upon a familiar French-British contrast of *principle vs. pragmatism*, seen as French elevation of ideas against a British hands-on approach to specific policy proposals.

6.2. Parliamentary vs. executive discourse

In part, cleavages over Iraq appeared as parliaments on one side and the heads of government on the other rather than presenting itself as a French/British divide. We perceive here a set of contrasts between *executive* and *parliamentary* argumentation. *Firstly*, in parliamentary debates relatively more attention was given to *national interest* concerns, summed up in expected consequences to national influence and security. Parliamentarians are rarely obligated to strategic concessions abroad (as in Chirac's repeated stress of French-American friendship); to a domestic audience, moreover, national interest and constituency concerns find a more immediate resonance. *Secondly*, when perceived in their totality, parliamentary debates had a mitigating or *moderating* effect on the national position. Due to the wide spectre of political views represented in the assemblies, they appeared less mutually exclusive than the heads of government. The French/British divide in guiding principles was thus relatively less clear-cut in parliament than was the case in governmental speeches. The parliamentary arena, sometimes criticised for empty rhetoric and irrelevant partisan squabbles, does in fact give location to debates of issues concerning the nation; in terms of legitimacy this must be regarded a quintessential task. In spite of difficult working conditions on the Iraq question, parliaments seem to have filled their deliberative role with some buoyancy.

However, as has been maintained in our account, it is the House of Commons that comes out with the most convincing record of deliberation. *L'Assemblée Nationale*, normally a forum of sharp partisan division, appeared in considerable

consensus on Iraq. Furthermore, argumentation turned towards *legalist idealism*, largely devoid of the President's practical flair and in sharp contrast to debates in Britain. This was the point where *l'Assemblée* appeared as deviant case, with arguments of *legality* heavily over-represented. Deference to executive leadership also appeared the more obvious in the French national assembly. The position of Jacques Chirac was fortified by the issue of Iraq; with *cohabitation* and domestic controversies left behind, the President would pose himself in the guise of preceding French statesmen (Times 13 November 2002). Charles de Gaulle's firm legacy was visible in Chirac's discourse, which could be perceived as a renewal of Gaullism to fit with a post-Cold war world. In a context of American dominance, France thus opted for Europe, the UN and international law. Flexibility has previously been referred to as a quality of de Gaulle; henceforth, his legacy was redefined in the perennial pursuit of French relevance – and *indépendance* – on the international scene.

In the British Parliament, meanwhile, different sets of attitudes could be drawn out, largely corresponding to the public debate; a *Labour* approach concerned to make the right ethical choices while maintaining British interests abroad; a *Conservative* position focusing on prudence, strategic interest and alliance with the United States; a *Liberal* perspective deeply troubled by moral concerns yet unable to find any univocal solution. The Prime Minister himself appeared somewhat external to these positions with his intermingling of strands of thought from different political traditions. Undoubtedly, some key sources to Blair's rhetoric are found in British foreign policy history; however, the Prime Minister also seemed to carry strands of thought more rarely expressed by British statesmen, typically found in Labour Party tradition and highlighted in opposition. Some parallels could be followed all the way back to the inter-war Labour of James Ramsay MacDonald and Keir Hardie, whose internationalism was blended with a vision of moral progress. The context was different, the challenges they had to face of a whole different nature than Iraq. However, the insistence on activism and international justice was equally persistent. A

departure from certain values in the Tory tradition of foreign policy, Blair may thus have been more at home with his early Labour predecessors. MacDonald, on the threshold of Labour's first government, stated:

> *[T]here is not a capital city in Europe today but contains somewhere embers which, with a fresh blowing wind, will scatter themselves over the inflammable material of Europe… My colleagues and myself want to go to office with a broad foot and a big heel and to stamp […] upon every one of those embers.*[98]

6.3. Implications of the empirical study

A study of political rhetoric inevitably turns towards the issue of broader significance. "What difference does it make?" is a question which naturally comes to mind, referring to the substantial *implications* as well as *scope for generalisation* of our empirical findings. We will attempt to provide some answers to these questions – but first, a brief evaluation of the *analytical concepts* that we have applied.

6.3.1. Typology and operationalisations

The guiding principles sought out in our historical study were schematically summarised in table 3.1, presented as a series of dichotomies. While simplifying foreign policy to a considerable degree, simplification was indeed what we aimed to do in order to arrive at fruitful *ideal types* for further research. The table thus functioned as a heuristic device in the vein of Max Weber. In order to test the typology empirically, however, theoretical concepts would have to be operationalised to be compatible with textual data. The process of operationalisation may be the most contentious aspect of our research; furthermore, what seems to be at stake is the sum validity of our empirical analysis. Our crude theoretical principles were transformed to standardised statements as we would expect them to appear in debates on Iraq. This was done with some knowledge of the debates, which might have led to biases; however, acquaintance with data seems imperative for such a coding system to be

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[98] Speech by James Ramsay MacDonald at a mass meeting in the Albert Hall, London 8 January 1924, at the eve of Labours' first accession to government (quoted from Gauger, Hildegerd & Hermann Metzger (1954). *British political speeches and debates from Cromwell to Churchill*. Tübingen.).

applicable at all. Some of the operationalisations remained ambiguous vis-à-vis the two foreign policy traditions. For example, France is not alone in promoting a vision of the world, neither is Britain in her advocacy of prudence and efficiency. The problem with ideal types is the same as their virtue; they are primarily constructs, highlighting some qualities of an object while shovelling others into the darkness. Consciousness of this aspect should constrain us from drawing too extensive conclusions in the empirical part.

6.3.2. What substantial significance?

Our third hypothesis stated that the guiding principles sought out in historical accounts would be *visible* and *crucial* to debates over Iraq. Determining whether ideas were visible represented a clear analytical task, drawing on devices of ideational content analysis. The second part of the claim, however, that guiding principles were *crucial* to the debates, begs a separate discussion, in which theoretical assumptions should be invoked. A *crucial* impact could imply that principles were *efficiently applied* to persuade domestic and parliamentary audiences. However, instead of this instrumental view one could perceive guiding principles as fundamental, in a *compulsory framework* perspective; ideas presented all actors with certain constraints, derived from the nation's historical experience and impossible to neglect when aspiring for consensus or majority support. Hence, we conceive here of two differing senses of ideational impact; *selective* vs. *obligatory*, *instrumentally evoked* vs. *present in and by themselves*; in Rosoux's (2000) terminology, the *choice* of the past vs. the *weight* of the past.

How do we perceive of the presence of guiding principles in French and British debates over Iraq? As accounted for, Tony Blair represented a particular usage of values from the British domain. The hybrid discourse of the Prime Minister gave a broad, but somewhat contradictory platform to his arguments; bold and moralist policy is not a predominant penchant in the British foreign policy tradition. Yet, there are strains of such values in the idealist Labour past; when coupled with British national interest, efficiency and Atlantic alliance arguments Blair's discourse attained a certain persuasive flair. A selective prime minister,

then, but within a broader vein of political tradition; a similar conclusion could be drawn from the speeches of the French President. While declaring a distinct attachment to certain traditional values, such as humanitarian causes, international law and UN legitimacy, Chirac passed silently by French pursuits of moral progress and a civilising mission by intervention abroad. *Inactivism* thus became a hallmark of the President's deliberative approach; *caution* and *prudence* the unwarranted companions of French policy.

Parliamentary debates would serve as the best starting point when aspiring to define a national discourse; however, the speeches of Blair and Chirac illustrate more succinctly the *instrumentalism* applied within a national set of guiding principles. In spite of a certain margin of manoeuvre, the two leaders as well as parliamentarians were confined to a framework defined by tradition – for reasons of *justification* and *communication*. In Parliament, Tony Blair would maintain his roots in pragmatism and defence of Britain abroad; to a domestic audience, Jacques Chirac heralded French universal values and independence. Thus, the *weight of the past* is present but not *omni*present in debates over Iraq; policy is played out in the space left for political entrepreneurs.

Finally, an important challenge could be stated with regards to the analysis: Could it be that what we have really sought out is the fact that France was naturally disposed to opposing invasion in Iraq, whereas British tradition pointed towards enforcement? To this question one cannot give any clear answer on the basis of data, primarily because position towards invasion was not consistently stated in the parliamentary debates. It is clear that in the speeches of Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac, support and opposition respectively seemed to follow logically from their ideational positions. However, this appears less univocal if we consider alternative strategies for which the two leaders could likewise have argued convincingly; *France* as champion of UN-coordinated humanitarian intervention, *Britain* as prudent sceptic to intervention where effects have not been clarified, the dangerous precedence not been fully considered. We return

here to the image of French and British decision-makers with liberty of movement, yet restricted to the confines of their foreign policy tradition.

Revolutionising a nation's foreign policy is rarely conceivable, the end of the Cold War in Eastern Europe represents one of the few exceptions to this rule of thumb. We seem to come back, finally, to one of the quotes given in our introduction, namely that ***[i]t is not something intrinsic to ideas that gives them their power, but their utility in helping actors achieve their desired ends under prevailing constraints**[99]*. Ambitious modelling has yet to reach a consensus on ideational impact on policy; what we are hitherto left with are different models working in different settings. Nevertheless, with *conceptual* and *theoretical* frameworks that correspond, ideational studies speak the same language, communicate by the same perspectives and ideas. Our framework conception of the impact of ideas is prone to generalisation in a very general sense; by seeking out guiding principles of French and British foreign policy, we do not eliminate the presence of *political strategy*, case-specific *national interests* and *structural constraints*. The question of what French or British policy on Iraq *will* or *should* be according to tradition is thus not answered by ideational analysis – the crux of the matter is where historical principles end and political engineering prevails. The Iraq debates gave a poignant example of the difficulty in drawing such a line. Endeavouring, nevertheless, is in the end what brings any scientific exercise forward.

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[99] Garrett & Weingast 1993:178.

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Speeches and statements analysed in the thesis

Jacques Chirac[100]

1. Press conference at world conference for sustainable development, Johannesburg (South Africa) 3 September 2002
2. Interview with *New York Times*, Paris 9 September 2002
3. Interview with *L'Orient le Jour* before journey to Middle East, Paris 16 Oct 2002
4. Presss conference with the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, Alexandria 16 October 2002
5. Press conference on the occasion of visit in Jordan, Amman 20 October 2002
6. Press conference with the Italian PM, Silvio Berlusconi, Rome 7 November 2002.
7. Joint press conference on the occasion of conference for financial support to Libanon, Paris 23 November 2002
8. Press conference with Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General, Paris 25 November 2002
9. Speech for conference of French diplomats, Paris 7 January 2003
10. Press conference with Hans Blix and Mohammed El Baradei, Paris 17 January 2003.
11. Interview with *Die Welt*, Paris 20 January 2003
12. Interview with *Le Figaro*, Paris 20 January 2003
13. Press conference with the British PM, Tony Blair, Le Touquet 4 February 2003
14. Press conference with the Finnish President, Paavo Lipponen, Paris 7 February 2003
15. Press conference with the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, Paris 10 February 2003
16. Interview with *Time Magazine*, Paris 16 February 2003
17. Press conference with the German Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, Berlin 24 Feb 2003
18. Press conference with the Spanish PM, José Maria Aznar, Paris 26 February 2003
19. Speech for the Algerian national assembly, Alger 3 March 2003
20. Televised interview with TF1 and France 2, Paris 10 March 2003
21. Televised interview with CBS and CNN, Paris 16 March 2003
22. Declaration, Paris 18 March 2003
23. Communiqué, Paris 18 March 2003
24. Declaration at the outbreak of war, Paris 20 March 2003
25. Press conference at European Council meeting, Brussels 21 March 2003

Tony Blair[101]

1. Speech at TUC conference, Blackpool 10 September 2002
2. Statement to the House of Commons, Westminster 24 September 2002
3. Interview with BBC World Service, London 9 October 2002
4. Statement on Iraq following UN Security Council resolution, London 8 Nov 2002
5. Speech at the Lord Mayor banquet, London 11 November 2002
6. Press conference with the American President, George W. Bush, Washington?? 21 November 2002. CHECK THIS REFERENCE!
7. Press conference with the Syrian President, Al-Asad, London 16 December 2002
8. Speech at Foreign Office conference for British diplomats, London 7 January 2003
9. Press conference with the American President, George W. Bush, Washington 31 January 2003
10. Statement to the House of Commons following the PM's journey to the United States, Westminster 3 February 2003
11. Press conference with the French President, Jacques Chirac, on the occasion of bilateral meeting in Le Touquet 4 February 2003

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[100] Speeches accessed through the presidential website: [http://www.elysee.fr/index.php]
[101] Speeches accessed through Downing Street's website: [http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page3109.asp]

12. Statement on Iraq to the House of Commons, Westminster 25 February 2003
13. Press conference with the Spanish PM, José Maria Aznar, Madrid 28 February 2003
14. Press conference with the Portuguese PM, Jose M. Barroso, London 11 March 2003
15. Statement following the Azores summit, London 16 March 2003
16. Outline of a vision for Iraq in the event of military action – introductory statement by the PM, London 17 March 2003
17. Statement opening debate in the House of Commons, Westminster 18 March 2003
18. Address to the nation on the start of military action in Iraq, London 20 March 2003
19. Interview with British Forces Broadcasting Service, London 23 March 2003
20. Statement to the House of Commons on the European Council meeting and Iraq, Westminster 24 March 2003
21. Press conference on Iraq, London 25 March 2003
22. Press conference with the American President, George W. Bush, Camp David 27 March 2003
23. The PM's article in the Arab press, 30 March 2003

Additionally, 12 speeches and statements by the French foreign minister, Dominique de Villepin, and 6 speeches by the British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, from the same period of time were coded and applied as background material.

Parliamentary debates

France[102]

  ▪ Debate in *l'Assemblée Nationale* over Iraq, Palais Bourbon 8 October 2002
  ▪ Debate in *l'Assemblée Nationale* over Iraq, Palais Bourbon 26 February 2003

Britain[103]

  ▪ Debate in the House of Commons over Iraq, Westminster 24 September 2002
  ▪ Debate in the House of Commons over Iraq, Westminster 26 February 2003

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[102] Journal accessed through the website of *l'Assemblée Nationale*: [http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr]
[103] Hansard accessed through the Parliament's website: [http://www.publications.parliament.uk]