British Foreign Policy Under Tony Blair

The difference individuals make

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1. Introduction

There are two main questions at the very beginning of a Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA): who decides the steps and what is their aim by doing so. At first glance, it might seem self-evident to search for answers by simply looking at the international context in which the given country operates. This method might be sufficient in case of regular events, but it has little to say when a comprehensive analysis is needed to explain why changes occur. A shift in policy serves the new interests of those who decide. These decisions have a direct effect on our lives. That is the reason why FPA looks below the state level, maps the polity and puts the individuals from the decision-making table at the heart of the analyses. Compared to the structural, theoretical lenses of International Relations (IR) to study the events around our world, FPA is more concerned about the process itself than about the outcome. The core feature of this field is that it requires a precise scrutiny of the actors because they are the direct participants in the process. As a subfield of IR, it provides a new theoretical ground and at the same time, it challenges the traditional understanding of the discipline by filling the gap that the mainstream approaches are missing. It is not about black-boxing the states because the role of individuals is not overlooked anymore. Therefore, it offers a solution to the main critiques of the abstract standpoints. To give an illustration, Hudson (2005 p.1) defines foreign policy as “…all that occurs between nations and across nations is grounded in human decision makers acting singly or in groups”. Based on her definition, the complexity of the social world does not exclusively come from the structure within the states interact, but it is highly influenced by the individuals who de facto make the choices of key importance. To put it simply, it is the decider’s mind where the choice is made. It develops from the idea that the head of the individual, who is in charge of the decision-making, is not a tabula rasa, but a sophisticated mixture of beliefs, emotions, experiences and values forming a particular conceptualisation of the societal world (Hudson, 2005 p. 10). Thus, the human agent operates within a given structure, following the norms that are relevant to their identity. This self-conception shapes the individual’s identity and that is the reason why FPA brings the human agency into the focus by creating a link between the traditional view of actor-general approaches and the relative newcomer actor-specific ones.

Due to the priority of the human actor, FPA is open to diverse research methods applied widely in Social Sciences and frequently uses their toolbox. As these disciplines move further, their improvements affect FPA as well. For this reason, it also has the
potential to dynamically broaden the existing knowledge about the international affairs.

My purpose with this research is to illustrate the integrative way of analysis. In this work, I presume that individuals, or more precisely, leaders matter. I use Blair’s example of leadership style to support my argument. The reason why I chose him as a case study to exemplify my argument is that his decade (1997-2007) of premiership brought about significant changes of paradigm in British Foreign Policy. With his uniquely firm belief to include ethics in foreign policy, he re-defined the mainstream attitude towards foreign affairs. He did not just introduce new principles in policy-making as guidelines, but also wanted to make others to follow suit. The significance of these principles is reflected by the fact that they were the bedrocks of his Chicago speech in 1999, which later became known as the Blair Doctrine, the Doctrine of the International Community. His timing to introduce these rules was fitting the current conditions of the era because the extension of the security concepts with human security in the 1990’s paved the way for his standpoint.

His fight for values, or in other words, his crusade as he prefers to call, has been highly criticised and serves as a topic for passionate academic debates even today. Yet, at this point, I should note that the purpose of this thesis is not to reveal whether the interventions were the right things to do or not. In this work, the question of appropriate behaviour in crisis will not be answered, nor any further humanitarian or moral dimensions of the policies he made. Throughout the research, I concentrate on staying as objective about his political career as possible. I attempt to engage in diverse methodological options to support the main argument that the predominant leaders are substantial in FPA because their personal traits can determine their acts. Blair’s story depicts a well-researched issue in academic work that shows its significance. Even his advisors claimed it was his strong individual influence that the final decisions were made to intervene in four significant cases, such as Kosovo (1999), Sierra Leone (2000), Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) and to support the US (Dyson 2006 p. 289). His personal impact cannot be overlooked and this increased one-person control is the crucial feature that triggers the right to take his personality into serious consideration. Therefore, his character, personal beliefs, worldview and interpretations of the situation are the main elements I wish to understand.

I divide this research into three main parts to develop a unifying analysis. I begin with a brief theoretical discussion about the role of Social Constructivism in FPA to point out why their common denominator is that they both make visible what is usually unnoticed. In the light of the most prevalent discourses, I examine to what extent this postmodern
theory is challenging the dominant role of Realism in the field and why it is relevant in this analysis. This section demonstrates the structural, actor-general approach to the case to provide a theoretical ground. I attempt to make a two-level analysis: one is a broader structural approach, which gives an explanation to the international forces at a state level and one is at the individual level. Then I describe and justify why they are interlinked with the example of Blair’s decision-making style. To lead my work, I use Barnett’s (2014 p. 164) definition that points out why it is important to get a deep insight into Blair’s world: “Norms are standards of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity”. I define: norms as legitimate acts, appropriate behaviour as foreign policy steps, the actor is Tony Blair and the given identity is the missing part that I attempt to understand.

After making an ontological clarification, in the second and the third part I continue with the methodological explanation. The logic in using both quantitative and qualitative ways to conduct the research is to offer a comprehensive representation of my findings. My hypothesis favours a deductive way to carry out the analysis, therefore I gather data to prove that the individual matters. Firstly, I turn to the qualitative method to underpin my argument. The aim of this section is to reveal the social setting; therefore, I use numerous sources to understand Blair’s standpoint and decision-making style. I start with the scrutiny of his attitude towards the United States because I presume that his foreign policy was highly influenced by the American factor. By this term, I define the elements of Blair’s alliance management with the US. Then, I put a special focus on his cabinet and his relationship with his advisors because the happenings in the “the den” reflect the key features of his premiership. The members of his cabinet are not just his colleagues, they are his close allies with whom he swept out the Conservatives from the power and formed the New Labour. That is the reason why it is important to include their Blair concept in the study. I also illustrate how his firm religious beliefs influenced his politics. As he articulates his viewpoint in his memoir, I use his book in order to examine his interpretation. To make it clear, in this section I apply an interpretivist, biographical research. As the unit of my case study is a person, this type of analysis is crucial to justify why the leader acted the way he did.

Secondly, I apply the quantitative method and use content analysis to put it in another aspect and increase the credibility of my research. As it offers an organised manner to examine texts, it turns words into data. I randomly collect 30 speeches of Tony Blair, plus I select 2 chapters from his memoirs, A journey (Blair, 2010). The speeches are not focused on one specific topic, they have different subject matters. They are also from
different periods of time to symbolise that he is not a constant actor, just like every human, his personality undergoes changes. This way I attempt to prove that his personal experiences and events shape his concepts, and emphasising this fact gives validity to the work. Therefore, I choose speeches before his election in 1997, around 1999 because it is a crucial year of his premiership and after his last intervention in 2003. This way the study reflects his unexpected shift from fighting for domestic issues to foreign policy shaping. I use one of the latest developments in the psychological assessments of political leaders, the ProfilerPlus. This automation of content analysis was developed by Young and Schafer in 1998 and made the process less time-consuming and more scientific. To assess his leadership style, I apply Margaret G. Hermann (2002) coding schedule. This method allows me to learn about Blair’s personality and leadership style without his direct participation in the study. Based on Hermann’s work, I explain the category in which Blair’s fall. I am aware of the fact that the limitation of this technique is that his speeches and chapters were probably supervised or partly written by a co-author or a staff member, but I stress that it is still a widely accepted and frequently used way in contemporary FPA to understand the leader’s personal concepts. At the end of the description of the methodological results, I compare the findings and call attention to the contradictory elements.

The mixed way of analysis provides mutual credibility and validity to the parts of the analysis. As I go through these phases, I attempt to describe the reasons behind the steps that ends in decisions. With the deep engagement in the research, I point out the relation between Blair’s act and his goal, I discuss the social setting and I reveal the cognitive factors, such as his values and beliefs. I dedicate this work to contribute to the better understanding of the agency-structure problem and to support the discourse arguing that individuals do matter in FPA.
2. Theoretical Framework

At the beginning of the analysis, I introduce the topic with a theoretical discussion because theories are necessary for two reasons: to simplify the complexity of the world and then to make sense of it (Flockhart in Smith, S., Hadfield, A., & Dunne, T., 2016 p. 79). When they are properly used, they provide a ground for the study. In the case of FPA, there is an ongoing argument among scholars comparing the relevance of the structural forces with the modern approaches where the human agency is at the centre. The discourse to decide which of them serves as the most appropriate unit of analysis is called the agency-structure debate. Hay (2002 p. 94) defines the structure as a “setting within which social, political and economic events occur and acquire meaning” and concludes that behaviour is ordered. Agency, as Vadrot (2017 p. 63) characterises in her work, is “a political conduct” with “a specific sense of choice, free will and autonomy”. To illustrate the misunderstanding between the two sides, I separately highlight their specific contribution to the field and point out what they are missing.

As FPA is strongly interlinked with IR, the use of mainstream approaches was common in its first decade, especially Realism had a dominant role in the discipline. From the realist viewpoint, the state is a rational unitary actor and there is no need to take the analysis to a lower level (Alden & Aran, 2012 p. 3). Morgenthau links the concept of national interest with power and argues that foreign policy is, therefore, a way to assess how powerful the state is. As the state operates in an anarchic international system, its steps are selected with the aim of gaining material wealth and increase security (in Alden & Aran, 2012 p. 4). This means that foreign policy decisions are tools and taken in order to expand the state’s power and increase its potential success in the zero-sum game. To sum up this paragraph, Realism creates a linkage between power and national interest and it focuses on the outcome at the national level.

The actor specific approaches of FPA, however, emphasise that focusing only on the outcome is not fulfilling the requirement of a convincing research because the process at least as relevant as the result. As Hudson (2005 pp. 3-4) highlights:

“If our IR theories contain no human beings, they will erroneously paint for us a world of no change, no creativity, no persuasion, no accountability. (...) IR theory currently provides much more insight into structure than agency. This is a severe theoretical handicap, for to lack a robust concept of the
“agent” in IR means to be at a disadvantage when trying to explain or project significant change and noteworthy creativity.

She emphasises that agency is important in Social Science because it means that agents can act differently, and their nature should be researched. This reveals the ability of the approach to answer the question why changes occur. It appeared as an alternative to Realism to integrate explanations of a change in the system by involving the individuals (Alden & Alan, 2012 p. 11). This move from the static nation-centric level to the “mind of men” (Alden & Alan, 2012 p. 9) puts the human agency in the spotlight. The groundbreaking achievement of this approach hides in its methodological effort to go further than a normative critique. To give an illustration, Sprout and Sprout picked up a well-justified work to challenge the dominance of actor-specific approaches in practice. They analysed the “operational environment” - responsible for the objective reality - and the “psychological environment” - a subjective reality formed by cognitive elements. In the experiment, they proved that decisions are made based on the psychological environment. They also noted that throughout the decision-making process people are guided by their perceptions (Alden & Aran, 2012 p. 20). This means that to a certain extent the human agent adapts to the structure but not determined by it. As the behaviourist theory was put into practice, it proved its legitimacy with the methodological justification. The contribution of Jervis and Sprout & Sprout to the development of the field laid the first stone to further psychological researches. This resulted in the arrival of the role of personality and cognition, and it took them under scrutiny. They introduced new methodological tools, such as in-depth case studies and personal trait analysis. Hudson (2005 pp. 10-13) outlines why it is innovative and essential to use psychological methods in FPA researches:

“Political psychology can assist us in understanding the decider. Under certain conditions - high stress, high uncertainty, dominant position of the head of state in FPDM - the personal characteristics of the individual would become crucial in understanding foreign policy choice. (...) A systematic study of leader personality effects is the concept of ‘‘operational code,’’. (...) Defining an operational code involves identifying the core political beliefs of the leader about the inevitability of conflict in the world, the leader’s estimation of his or her own power to change events, and so forth, as well as
an exploration of the preferred means and style of pursuing goals. (...) Explanation of that variation must be found at lower levels of analysis, where variation in the explanans can be identified. Here, then, is one of several sources for the notable lack of integration between actor-general systems theory in IR and FPA”.

Thus, the attempts of Contemporary FPA seem promising to give an account of the psychological background of decision-making. Controversially, the achievement of the approach ended up with being its weakest point. Scholars who are critical about the approach argue that the development came with the conceptual price: it fails to conceptualise ‘state’ because the state is represented as the plain sum of actors (Alden & Aran, 2012 p. 9). To put the section shortly, the integration of human agency conceptually expands the field with the individuals’ cognition.

Based on the previously discussed ideas, to conduct an integrative research about foreign policy decision-making, analysis is crucial at both levels. Dyson’s work, *The Blair Identity* (2009) is a pioneering example to illustrate how these theoretical assumptions can be articulated in a research. Dyson (2009 p. 10) suggests that:

“‘Impersonal forces’ and ‘personalities’ combine and interact in any compelling explanation of foreign policy choices. Such explanations, while beginning with the political leader, conceptualized as an autonomous individual with distinctive beliefs, goals, and motivations that decisively shape their choices”.

To explain Blair’s identity, he applies Realism and Leadership Theory to harmonise the individual level with the structural one. However, his attempt to create a dual-natured analysis indicates a problem because the two sides need a bridge. I examine this problem in further details to point out the misunderstanding. It is mentioned above that Realism lacks the human agent, while the political leaders undeniably operate in the structure. From the two approaches, I collect the key words, such as the linkage of power and interest, norms and values, self-conception, process and outcome. At the agents’ level, the interest of the nation remains a central concept because they are the legitimate actors to make decision in the name of the country. This is often reflected by scholars’ definition, such as Alden & Aran’s (2012 p. 1) interpretation of FPA describes that the practice of
relations is primarily between the states, while they add that the individual decision maker is at the heart of the scrutiny because they are the participant of the process. Vadrot (2017 p. 62) argues that our interpretation of knowledge and power shapes how we see the relations between the structure and the agent. She develops her idea from Foucault’s work, which says that power is legitimacy, and legitimacy comes from following norms. People are norm followers and norms exist at the international level. This uncovers the possibility to link the approaches, but only the two of them is not enough. As Vadrot (2017 p. 63) points out, what truly matters is the challenge to harmonise the dual nature of the analysis: the human agent and the environment in which it operates. Thus, the questions are how their ontological gap can be reduced and what is their common denominator to prove that they are interlinked.

I start with the structural approach to examine how it can be pushed towards the individual one. I use Barkin’s concept of Realist Constructivism (2003). He introduces an innovative mixed theory to justify why Realism and Social Constructivism are compatible. The created theory can define change at the structural level, highlights the importance of power and integrates norms. He demonstrates that (2003 p. 337):

“Neither pure realism nor pure idealism can account for political change, only the interplay of the two, subject to the assumption that morality is contextual rather than universal. (...) The realist constructivism would look at the way in which power structures affect patterns of normative change in international relations and, conversely, the way in which a particular set of norms affect power structures. (...) When interpretations differ, the power of the interpreter continues to matter. The role of a realist constructivism, then, is to examine, skeptically from a moral perspective the interrelationships between power and international norms”.

The reason that makes them compatible hides in analysing their meaning. As Flockhart (in Smith, S., Hadfield, A., & Dunne, T., 2016 pp. 80-82) argues: the essence of Social Constructivism is that it uncovers the static nature of mainstream theories. It is not ideologically challenging to Realism because it fails to define the main actors and problems of the international system. Yet, it does offer an alternative way of understanding as it makes visible what is overlooked. Flockhart (in Smith, S., Hadfield, A., & Dunne, T., 2016 p. 82) uses Wendt’s argument to support his claim. According to
Wendt, self-help does not come from the structure, but it is self-interpretation to decide which interest should be followed. It goes further than the cost-benefit analysis of Realism because it includes norms to follow. It deals with missing concepts of Realism, such as identity and norms, but not contradictory ones because they can be related to power and interest.

The other important feature of Realist Constructivism is that it does not name the interpreter. By doing so, it needs further explanation because from one side, it integrates normative features in Realism, but from the other side, it also signs a gap where the individuals can be placed. This is the reason why Social Constructivism can work as a bridge to fill the gap between the two approaches. Its two main concepts, norms and identity, fit the role to underpin the link because they are applicable in both cases. By doing so it opens the way to cognitive mapping of individuals, while the structural level remains insured. These individuals have normative roles, they indirectly represent the interest of the nations. Objects have meaning for people and they act towards them on the basis of these meanings (Flockhart in Smith, S., Hadfield, A., & Dunne, T., 2016 p. 82). They are influenced by their viewpoint because ‘nation’ is just one of the concepts in their mind. Therefore, change is a crucial point to be integrated because just like people’s personality, the world is not pre-given, but it goes under changes. Hermann et al. (2001 p. 87) point out the reason behind it: “…leaders value loyalty and often move to shape norms and institutions to facilitate their personal goals”.

3. Theory in Context

For the reasons mentioned above, the case study of Blair’s personality comes into focus at this point of the explanation. Based on the previously mentioned theoretical concepts, I conclude that power is the interpretation of those who have the legitimacy to act. To find the missing part, the interpreter of the situation, I reveal the importance of the individual - in this case, of Tony Blair - in the decision-making. To increase the validity of my argument, I start with the description of the frameworks having an impact on him to stress that it is not a vacuum in which he operated but a political environment, and with his electoral victory, he inherited the leading of a country with a past. Hence, it requires taking a look at two things before discussing his personal traits: to show the limitation of the Prime Minister in the British political system and to delineate the main principles and characteristics determining Britain’s foreign policy until the New Labour’s era.

I begin with the role of the Prime Minister (hereafter PM) in British politics to illustrate his office, main duties and the core features of Blair’s position. According to the rules of the Whitehall game, the PM is the head of the government and the de facto leader of the state as the institutional resources of the PM significantly increased in the second half of the twentieth century. These main resources include patronage, control over the Cabinet agenda and the appointment of the Cabinet representatives and the PM’s office. He has a collective oversight with the ability to get involved in areas of policy-making. This makes him primus inter pares, first among equals, which means that he has a greater level of authority than other ministers (Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon, J., 2003 pp. 225-228). Although he is clearly the most noticeable element of the core executive, he only has the authority if it is legitimised by the appointed ministers. To put it shortly, he needs a support from his Cabinet in practising his office. Smith (in Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon, 2003 p. 226) points out the complexity of the system:

“The British core executive (...) is a strange blend of institutions, formal and informal rules, cultures and personalism. There are sets of rules defining the powers of certain actors but more effective regulation often develops through the inculcation of values and norms which affect the behaviour of officials and ministers. However, while officials are in many ways extremely rule bound, ministers and the Prime Minister in particular are given the space to act. The Prime Minister can change the nature of the
Prime Minister’s Office or the role of Cabinet or create and abolish new departments at will”.

The increased personalism of the system signs the ability of the PM to make an impact as an individual. This feature makes it crucial to analyse the person in the leading position because his rights enable him to appoint those who give him legitimacy. As previously mentioned, the PM is dependent on the Cabinet for advice and information. Thus, to be influential in decision-making, the preparation process is about the personally formulated tactics and making allies. Smith (in Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon, 2003 pp. 232-234) states that Blair was aware of his influence and his dependencies. As the two most important words in the Whitehall were “Tony wants”, it notes that his words do have an impact on policy outlines. Smith (in Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon, 2003 p. 236) suggests the necessity of a theory for the explanation of the PM’s position because neither the utility-maximiser nor the risk-manager work as a general description of the role. The failure to give an abstract theory comes from the generalisation of the role because it neglects the importance of the uniqueness of the individual. According to Smith (ibid), personal traits are difficult to ascribe because the impact and the power of the PM undergo changes while the personality is fixed. However, it might be unthoughtful to assume that personality is consistent, especially in a leading position which lasts for a decade. During a political career, outer and inner forces shape the character. To give an illustration, the leader goes through events, negotiates, learns from his mistake and make new allies while lost some. Thus, an actor-specific theory with its cognitive methodological tools might be a useful attempt to explain the PM, but only if the chosen methodology reflects how the personality changes during the time.

The other crucial element to be discussed is the foreign policy tradition of the country. The previous paragraph concludes that the British political system allows the PM to have an influential voice. Having said that the leader normally takes over main principles in conducting foreign policy, it depends on the individual whether he continues with the same policy, modifies the direction or drastically changes it. This section helps to reveal which choices are more related to the national interest in British foreign policy, and what might be the reasons behind groundbreaking acts.

Harris (in Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon 2003, p. 311) defines foreign policy as “the combination of national and governmental values and preferences towards the world, the goals the government seeks to achieve to promote those preferences and the means
by which it implements those goals”. This definition requires the division between national and governmental values to see how they differ or whether they overlap at some point. To name the national values shaping the main principles of the foreign policy acts, a closer look at the country’s past should be taken. I start with the national values because this is affected by the history. For this reason, it must be stressed that Britain was one of the world’s greatest power, a concept which did not disappear from British politics. Yet, this identity has changed significantly. The era of Pax Britannica resulted in the creation of Britain’s willingness to promote international peace, an aspiration to uphold common international standards and stability. The upcoming events of the post-war era and the strengthening of the American influence and global dependence, however, significantly changed Britain’s position at the international level. It had to face a shift from being a superpower to a middle power. The crucial thing is that it resulted in a unique approach to foreign affairs. Although Britain acknowledged the new conditions, it started a new game of tactics to stay influential in the new world order (Harris in Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon, 2003 pp. 311-314). This attitude to stay influential in international events formulated the underlying principles of the country’s foreign policy. Based on Harris’s (in Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon, 2003 pp. 314-316) work, there are eight main points representing the national interest of the state:

1) Britain should play a major role in international relations
2) Foreign Policy should promote Britain’s economic interests
3) Related to economic interests is the continuing British commitment to promoting free trade
4) Support for a strong conventional and nuclear military capability
5) Britain is essentially part of Europe and its interests require a safe and prosperous Europe
6) Commitment to close relationship with the United States
7) Responsibility towards fellow members of the Commonwealth
8) Britain must engage the world beyond Europe

The last point illustrates how clearly the British foreign policy was affected by the country’s imperial past up until the New Labour’s era. Compared to the diminished role at the international stage, the eagerness to maintain an active and robust position was a crucial feature of the governments, reaching its peak with the post-1997 Labour
government. Harris (in Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon, 2003 p. 326) points out that contributing to global affairs is not just about upholding Britain’s impact, but also about protecting its vital interests and ideals., such as a safer, more decent international order. This renders the country’s image to be an “internationalist middle power”.

These principles were set as an overall trend in outlining foreign policy actions of the country for decades. As they are originating from national values, the approach of the leader of the government to these aims is worth putting under scrutiny to examine three things: to what extent and how intensely he acts according to these principles, and what changes he makes. I define the leader responsible for foreign policy steps because the PM is the final arbiter of foreign affairs. Although he normally consults with the Cabinet and the Foreign Secretary, the degree how influential he is on the outcome of the decision-making process depends on the individual. Thus, after revealing the overall characteristics, from the next chapter I put the focus on Blair to justify why leaders matter.

The country’s political system and the inherited foreign policy goals shaped the environment in which Blair operated. I stress that it depends on the personality of the Prime Minister whether this environment is a burden or an assistance in governing. In Blair’s premiership, these factors clearly cannot be discussed as limitations. I rather refer to them as tools because they provided the space for significant acts. Therefore, his personal traits and individual characteristics, such as beliefs and values and his governing style should be taken under scrutiny. As an individual, he follows norms that fit his identity. His identity is shaped by his personal beliefs and values, and therefore, he acts according to them. The key difference is; besides his everyday choices, he is also responsible for the foreign policy steps of a nation. To put it simply, as a political actor, he is in a decision-making role.

In conclusion, even at the theoretical level FPA is innovative and essential part of IR because it is deeply engaged in IR’s broader debates. Yet, the crucial feature is that it goes further than the normative critique of the discipline and offers new methodological tools. With appliance of these new methods, FPA becomes more practical and testable. Its vital feature is that with the recent development of the field it suggests a solution to the agency-structure debate and has a potential to harmonise the approaches. It paves the way between IR and other Social Sciences, gives alternative lenses to understand the world and offers measurable data that brings the discipline closer to the people. However, to get an adequate explanation of the events, one should look beyond the state level and link the theories with a close analysis of the powerful individuals.
4. The Blair Concept

Having discussed the framework of British Foreign Policy, from this chapter I begin the analysis of the human agent. I apply autobiographical research to reveal the most influential factors of his decision-making. Autobiographical analysis is a qualitative method and interpretivist in nature (Harrison & Callan, 2013 pp. 3-6). It is commonly used in Sociology and History researches because it reveals what is frequently overlooked: the individual. Roberts (in Harrison & Callan, 2013 p. 4) highlights that the importance of this approach is that it reveals and understands the “personal” and how it is interlinked with its political environment and practices. As the aim of this thesis is to explain the role of the individual in FPA, this approach helps to unveil why Blair acted the way he did and how he interacted with his environment. The criticism of this method is its anti-positivist nature that comes from its subjectivity, but in this case, it is not a distortion because I include a wide range of sources and also introduce a quantitative method in the next chapter.

I divide this chapter into three parts. Firstly, I explain the American factor in his premiership and illustrate why he regarded the US as an ally and to what extent it was the result of his personal influence. Secondly, I explain his relationship with his close advisors and the working morale within his Cabinet, the den. Thirdly, I attempt to reveal the reasons behind defining his political career as a crusade and the role of his faith in decision-making. Throughout the chapter, I also discuss the most common academic debates related to each section.

4.1. The American Factor

British foreign policy under Blair’s premiership is commonly depicted as acting like “lap dogs to American power” (Williams, 2005 p. 25). Blair personally was frequently accused of being a “poodle; a subservient lieutenant at the back and call of his American master” (Azubuike, 2005 p. 123), “a mere puppet” (Azubuike, 2005 p. 124) of the US presidents, “a foreign minister of the United States” (Wither, 2003 p. 67), and “supra-American secretary of state” (Dyson, 2009 p. 73). The most critical point was the invasion of Iraq when Blair decided to take the country into war by joining the American forces despite the British people’s protests against the intervention and the 120 opposing votes from the government (Wither, 2003 p. 67). Nevertheless, Wither (2003 p. 76) argues that taking
Blair’s support for granted “would be naïve and unfair” because the ‘special relationship’ would not be enough justification for the legitimacy to take the country into war. To explain why the seemingly unconditional support is an oversimplification, I analyse how Blair reinterpreted what the inherited from the traditional understanding of British foreign policy and what difference his personality made in managing the British approach to the US.

As discussed in the previous chapter, having a close relationship with the US is one of the main principles of the British foreign policy. This traditional pro-American orientation was declared by Winston Churchill when he illustrated Britain’s interest as three majestic circles for cultural and historical reasons. According to his concept, Britain stands as the intersection between the circles of the Commonwealth, the English-speaking world and Europe (Williams, 2005 p. 2). Furthermore, it also covers two more principles – Britain belongs to Europe and its responsibility towards the Commonwealth (Fisher, J., Denver, D., & Benyon, 2003 pp. 314-316) – among the eight. I argue that these serve as a bedrock to British foreign policy, while the remaining five originates from the pro-US approach and all interlinked, giving the almost unavoidable option for Blair to maintain a close alliance with the presidents of the states.

There is a common viewpoint among scholars that there are two components of the so-called ‘special relationship’ between the two countries. First is a normative approach naming it “a relationship rooted in common history, common values and common interests around the globe” (Wither, 2003 p. 68). The second is a strategic perspective outlining a power asymmetry between the US and the UK. It originates from the idea that Britain acknowledged being a junior partner to sustain a favourable relationship in order to gain a pivotal role in the US’s foreign policy (Wither, 2003 p. 70). As Smith (in Williams, 2005 p. 3) depicts the case of Britain:

“There is a simply no convenient classification within which Britain fits: it is not a superpower, nor a middle power; it has aspects of a great power, but is caught up in a very complex set of interdependencies; it has to be involved in bargaining with defence and economic alliances and organisations, yet it is not a small power. No other country has quite this profile. Yet exactly because Britain slips between conceptual categories, it offers a very real challenge to international relations theory”.
Hodder-Williams (in Little & Wickham-Jones, 2000 p. 241) highlights that from defence, nuclear and intelligence aspects Britain is strongly dependent on the US. Azubuike (2005 p. 129) points out that the degree of collaboration in these fields are significant and puts Britain in a privileged position. Yet, this exceptional role also comes with a certain level of dependence. As he indicates, “its nuclear arsenal from the Polaris to the Trident submarines depends on American ballistic rockets, cruise missiles, guiding systems and intelligence. (...) Without Britain’s privileged access to the American technology (..), British nuclear deterrence would become almost useless for effectiveness”. Therefore, an alliance is a precondition of a successful British foreign policy. However, this precondition does not mean unconditional support. Given these circumstances, the global conditions in which Britain operates and the US plays a vital role should be seen as a framework rather than a one-way road. What differs – and here comes the importance of the leaders – is the intensity of the alliance.

Previously in IR, the impact of the person in the leading position was frequently neglected, and the depersonalised unit – the state – was analysed instead. However, as Hodder-Williams (in Little & Wickham-Jones, 2000 p. 236) suggests, history has proved that this approach is not always sufficient, therefore, researchers started to include the individual’s preferences to analyse the relations between the countries. The Anglo-US relationship during Blair’s premiership is described as “warmer than ever” (Little & Wickham-Jones, 2000 p. 17) referring to a “‘special’ special relationship” (Williams, 2005 p. 36). The question is whether the normative reasons or the power dependence led Blair to maintain an exceptionally close relationship with the US and to what extent it was the consequence of the favourable vision of the country or a common denominator of the individuals leading the states.

In his memoir, Blair frequently refers to America and the American values in a positive sense. As he (2010 p. 115) argues: “I hate class; but I love aspiration. It's why I like America. I adore that notion of coming from nothing and making something of yourself”. Williams (2005 pp. 36-38) describes the relationship between Blair and Clinton as “collegial and often friendly” which is the outcome of the “important meeting of minds” between the two leaders. Their common denominator was their vision of Third Way politics, originating from a progressive, internationalist mentality with a strong belief in social justice and the introduction of a new social contract including the responsibility of the individual (Giddens, 2000 pp. 1-26). Even before the landslide New Labour victory in 1997 Blair’s charismatic style and vision of the successful party renewal amazed the
US intellectuals, while the New Labour party was also inspired by the Democrats. Clinton even visited 10 Downing Street and welcomed the newly elected PM and his full Cabinet. This mutual preference was represented in the fact that Blair and Clinton regularly held seminars together on the Third Way politics (Little & Wickham-Jones, 2000 pp. 234-249). Moreover, their conversations were often like brainstorming sessions discussing the perspectives of the centre-left. Clinton also played an important role in the success of the Good Friday Agreement (Little & Wickham-Jones, 2000 p. 17).

Blair (in Williams, 2005 p. 35) points out the main reasons for the alliance: “The first principle of UK foreign policy was to remain the closest ally of the US, and as allies influence them to continue broadening their agenda. The UK was an ally of the US, not because they are powerful, but because we share their values”. Yet, it should be noted that there still were issues on which Blair and Clinton disagreed, such as the Kyoto protocol and the case of Kosovo, resulting in “heated phone calls” (Williams, 2005 p. 39).

For this reason, the Anglo-American relationship is undeniably a special one but should be emphasised that it is between two sovereign countries with – although sometimes overlapping – but differing and changing priorities and far from being a pure harmony (Azubuike, 2005 p. 133). Blair (in Azubuike, 2005 p. 132) emphasises that Britain’s close alliance with the US is more than just a strategic partnership because it is the government’s decision to support the states, not the unavoidable consequence of a dependence:

“The price of British influence is not, as some would have it, that we have, obediently, to do what the US asks. I would never commit British troops to a war I thought was wrong or unnecessary. Where we disagree, as over Kyoto, we disagree. But the price of influence is that we do not leave the US to face the tricky issues alone.... America should not be forced to take this issue on alone. Of course it should go through the UN—that was our wish and what the US did”.

Moreover, from Blair’s words, two conclusions could be made. Firstly, as the speech refers to the context of the Iraq intervention, the friendly relationship between the two countries continued with the Bush administration. The reason behind this, as Williams (2000 pp. 35-37) indicates, is that Bush did not change the core American values just
chose a different approach to achieving them, but “the moralism comes from the liberal self-image held by both states” remained the same. This moralism underpins the normative approach to the alliance, which is more dependent on the leaders than the shared history of the countries. Yet, the importance of the strategic partnership cannot be neglected. In his speech in Brighton in 2005, Blair reconfirms his and Britain’s strong commitment to the US by pointing out it is the responsibility of the country to keep the alliance:

“Britain should also remain the strongest ally of the United States. I know there's a bit of us that would like me to do a Hugh Grant in Love Actually and tell America where to get off. But the difference between a good film and real life is that in real life there's the next day, the next year, the next lifetime to contemplate the ruinous consequences of easy applause. (...) I never doubted after September 11 that our place was alongside America and I don't doubt it now. (...) I know we could have hidden away at the back after September 11 and let others take the strain. But that is not Britain at its best. Nor is it this party. (...) such nations aren't built by dreamers. They rise by the patient courage of the change-maker. That's what we have been in New Labour: the change-makers. That's how we must stay”.

Secondly, Blair attempted to take an accommodative role and put the American’s act in a multilateral framework maintaining the rule of law and providing legitimacy to the intervention. Thus, it was not because of the unconditional support, but also Blair’s own vision. When he was interviewed, he replied to the criticism for his loyalty to the US as: “It’s worse than you think, I believe in it” (Azubuike, 2005 p. 130). Indeed, Blair was personally committed to sharing the common values and he also provides a place for Europe in this alliance. As he indicates in his speech in Washington (2008):

“The transatlantic alliance is, of course, a product of historical connection, culture, language and tradition. But most of all it is an alliance of belief, of shared values, of a common outlook not just about nations and their common interest but about humanity and its common destiny. (...) We need now a powerful revival of our alliance. In the world so rapidly changing around us, we cannot take a narrow view of our interests or a short-sighted view of our
destiny. We can’t afford to take fright at these changes and go back into isolationism. We can’t avoid the challenges. But we can master them. Together. The transatlantic partnership was never just the foundation of our security. It was the foundation of our way of life. It was forged in experience of the most bitter and anguished kind. Out of it came a new Europe, a new world order, a new consensus as to how life should be lived”.

For this reason, the backbone of the alliance is undeniable the strategic partnership, but this would not serve as a complete explanation for the UK’s foreign policy steps. The leaders’ shared conviction and Blair’s strong vision played a crucial role in the decision-making. Taking this further, Blair also had a clear viewpoint that his country could also be beneficial to Europe by mediating between its two allies. His words indicate an accommodative role between the US and Europe in which relation Britain functions as a bridge. This way Blair attempted to expand the American accommodating, consulting and cooperating alliance structure (Wither, 2003 p. 74) by involving Europe. As he writes in his memoir (2010 p. 318): “As for Britain's place in the world, it seemed to me self-evident that we had to exercise power through alliances. We had the two best - Europe and America - so why not keep them strong and use them?” This way a “strong ‘atlanticist’ voice in the European Union” (Wither, 2003 pp. 69-71) could be heard where the UK’s role is a ‘unifier’ actor to build global consensus. As Wither (2003 pp. 80-81) puts this shortly:

“If the European Union and the United States were to become true strategic partners, Britain would have a crucial role” because “the United Kingdom possesses the only armed forces with the prospect of remaining interoperable with the United States (...), while any serious attempt to build a European power-projection capability would be reliant on British commitment and expertise. In these circumstances, the UK might yet be able to remain both a leading player in Europe and a special partner of the United States and thus realize Prime Minister Blair’s vision of Britain as a pivotal power”.

Given these points, it is undeniable that to a certain degree and mainly for security and strategic reasons, Britain was dependent on America. Thus, the need for the alliance is not determined by the leaders, but the intensity of the alliance is. In many cases, the
leaders had an overlapping vision that resulted in mutual actions and support. These acts, however, should not be oversimplified as unconditional support from Britain. Instead, it is more likely that Blair’s strong conviction, the Third Way policies, values and personal preferences that he represented and shared with the presidents played the major role in Britain’s foreign policy decisions. He attempted to use his power to build a strong global community which “requires values to match, values that are shared” (Blair, 2010 p. 689).

4.2. The Cabinet

Besides the American alliance, Blair’s administration and decision-making style were also frequently condemned, accusing the Prime Minister of having an inner-circle, a group of handpicked, like-minded and close advisers (Dyson, 2009 pp. 1-2) in his Cabinet. In Blair’s case, it’s necessary to look beyond the ministry and mention the key members of the core staff as well because the overall picture of Blair’s premiership is complete only with the indication of their influence on the groupthink. For this reason, its set-up contains two groups. The first is the “non-party-political” but Labour supporter staff, like Peter Mandelson, “a close friend and ally”; Jonathan Powell, former British diplomat previously working in Washington; Anji Hunter, best friend since the two being adolescents; Alastair Campbell, broadcaster and journalist (Blair, 2010 pp. 19-29). The appointment of Alastair was a well-considered choice from Blair because he was determined to establish a competent coordination on policy and press issues from the team inside. He saw it crucial how things were articulated towards the public through the media and was well-aware that scandals would happen, therefore, he needed someone who “was rather brilliantly trying to feed the media beast” (Blair, 2010 p. 171). Yet, it does not mean a direct control over the media, it was the necessity of someone in the staff whose job was to keep up a dialogue with the media. As Alastair recalls: “my job was not to say ‘good luck’. It was all of our jobs to make sure he didn’t need it” (Campbell, 2007 pp. 201-205). This suggests a strong dedication from the staff to provide expertise to the PM.

The second is fellow Labour colleagues, such as Jack Straw, Robin Cook, John Prescott, Geoff Hoon and Gordon Brown. The PM’s relationship with Brown was exceptional in a collegial sense, but it is challenging to uncover its true nature or to decide the exact time when their relationship deteriorated. The two were known as close friends and allies in policy-making. Daddow (2009a p. 558) argues that this good relationship fell apart gradually during the time in office, however, Blair’s memoir suggests it
happened earlier. He notes that despite the endless hours spent on vivid discussions about the party reforms, early indicators were seen even right after 1992. He describes Brown as “Within the box he was tremendous, but he didn’t venture outside it” (Blair, 2010 p. 60). Blair believed the party was in more need of his modernising mentality than Brown’s rather conventional framework. Although he respected Brown and firmly relied on him with their shared vision of Third Way, their relationship turned into rather collegial than friendly after Blair was elected for the Leader of the Opposition and it might have been the roots of further conflicts (Blair, 2010 pp. 40-63).

The Campbell diaries reveal that Blair was keen to keep the Cabinet together because effectiveness requires a well-organised manner and it was exactly what the Tories lacked that time. The Press Secretary’s notes illustrate the Cabinet’s working morale as Blair pointed out (Campbell, 2007 pp. 201-205):

“He said we will sink or swim together. (...) we had to remain united and disciplined, and always ahead of the game. No doubt we would have disagreements, but the tone of disagreements matters (...) Nobody should get drunk on power. We are here to serve”.

The features of this informal style often noted as a ‘sofa cabinet’ which, according to Dyson (2009 p. 59), lacks the normal bureaucratic and groupthink requirements and indicates Blair’s hunger for power. He illustrates the informality of the procedures by depicting that the Prime Minister was captured eating an apple during crucial negotiations. This informal style was seen as the presidentialisation of the government (Daddow, 2009a p. 558) by other politicians and civil servants. This effect culminated in political debates when David Cameron (in Hennessy, 2007 p. 345), the Leader of the Opposition, in 2006 promised the changing of this system as promoting: “I will restore the proper process of government ... I want to be Prime Minister of this country. Not a President”.

There are two vital things to be mentioned in order to assess these criticisms. Firstly, as I previously stated, the British political framework provides the possibility for the PM to have greater authority than other ministers and the right to appoint them. The renewal of the ‘old Labour’ and his vision how to put Third Way politics into practice was planned with his colleagues in Opposition. He came into office with a firm belief to make a change. New Labour, the approach Blair represented, was something merely different,
that is the reason why he chose his team the way he did. As a result, they transferred this rather friendly than collegial teamwork from Opposition meetings to governing groupthink.

The ‘Butler report’ (in Dyson, 2009 p. 37) – on the rightness of the Iraq intervention and the decision-making process leading to it – included an allegation of the Cabinet’s ad hoc consultations and of neglecting the formal machinery of Whitehall processes. As Butler worked with Blair until 1998 and has previous experience as Cabinet Secretary with former PMs from 1988, he also stressed that the consequence of this unusual “close knit team of inner advisers” was that the den’s decision-making may have suffered from groupthink, represented mainly Blair’s vision and deteriorated the formal procedures of policy-making (Daddow, 2009a p. 558). In his memoir, Blair (2010 pp. 17-18) replies to the accusation as:

“Truthfully, for the first year or so, as we found our feet and grappled with the challenges of governing, we did tend to operate as a pretty tight unit, from which some of the senior civil servants felt excluded. From our perspective, we were working flat out to deliver an enormous series of commitments to change. We were very quickly appreciating the daunting revelation of the gap between saying and doing. In Opposition, the gap is nothing because ’saying’ is all you can do; in government, where 'doing' is what it's all about, the gap is suddenly revealed as a chasm of bureaucracy, frustration and disappointment. So we tended to work in the first months of government rather as we had when campaigning for office and changing the Labour Party. However, Robin was only with us for eight months. In time, we broadened out, we learned, we adjusted. (...)The modus operandi shifted. Cabinet and Cabinet committees flourished, and there was a better balance between special advisers and civil servant input. The allegations of 'sofa government' were always, therefore, ludicrously overblown. For a start, leaders have always had inner circles of advisers. What’s more, although Robin used to make much of the fact that my predecessors had been sticklers for Cabinet government, I found this a trifle inconsistent with my recollection, admittedly from the outside, of Mrs Thatcher and her Cabinet relations”.
Although Blair admits that they went on with the informal style practised in Opposition, he mentions that after years it changed. He also emphasises that the crucial issues were negotiated, and he was not simply “presiding over a kitchen cabinet” (Daddow, 2009a p. 556). Thus, another vital feature of his governing style is that he relied on his team and even when he had a clear viewpoint, he listened to their voices and tried to build a consensus. He (2010 p. 428) goes on with the explanation in A journey as:

“One of the most bizarre things said about the build-up to war is that it was a kind of one-man mission, discussed with a few special advisers on the famous sofa in the den, with the Cabinet excluded. Actually, it was the topic at virtually every Cabinet meeting for nine on six months, with not just me but Jack and Geoff Hoon briefing extensively, and everyone not just having the right to have their say, but saying it”.

He also points out the strategical advance of their decision-making, calling for the more proactive and practical side of policy-making. This reflects his ambition to make an impact and face the challenges of the fast-moving world because he conceptualised politics as a project realisation rather than monotonous bureaucracy. His attitude symbolises a progressive mentality that he claims to be competitive enough in the century. According to him (2010 p. 18), the changing of politics requires a different approach to decision-making in our era:

„(...) skill set required for making the modern state work effectively is different from that needed in the mid-twentieth century: it is far less to do with conventional policy advice, and far more to do with delivery and project management. (...) Moreover, the pace of modern politics and the intrusion of media scrutiny - rightly or wrongly of an entirely different order today than even fifteen or twenty years ago - mean that decisions have to be made, positions taken, strategies worked out and communicated with a speed that is the speed of light compared to the speed of sound”.

From one side, Blair’s effort was exceptional in order to fulfil his agenda because he aspired to be regarded as a moderniser, therefore, he was keen to speed up processes that bring about results. He wanted the public to benefit from his reforms not just years after but under his premiership because it would help to maintain the government’s legitimacy
and voting support. From the other side, however, this modification could be assessed as the lack of conventional decision-making from those was sceptical about the rightness of the policies. Therefore, the PM would probably have benefited from being more careful to follow traditional steps especially on documentation and administrative issues, such as the accurate recording and official notes of the meetings. This would have increased the credibility of the Cabinet by representing the viewpoint of his advisers and how the consensus was reached and would have given validity of the steps taken.

Secondly, most of these criticisms rose as the aftermath of the intervention in Iraq, six years after Blair entering his office in 1997. As a consequence, it requires tremendous effort from a researcher to find an Iraq-free note on Blair not just among public articles but even in the work of scholars. Yet, it might be worth looking at his earlier attitude towards foreign policy decisions to understand how he became an important actor in global politics and to portray a comprehensive picture of Blair’s leadership and personality (Daddow, 2009a p. 548). Dyson (2009 p. 2) calls it paradoxical to analyse Blair’s relevance to global politics because at the beginning of his political career he showed much more willingness to deal with home affairs than foreign issues. Clare Short (in Daddow, 2009a p. 550), Blair’s Cabinet colleague, indicates that Blair was not ambitious to take an active role in foreign policy before his leadership. Blair (2010 p. 224) explains this shift as:

“I can't remember an incoming American president who fought a foreign policy campaign to reach the White House; or who didn't, in the course of his administration, end up being preoccupied with it. The conventional wisdom among all political strategists is that to base a campaign on, or become immersed in, foreign policy is a disaster, the beginning of the end”.

Daddow (2009a pp. 550-552) argues that it was an attempt to complete Labours’ agenda with the lacking defence policy, while others suggest it was in order to increase authority that cannot be gained through domestic issues because the involvement in global conflicts strengthens the leader’s position at domestic level. However, as Blair reveals (2010 p. 223), there was just simply no division between domestic and foreign affairs after being elected for the leader:
“The categorisation of policy into foreign and domestic has always been somewhat false. Plainly a foreign crisis can have severe domestic implications, and this has always been so. Two things make the distinction even more misleading today: first, the world is far more integrated, so home and abroad tend to come together; second, as a global media develops, foreign crises are often played out in real time and graphically on our TV screens. They swiftly become domestic challenges”.

In short, although Blair was motivated by his firm vision of progressive politics and the features of his Cabinet meetings reflects less formality than what was expected from the traditional Whitehall procedures, the decisions were built on the consensus of the group and the expertise of the team. In the next part, I explain why the realisation to conduct foreign policy paired with his personal belief has a vital role in his premiership.

4.3. Faith and Politics

An in-depth analysis of Blair’s leadership style requires a discussion about his religious beliefs because it could contribute to the explanations why he reacted to foreign policy challenges the way he did. As stated previously, he saw no division between home affairs and global issues because in the globalised world he regarded the events all interconnected. What matters is the role of his religious beliefs in foreign policy and how they were linked to the progressive mentality of Third Way. The aim of this section is not to explain what happened during his foreign policy steps or their rightness, but to attempt to answer why these approaches were applied.

I begin with the explanation of Blair’s self-reflection to illustrate his interpretation of the two concepts, politics and faith. His religious beliefs guided him through his political career. In his memoir, he (2010 pp. 662-663) states: “I had always been fortunate in having a passion bigger than politics, which is religion”. His words suggest that in his case, politics is subordinate to religion. He also highlights that his viewpoint on religion and politics was influenced by what he learnt from his friend, Peter Thomson, an Australian Anglican priest he knew from university. He mentions that Peter was one of the most influential people on his thinking, and he describes his friend as “a doer not a spectator; and a thinker not just a preacher” (Blair, 2010 p. 78). As he defines (Blair, 2010 p. 79):
“Religion starts with values that are born of a view of humankind. Politics starts with an examination of society and the means of changing it. Of course politics is about values; and religion is often about changing society. But you start from a different place. This is vital in understanding my politics. I begin with an analysis of human beings as my compass; the politics is secondary”.

His views combined with his can-do mentality might have been the reason for the decisions he made in power. When approaching policy issues, he felt a strong desire to act, and these acts often represented values. As he (2009b p. 95) points out “(...) faith matters. Values matter. How those combine will critically define the prospects of success, prosperity and peaceful coexistence of the global society in which we live. The alternative is tension, conflict and violence”. The other key feature of his mentality is that he presumes a great role of faith in society. In his vision, faith is a crucial motivation for people to build up a better world. He does not refer to religion in an old-fashioned sense, but rather interprets it as a modern, strategic component of a well-functioning society. As he puts into words in a conference in London in 2007:

“It is important to show that religious faith is not inconsistent with reason, or progress, or the celebration of diversity. Round the world today, along with the images of violence, are the patient good works of people of different faiths coming together, understanding each other, respecting each other. Religious faith has much to contribute to the public sphere; is still a thriving part of what makes a cohesive community; is a crucial motivator of millions of citizens around the world; and is an essential if non-governmental way of helping to make society work. To lose that contribution would not just be a pity; it would be a huge backward step”.

The reason behind attitude is that Blair’s premiership started in an era with a more open and interdependent world than ever before. Everything was under change and politics was not an exception. Globalisation is vital in Third Way politics that he represented because it attempts to reply to its challenges. Therefore, Blair attempted to introduce new approaches to achieve old goals (Clarke in Seldon, 2007 p. 593) driven by his vision. It might be oversimplification to interpret his foreign policy steps as a pre-
emptive defence of Britain. It was rather his complex vision in practice. As General Sir Charles Guthrie, who served as Britain’s Chief of Defence Staff (in Daddow, 2009a p. 553) emphasises: “He feels (...) evil triumphs when good men do nothing”. Another evidence for this is how Powell’s joked about Blair’s Messiah complex, thinking he could achieve what others could not (Blair, 2010 p. 157).

As mentioned above, Blair gained confidence after Kosovo because it is seen as the articulation of his moral vision and a legitimate reply to the previous failure of the world to solve the Bosnia crisis between 1992 and 1995 (Daddow, 2009a p. 548). Blair was not expected to have a fierce voice in foreign policy decision-making before getting in power, but his attitude changed due to the given circumstances. Campbell (2007 p. xii) depicts how Blair’s personality evolved during his time in power. As he recalls: “At other times he could be overly concerned about things that ultimately don’t matter a great deal, how he was seen by this person or that, minor personnel issues that should not have detained him too long. Today, he has a thick skin, hardened by experience. It was not always so”.

The reason behind this, as Daddow (2009a p. 555) highlights, that Blair gained confidence from the Kosovo intervention and he worked hard to keep it under the multilateral NATO framework to uphold its credibility. He also became widely regarded as “the key western organizers of and spokespeople for, the alliance effort” (Daddow, 2009a p. 554)

The success of Kosovo and his increased certainty in the rightness of his visions turned Blair into a pro-active and confident leader with a strong voice. Daddow (2009a p. 555) indicates that “Kosovo seems to have been the point at which Blair began to be his own man”. As Blair improved his leadership skills, with his can-do attitude, he attempted to conceptualise the rules of intervention and turn it into a norm. His aim was to establish a framework that prevents the outbreak of similar conflicts by reinterpreting states sovereignty. Yet, aiming to make peace with the breach of sovereignty is contradictory to the Peace of Westphalia because it founded sovereignty and the norm of non-interference. To make a clarification about how flexible these rules are, I briefly explain Finnemore and Sikkink’s norm circle (in Baylis, J., & Smith, S., eds., 2014 p. 165) and interpret it in the light of Blair’s attempt. As sovereignty is a social fact, it depends on human agreement. It serves as a rule which prevents one country from exercising power over the legitimate authority of the other. Rules are not unchangeable truths, they can be modified through debates and revised through practice by actors. Same applies to non-intervention, it is a norm which develops through political practice (Barnett, 2014 pp. 159-163). Therefore, the key procedure is how norms and rules are internationalised and
institutionalised.

According to Finnemore and Sikkink (in Baylis, J., & Smith, S., eds., 2014 p. 165), there are three stages of the life cycles of norms. The first is the norm emergence when the ‘norm entrepreneur’ introduces the new norm and establish a framework for it. Blair’s Chicago speech in 1999 a clear illustration of this, in which he introduces the option of intervention meanwhile reinterprets sovereignty. The ‘Kosovo success’ had three main components: a proactive leader representing Britain at the international stage, key values shared with the most powerful state (US) as a starting point and an aim to spread these values in the light of humanity. He also highlighted that international organisations are insufficient to face the challenges of the time (Clarke in Seldon, 2007 p. 600). Although he tried to build up a multilateral framework in which the global community has the legitimacy to act, he also expressed criticism about this mentioned deficiency of international organisations by stating “I don’t need the United Nations to give me authorization (...) I’m on a crusade, I can change the world and I’m going to do it by sheer will and determination”(Dyson, 2009 p. 66).

Blair’s norm-forming attempt reveals his reactive attitude to constraints. However, this mentality would not have been enough without a multilateral approach to the intervention. He was aware that the framework for his new project needed broad support and consensus because only his way he could have minimised the risk of challenges and critics (Clarke in Seldon, 2007 p. 613). As his emerged norm of liberal intervention was supported by the NATO and the United Nations, it reached the second stage: the norm cascade. In this process, the ‘norm leader’ is motivated to convince other states to follow suit. Blair called the Western world for taking a proactive role because – according to him – they had the resources to cope with these conflicts. This way he also attempted to bring closer Britain’s two main allies, the US and Europe (Clarke in Seldon, 2007 p. 601). In Blair’s vision, with Britain’s transatlantic bridge role and the institutionalisation of the ‘Kosovo norm’, the united world with shared values and means could face the challenges of globalisation.

The success in Sierra Leone – “the text book demonstration of the art form” of humanitarian intervention (Clarke in Seldon, 2007 p. 604) – and Afghanistan suggested that the third stage could be triggered, which is the norm internalization. At the last stage, the norm is no longer debated but followed automatically. Yet, this is the stage where Blair could not succeed because the upholding of values and the image of the
interventional, global community failed. The Iraq intervention is highly criticised even today, hinting that “Liberal interventionism talks the talk but can barely walk the length of a red carpet” (Clarke in Seldon, 2007 p. 610).

The failure of the implementation of the ‘Kosovo norm’ in Iraq’s case suggests that parts of the norm were not accepted by other countries. Daddow (2009a p. 550-560) points out that there is a division between the global commitment of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the Blair articulated Doctrine of the International Community. As he argues, the second is rather a guideline suggesting when the global community should intervene. The key feature of his argument is that it marks Blair’s principles were not written in stone. This was clear in his use of language as he never called the R2P – which was used by Brown and highly supported by the United Nations – and these concepts were developed side-by-side. The revision of the steps and a global commitment to work out a commonly accepted criteria system for interventions might serve as a better guideline to solve further global conflicts.

The arguments made in this chapter indicate that without Blair’s firm commitment and conviction, the solutions for global conflicts would have been articulated in a different manner. In the next chapter, I continue with the quantitative analysis of Blair’s personal traits to measure his leadership style.
5. The Scrutiny of Blair’s Personal Traits

As the rising personalism in public affairs resulted in the increased curiosity about the political actors’ private lives and individual preferences, it also brought about several changes in research approaches to the discipline. Hermann (2002 p. 1) suggests that the main reason behind this phenomenon is that people realised that these leaders are influential on our lives. They decide about a nation’s domestic and foreign affairs, while they make these decisions based on their individual beliefs and motivations. Due to the massive number of memoirs being published recently, their personal thoughts are easily accessible to everyone to discover. This seems beneficial in the academia as well because it makes it easier to understand and analyse the decision-making environment without the personal involvement of the individual. On account of the widespread use of the Internet, it is not just the memoirs that can provide the base for the analysis. Speeches and interviews are also recorded and can be accessed without any complication or permission.

The factors mentioned above paired with the appearance of cognitive mapping of the individual in FPA contributed to the development of the existing research methods of the discipline. Besides the qualitative methods, which are frequently criticised for not being objective enough and therefore, largely determined by the interpretation of the researcher, quantitative approaches with measurable data are also gaining popularity. To give an illustration, content analysis is a frequently used way to conduct researches in IR and FPA because it is a systematic and organised manner to examine and interpret texts (Harrison & Callan, 2013 pp. 25-28). It looks at the latent content by revealing the implicit messages underneath the words of the text. To interpret the findings, it requires a coding schedule, which serves as a common guideline. It is important to choose a codebook which rules are systematically organised and has proven validity because it provides reliability for the analysis (ibid).

The automatization of content analysis, the ProfilerPlus, developed by Young and Schafer in 1998, shortens the process as it is not the researcher who is counting the frequency of a word anymore. The website’s coding system applies a psychological assessment of political leaders and cognitive mapping. It originates from the idea that compared to physical sciences, the analysed material has agency in Social Science. Given the same situations, agents can act differently led by their motivations, emotions and problem representations (Hudson, 2005 pp. 4-10). Therefore, the explanatory level in this analysis is the cognition and information processing of that individual in charge of
decision-making during the given period. George’s work (in Hudson, 2005 p. 11) paved the way for further developments by pointing out the necessity of an operational code that includes the identification of main political beliefs of the individual about the conflicts in the world, the leader’s recognition whether she or he has the ability to change events, and the goal realisation.

Taking this further, Margaret G. Hermann (in Hudson, 2005 pp. 11-20) introduced process tracing with content analysis as operational code framework as an attempt to reveal the leader’s motivations, openness to new information and attitude towards constraints. The suggestion is made by how frequently one uses certain words and phrases; thus, it has a quantitative nature and it applies frequency counts. This systemised approach with the accuracy of the mentioned technological tool offers a valid and speedy option to carry out a research. To explain leadership traits, Hermann’s codebook is built on three main questions examining the attitudes of the individual. These are the leaders’ reaction to political constraints in their environment, their openness to incoming information, and their main reasons for seeking their positions. To a certain degree, individuals are sensitive or insensitive to these questions and a combination of the results refers to a political leadership style. These three concepts depend on further aspects. Responsiveness to political constraints examines whether the leaders have a strong belief they can control what happens and a strong desire to exercise power and influence over their environment. To decide how open the individuals are to new information, their conceptual complexity and self-confidence play crucial roles. In terms of motivation, their sensitiveness to task focus, distrust of others and ingroup bias are looked at (Hermann, 2002 pp. 5-11). I illustrate the relations between the aspects:
In the second part of the analysis, I turn to this methodological tool to construct Blair’s profile. The importance of this approach is that these results cannot be influenced by the qualitative part of the autobiographical research and by the work of other researchers. I collect thirty of his speeches to provide the required text base of the analysis. My aim is to emphasise that his personality is not static as the decade of his premiership is a significant time. During this period, the events and the challenges he faced affected his personality and his leadership style. Even Blair (2010 p. xv) himself depicts a change of his personality in his memoir:

“(…) my aim was to write not as a historian, but rather as a leader. (…) There have been plenty of accounts – and no doubt will be more – of the history of my ten years as prime minister, and many people could write them. There is only one person who can write an account of what it is like to be the human being at the centre of that history, and that’s me. So this is a personal account; a description of a journey through a certain period of history in which my political, and maybe to a certain degree my personal character evolves and changes. I begin as one type of leader; I end as another. That’s why I call it a journey”.

A comprehensive analysis reflects these changes; thus, I attempt to include speeches from different occasions of his political career. The selection has three dominant parts: the first group focuses on the speeches before the beginning of his premiership in 1997, the second one contains his speeches from his premiership between 1997-2007, and the third one is from those after his resignation. By doing so, speeches even from 1983 and 2017 are included. These talks cover a wide range of issues from home affairs to foreign policy. These issues include speeches in New Labour’s main policy goals: on parenting, on education, on the transatlantic alliance and its common values, on the Social Exclusion Unit, on Ghana and policy towards Africa and even on today’s most frequently discussed topic: the Brexit. Not just the topics represent diversity, but also the location of the speeches: I analyse talks within the UK; at party conferences in Blackpool and Brighton, local government conferences, in his constituency of Sedgefield where he began his career as an MP, and abroad; in France, and in different parts of the United States. I highlight the picking of three significant speeches that puts his leadership in framework:
his electoral victory speech in 1997, which symbolises the beginning of his premiership, the Kosovo speech in 1999 (later called the Doctrine of the International Community), which summarises all of the norms and values he, and therefore, the UK represents, and his resignation speech in 2007 to indicate the end of his office. I remove all of the unnecessary citations and additional sentences from the texts which are not his own words to increase the validity of the research. I also select two chapters from his memoirs, A journey (Blair, 2010). These are the Introduction and the Postscript. The reason why I decide to include exactly these two parts is that these are the chapters with the least amount of explicit historical facts. The Introduction (Blair, 2010 pp. xv-xvii) reveals his vision and stresses the importance of his personality in his career. The other’s title suggests it is a Postscript (Blair, 2010 pp. 664-691), but it is more than just his afterthoughts of the book because Blair turns it into his credo. He systematically analyses the problems we face today – more precisely up until 2010 - and points out how they are interrelated at three levels: the first is the UK (national) level, second is the European, and the third is the one of the global community. Then he goes further and sets policy goals as solutions to these issues. To put it shortly, they are normative discussions about his vision, values, beliefs and worldviews, therefore, I consider the chance of working with a co-author on these lower than in any other parts. His close advisers report that despite long discussions and detailed planning with officials, the major parts of the speeches were written by Blair because he always had a clear vision of what he wanted to articulate. As Powell notes (in Daddow, 2009a pp. 557-558): “The Foreign Office might have been asked early on for comments and some policy input, but that the final product always had Blair’s hand unmistakably—and quite literally—upon it. (...) Blair was basically his own speech writer”. Yet, I must take it into consideration while carrying out the research that parts of the used materials might have been written or influenced by a co-author, which is also the limitation of this research. That is the reason why I attempt to work with such a wide range of sources, to reduce the external influence on the scores.

The process can be divided into three parts from here. I separately analyse the speeches and the chapters, then record the results. I round the numbers to the second decimal point as it makes it easier to compare with Hermann’s numbers. After this, I insert the two materials together to see how the outcome changes. The table below shows that there are just small differences between the results I get separately, thus the mixed step is a synthesis of the scores as it is expected. This assumes a high probability of being the same author behind the texts in both cases.
Table 1 Blair’s Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Trait</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Speeches</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Speeches and Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief in Controlling Events</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Power and Influence</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Complexity</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Focus</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distrust of Others</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingroup Bias</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Hermann’s Comparison Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Trait</th>
<th>87 Heads of State</th>
<th>122 Political Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief Can Control Events</td>
<td>Mean = 0.44</td>
<td>Mean = 0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.30</td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High &gt; 0.58</td>
<td>High &gt; 0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Power</td>
<td>Mean = 0.50</td>
<td>Mean = 0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.37</td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High &gt; 0.62</td>
<td>High &gt; 0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Confidence</td>
<td>Mean = 0.62</td>
<td>Mean = 0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.44</td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High &gt; 0.81</td>
<td>High &gt; 0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Complexity</td>
<td>Mean = 0.44</td>
<td>Mean = 0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.32</td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High &gt; 0.56</td>
<td>High &gt; 0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Focus</td>
<td>Mean = 0.59</td>
<td>Mean = 0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.46</td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High &gt; 0.71</td>
<td>High &gt; 0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingroup Bias</td>
<td>Mean = 0.42</td>
<td>Mean = 0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.32</td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High &gt; 0.53</td>
<td>High &gt; 0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distrust of Others</td>
<td>Mean = 0.41</td>
<td>Mean = 0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.25</td>
<td>Low &lt; 0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High &gt; 0.56</td>
<td>High &gt; 0.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then I use Hermann’s codebook to put the results into perspective and give meaning to Blair’s scores. I compare Blair’s numbers to the norming groups of 122 political leaders given by Hermann (2002 p. 33). Hermann’s table represents average scores on traits and one standard deviation below and above them as well. This increases the validity of the research because 122 leaders in positions of authority between 1945 and 1999 from all over the world represent a wide range of sample. I explain the meaning behind the title of the category and Blair’s sensitiveness to each aspect with a particular focus on
extremely high and extremely low scores. The final score is the average of percentages in each speech. I also underpin the score with Blair’s thoughts selected from his memoir when there is a firm relation between his words and the interpretation of the result.

Following the order of the table, the first aspect is the belief that he can influence or control what happens. It examines whether he has the image that he and the government can influence the events by exercising control over the situations. It seeks verbs indicating the planning of actions taken by him or his group (Hermann, 2002 p. 13). His result (0.39) indicates he is moderate on the trait (0.45). Therefore, a mixture of the characteristics of the trait can be observed in his leadership. It suggests he is interested in the policy-making process and wants to maintain control over decision-making to a reasonable level. He trusts in his close team and is willing to delegate authority if it is necessary. He is prone to take initiatives and to have an impact on the world. He is also quite flexible and reactive to the situations. He takes responsibility for his decisions and does not look for scapegoats if something goes wrong (Hermann, 2002 pp. 14-15). The way he looks back shows how adaptive he is to changing situations and act accordingly (2010 p. 5):

“I was afraid because (...) suddenly I thought of myself no longer as the up-and-coming, the challenger, the prophet, but as the owner of the responsibility, the person not explaining why things were wrong but taking the decisions to put them right”.

The score of need for power suggests a perception for establishing, maintaining, restoring his power, and the level of his ambition either to control others or make an impact on them. It is measured by the percentage of action verbs expressing forceful actions, accusations, advice giving when it is not solicited, effort to regulate other’s behaviour, persuasion of long arguments, desire to gain fame with action, and being concerned with his prestige (Hermann, 2002 pp. 15-16). Blair’s score (0.28) is significantly lower than the standard deviation below the Hermann’s indicated mean record (0.38). This suggests that Blair does not have the utmost need to be in charge. He rather visions himself as the one among other powerful individuals. When deciding about policies and steps to be taken, he calculates what is the best for the people because that is the best for him. The key thing for him is to empower others and spread the group’s viewpoint. Thus, he takes the leader’s role not to seize his individual power but because he is led by the genuine sense that he can make things better. He describes this
messianistic feature of his style as (2010 p. 107):

“From start to finish I never lost my optimism, self-belief or objective belief in what could be done (...) or the recognition that the ultimate boss was ‘the people’. It came out of an unrestrained and genuine wish to drive the nation forward”.

His leadership style is also excepted to be high in morale, have a sense of team spirit, crucial role of norms, justice and goal clarity (Hermann, 2002 p. 17). Taking a closer look at his decade, all of these elements can be found as I already highlighted them in the previous chapter. His strong faith triggers morality, just like his firm belief in social justice. His close inner circle could not have worked without the remarkable team spirit that was the result of numerous years working together in Opposition. He did not look them as tools, but as partners in achieving a common goal. As expected based on his score, he built a special relationship with his followers, and “the den” functioned based on the New Labour’s policy. Therefore, his role was rather to be the agent for the group rather than the ruler of the group, representing its shared values and interests.

The score for conceptual complexity indicates how Blair can differentiate between other ideas, people, places, policies and things in his discussions. It looks for the words expressing the ability of the speaker to see different dimensions. As he got an extremely high score (0.6) compared to Hermann’s mean score (0.45) it suggests that he is able to recognise varying reasons for the situations. He does not see everything in black and white and he is capable of showing flexibility in reactions to objects and ideas. Before decisions, he collects a wide range of information and seeks different perspectives to interpret the situation. He listens to the advice and opinions of others because he knows they all add up to a more complex picture and a better understanding (Hermann, 2002 pp. 22-23).

Self-confidence signals his sense of self-importance. It attempts to reflect his image of his ability to cope with the challenges he faces. Just like every individual, he also processes new information by his sense of self. This self-reflection from others through new information shapes how he positions himself in a context. It examines the frequency of pronouns of ‘I’, ‘myself’, ‘me’ and ‘mine’. To put it shortly, it is the degree of importance he considers to himself in a particular situation (Hermann, 2002 pp. 20-22). His score (0.4) is not extremely low, but it is on the edge, and clearly below the mean
score (0.57). This is the reason why not all of the expected characteristics of the trait provide an accurate description of him. Contrary to the leaders low in self-confidence, Blair has a well-developed sense of where he stands. Although input from others is crucial to him – as discussed in the previous traits – his behaviour hardly reflects inconsistency or inadequacy.

Task focus seeks to answer whether Blair is more focused on solving a problem or building relationships. It searches words referring to either instrumental activities or to feelings and satisfaction. His score (0.65) hardly differs from the mean value (0.62) which indicates that he has a moderate position on the issue (Hermann, 2002 pp. 24-26). To complete a task and to maintain group spirit and morale are equally important to him and to which he gives priority depends on the situation. This shows a linkage with his need for power and self-confidence scores. During his premiership – and might say even today – he has a clear goal, a purpose to be fulfilled. However, to get over his anxiety, he enhanced confidence from his advisers. To provide this support, he needed a valuable team, therefore, maintaining team spirit was crucial to him. He emphasises (2010 p. 11):

“(…) you have a team and it feels like a team. Yes, you’re the leader, but your collaboration is so close, your intimacy so refined by experience, your interaction so governed by familiarity of an almost telepathic nature, that you feel like a family or a cabal of like-minded conspirators”.

Distrust of others suggests a level of general wariness about others and mistrust towards their actions. For this reason, it looks for nouns expressing wary towards other groups or people (Hermann, 2002 pp. 30-31). As Blair’s score (0.21) is on the edge of being lower than the mean score (0.20), it assumes that he is not suspicious about the actions of people at all. Moreover, it is on the edge of being overwhelmingly confident about the goodness of the individuals. It also indicates a large amount of willingness to work in a team and trust in the words of his advisors. It also reflects a positive-sum view of the world instead of a zero-sum approach, which is represented in his firm belief in cooperation and partnership between nations. Even his own words (2010 p. 691) illustrate the score:

“What makes me an optimistic? People. Since leaving office, I have learned one thing above all: the people are the hope. (…) for every bad event, malign
conjunction of circumstances or individual act of hate, there are changes for the better, benign possibilities and above all people of good faith, good intentions and worthy actions”.

Ingroup bias examines whether the group Blair identifies himself with plays a central role in his worldview. It measures the amount of phrase referring to this group in a favourable, strong manner (Hermann, 2002 p. 29). As his score (0.13) is extremely low compared to the mean score (0.43), he is less likely to depict the opposition as scapegoats in dealing with domestic policy and he prefers summit conferences and diplomatic gestures to the games of politics. It underpins his conceptual complexity score because it presumes he is less likely to view to the world in black and white (Hermann, 2002 p. 30).

5.1. Constructing a Profile

The separate analysis of each trait attempts to give a detailed description of Blair’s character on its own, but as these traits are interrelated, the study of their relations adds up to an even broader image of his leadership style. I illustrated how they are linked in the previous chapter. Hence, in the light of the results, I explain what their interrelation suggests in Blair’s case.

The interrelation between the first two scores (belief he can control events and need for power) indicates whether Blair is more likely to challenge or respect constraints. As he is moderate on the first and low on the second, it suggests that his reaction to these constraints is highly dependent on the situation. Therefore, he can move either toward challenging or respecting constraints. When he decides to work within the given framework, compromise and consensus building are crucial to him. Yet, when he pushes the limits, due to his low score on need for power, it is more difficult to him to succeed than to another leader with a higher score because he is less able to read how to manipulate others while sitting behind the scenes. The other reason for this, as it presumes, is that he is too open and direct in exercising authority. It also assumes that these two traits are not the most determining feature of his leadership style and other traits have more determining roles (Hermann, 2002 pp. 11-13). The key importance of these indications is that they suggest a profile of a leader who is willing to push the limitations, but only when it is required to achieve his goal. This goal, however, does not come from the unconditional aspiration to extend his power as the low score excludes this.
The scores of conceptual complexity and self-confidence indicate how open Blair is to new information. As they are interrelated, they reflect his self-orientation. This self-orientation reveals his openness to input from his advisers and from the general political environment in the decision-making process. As his conceptual complexity score is higher than the one of self-confidence, it assumes he is open and responsive to the ideas and demands of others. Maybe not surprisingly, leaders with this trait are usually elected in America. This indicates an interesting link not just to the common values between the countries, but his individual openness and commitment to the cooperation with the presidents of the US. He is ready to listen to the opinion of others and genuinely interested in what happens to them. Thus, he is also concerned about helping them. The scores sign that he is prone to work within collegial decision structures because he can get more contextual information and opinions to see a more complex picture before deciding about a step (Hermann, 2002 pp. 17-18). Blair (2010 pp. 114-124) himself describes the importance of the expertise of his team and confesses his uncertainty as:

“I have many faults, but one virtue I have is that I don’t mind big people around me. In my office, I liked Alastair, Jonathan, Anji, Sally, Peter, David Miliband and others precisely because I knew they would tell me what they thought. This is not to say they were disrespectful (...) but they spoke their mind. I welcomed it, and drew valuable advice and even confidence from it. (...) No one ever believes a politician when he or she says this, but I was never desperate to be prime minister or to stay as prime minister. That’s the honest truth. I don’t mean I lacked ambition – I had plenty of that – but I did lack courage”.

This ambition that he mentions, however, is not the desperate need for power, but rather the aspiration to make his vision come true: a progressive political agenda which is reflective and adaptive to the challenges of globalisation. He needed his team to gain confidence from them and to become the leader he developed to be. In his autobiography, Blair (2010 p. 51) highlights the genuine desire to put these goals into practice by defining politics as the set of beliefs he leader represents: “(...) what was the point of politics if not to win power, govern and put into practice the policies you believe in?”.

The last group looks for the answer to decide whether Blair is rather led by problems or relationships. It originates from the idea that the leaders have certain reasons to seek
office. This can be either because of an internal focus, such as ideology and specific interests or a desire for feedback from their environment, like acceptance, power and support (Hermann, 2002 p. 24). Three traits are deciding in this aspect: task focus, ingroup bias and distrust of others. This approach attempts to reveal Blair’s motivation for seeking office and motivation towards the world.

I begin with the score of task focus, which reveals whether Blair’s priority in his group is to move this team forward and to complete the task (problem-solving) or to maintain group spirit and morale (relationship building). It also suggests that he puts a small emphasis on one of the aspects when it comes to negotiations and Cabinet meetings. As Blair is moderate on this trait, it indicates that both problem and relationship aspects can be important to him depending on the situation. Hermann (2002 p. 25) highlights it is the typical feature of Charismatic leaders because they have the ability to recognise which is more relevant to the situation. Thus, reaching a goal and moving the people forward is as significant to him as keeping high morale and establishing relationships. It presumes he is clear about the problems and keen to solve them. This trait also reveals a progressive mentality that is willing to move forward because there are problems in the world to be solved. Although he is mostly sensitive to the requirement of the people, he is able to make hard decisions if that is the most appropriate answer to the case. It suggests that he is a team player, which means empowering and mobilising others are vital in his leadership (Hermann, 2002 p. 27). To put it shortly, he is equally motivated by solving problems and fostering a sense of collegiality in his group.

The other two traits, ingroup bias and distrust of others, mark Blair’s attitude towards the world as it examines whether it is perceived by him as threats or as an opportunity to cooperate. His focus is on taking advantage of opportunities and building relationships because he is low on ingroup bias and on the edge of being low on distrust of others (Hermann, 2002 p. 28). He does not perceive the world as a threatening place, but rather as an international arena where cooperation is possible and reasonable. According to his score, he presumably prefers a case-by-case approach to the conflicts of the world. He is aware of the limitations what one can do but he calls for flexibility to find the solution. These features reflect his attitude towards globalisation and his 5-step analysis before an intervention because it represents the previously mentioned case-by-case approach. It can be summarised in his Chicago speech in 1999:
“So how do we decide when and whether to intervene? I think we need to bear in mind five major considerations. First, are we sure of our case? (...) Second, have we exhausted all diplomatic options? (...) Third, on the basis of a practical assessment of the situation, are there military operations we can sensibly and prudently undertake? Fourth, are we prepared for the long term? (...) And finally, do we have national interests involved? (...) Globalisation is not just economic. It is also a political and security phenomenon. We live in a world where isolationism has ceased to have a reason to exist. By necessity we have to co-operate with each other across nations. Many of our domestic problems are caused on the other side of the world. (...) These problems can only be addressed by international co-operation. (...) We are all internationalists now, whether we like it or not”.

The interpretation of how Blair reacts to constraints, handles new information and his motivation are the components of a leadership style in Hermann’s work (2002 p. 9). However, as Blair is moderate on several traits, his leadership style cannot be decided unambiguously. For this reason, I start with those traits where there is a low probability to act differently in situations. As he is firmly open to information, the options are halved. His character cannot be described by the Expansionistic, Evangelistic, Directive or Consultative leadership style. Although his motivation tends to be problem focused at times, his scores are closer to the relationship building motivation. Therefore, Blair’s leadership style is between the Charismatic and the Accommodative categories.

It is worth mentioning that these results significantly differ from Dyson’s results of a similar analysis about Blair’s leadership style. His method was inspired by Hermann’s work, but he used his own coding schedule and compared Blair’s responses to parliamentary questions from 1997 to 2007 with the scores of other British PM in office from 1945 (Dyson, 2009 pp. 32-33). According to his results, Blair has high scores on belief that he can control events and need power, while low on conceptual complexity (Dyson, 2009 p. 4). Yet, it must be remembered that Hermann’s coding schedule is made by the scores of various leaders worldwide, therefore, it provides a more comprehensive analysis, not just to the leaders within the same country.

As it highly depends on the situation whether he challenges constraints or respect them, his leadership style reflects a mixture of both. The descriptions of these leaderships are not inconsistent or mutually exclusive. Hermann (2002 p. 9) defines Charismatic leader
as where the “focus is on achieving one’s agenda by engaging others in the process and persuading them to act” and Accommodative leader as where the “focus is on reconciling differences and building consensus, empowering others and sharing accountability in the process”. In both cases, gathering in-depth contextual information from the political environment and cooperative action through consensus are necessary for the leader in any political steps (Hermann et al., 2001 pp. 96-99). The only difference between the two styles is the leader’s attitude towards constrains. As Blair can be both, the reason for that might hide in the fact that he firmly relies on the expertise of his group. Therefore, this trait is not always dependent on his personality but the advice he gets. However, it does not make him a weak leader who is directed by his ministers. It is rather a sign of openness and an attempt to see other viewpoint before making a decision. Taking a closer look at these lines, I conclude that their common feature is a strong willingness to lead a well-functioning team following the advice of the group, where responsibilities are shared in order the achieve one’s agenda.
6. Conclusion

All things considered, Blair’s political career illustrate that individuals make difference. With the broad theoretical discussion made above, I dedicate this work to the agency-structure debate in the academia to explain why the leaders of the states are at least as important as the environment in which they operate. With the human agent included, the gap between the rational approach of Realism and the idealism represented by Social Constructivism is narrowed. Hence, I put a great emphasis on the human agent in power, highlighting that individuals are led by their personal convictions and perceptions of the world when they face decision-making situations. I also call attention to the individuals’ ability to change because they are capable of learning as outer and inner forces shape their character. As a consequence, I refuse the idea that personalities are consistent. The individuals are the direct mediator of the national interest, and ‘nation’ is just one of the concepts on their minds. Since the beliefs and visions of individuals are not value-free, the involvement of cognitive mapping can help to measure them, and this way depict a comprehensive picture of the powerful individuals. For this reason, political psychology has a great potential to broaden the discipline of IR, introducing new technological tools for Social Science researchers, such us the automatization of content analysis, the ProfilerPlus.

As Tony Blair’s leadership is the case study of this thesis, it demonstrates a deep engagement in his main policies, decision-making style and in his visions. Each section addresses his convictions guiding him in his acts without discussing the rightness of the interventions. As stated, Blair’s premiership is assessed with a disproportionally large focus on the intervention in Iraq while his previous years in and leading to power are frequently overlooked. Yet, to explain how he developed to be the leader he was in Iraq, the analysis should start with Kosovo – or even earlier – without being written in a light of just one event because various factors contributed to his leadership style during his decade. To a certain degree, he was dependent on the given environment in which he worked, such as the British political system and the main principles in British foreign policy. The increased personalism of the system can originate from the authority of the PM to conduct foreign policy and his primary role among the other ministers but only if there is a charismatic leader – like Blair – who recognises and takes these opportunities.

Throughout the research, I put a special focus on comparing Blair’s and his close colleagues’ words with the most dominant academic debates about New Labour’s foreign
policy. In the qualitative part, the applied autobiographical research discusses the three crucial – and most critical – points in Blair’s premiership. As it concludes, defining the American-British special relationship in the framework of the ‘poodle theory’ is an oversimplification because to a certain degree Blair followed the traditional three majestic circle approach to foreign policy, declared by Churchill. From one side, the special relationship with the US was vital for Britain from strategic aspects, and for cultural and historical reasons the two countries were open to a partnership. From the other side, Blair’s personal beliefs and the Third Way politics he represented intensified the relationship. This close alliance did not mean unconditional support to the US, Blair only acted in accordance with the American interest when, according to him, the two countries interests were overlapping. The values the two countries stood for defending and spreading was something Blair personally believed in: faith in humanity, in progress, and most importantly, those who have the power must act to eliminate the evil.

This standpoint directed him to stand close to America and served as a strong basis to formulate the working morale of his Cabinet, the den. Its informal decision-making style was different from the conventional Whitehall procedures because it was rather friendly, than collegial teamwork. Blair’s appointed advisors were those colleagues who also believed in and represented Third Way while supported the renewal of Labour. At the beginning of his premiership, they simply transferred their meeting style to 10 Downing Street. Meanwhile, it also rooted in Blair’s perception of politics because he regarded this consulting style to be the most effective form to reflect the challenges of our era. By politics, he meant project realisation, and as a moderniser, he needed to make reforms quickly that bring about changes. He firmly relied on the expertise of his team to formulate his viewpoint on events, not just because he needed legitimacy from the ministers to uphold his office, but because he gained confidence from them.

As can be seen, his vision played a crucial role in his attitude towards America and his policy-making procedures in the Cabinet. The values he stood for are the essence of the researches that includes Blair’s premiership because he had a unique approach to politics from every aspect. Politics was subordinate to religion, he saw a strong connection between the society and values. He believed a change in the world could only happen if there is a strong faith in values paired with a willingness to act accordingly. He regarded religious faith to be a vital motivator for the society that guides civil people to do good at the micro level and empowers political leaders to eliminate conflicts at the macro level. As a consequence, his norm-changing attempt to establish the ‘Kosovo norm’ with the
reinterpretation of state’s sovereignty might be better explained as his entire vision in practice than as his hunger for power.

Taking these points in the framework of Blair’s scores in the quantitative analysis, the mixture of the Charismatic and the Accommodative leadership style portrays Blair’s character to put the focus on consensus-building, empowering others to engage in his agenda and to share accountability in the process. These features can be observed in his foreign policy and illustrate how the previously discussed three aspects are interlinked including the progressive mentality of Third Way politics. After Kosovo, Blair gained confidence and believed he could make a change. He learnt how to represent confidently the values he fought for, rooted in his religious beliefs. With the expertise of his Cabinet, he was leading a team he could firmly rely on; therefore, he had a strong support from the background. This is crucial for a PM because he could work effectively only with a well-functioning Cabinet to push him forward. The traditionally special relationship with America was developed to be a ‘closer than ever’ alliance under Blair. The cause of this hides in the mutually progressive mentality with Clinton, and the personally, not just at the state level shared values with Bush. Blair attempted to build a global community, placing America’s superpower in a multilateral framework, where Britain’s role is to be a transatlantic bridge between the US and Europe. This way the US would not have acted alone in international conflicts, but still remained the most powerful in the alliance. Blair vision was that only this value-based cooperation would be able to solve international conflicts and reflect the challenges of the globalised world.

Campbell (2007 p. xii-xiii) refers to Blair in his diaries as “a man of enormous drive and vision, who was determined to use his time in power to make a difference and brought about a lot of change for the better”. Blair remained actively engaged in public affairs after his resignation and still is even today. He was a special envoy to the Middle East (Blair, 2010 pp. 665-691), established the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, and he frequently comments on rejecting Brexit (Blair, 2017). As he (Blair, 2010 p. 665) notes: “I have never felt a greater sense of frustration or indeed a greater urge to leadership. (…) I am fighting for my world view, but in a different manner from that of being in conventional office”. In the final analysis, it can be argued whether he chose the right tools to achieve his foreign policy goals or not but not about his convictions because from the start of his political career he represented values he believed in and acted accordingly. His case demonstrates why it is advantageous to include the human agent in FPA, and most importantly, why leaders matter.
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8. Appendix

Margaret G. Hermann’s (2002 p. 9) Categorisation of Leadership Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsiveness to Constraints</th>
<th>Openness to Information</th>
<th>Problem Focus</th>
<th>Relationship Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenges Constraints</td>
<td>Closed to Information</td>
<td>Expansionistic (Focus is on expanding one’s power and influence)</td>
<td>Evangelistic (Focus is on persuading others to accept one’s message and join one’s cause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges Constraints</td>
<td>Open to Information</td>
<td>Incremental (Focus is on maintaining one’s maneuverability and flexibility while avoiding the obstacles that continually try to limit both)</td>
<td>Charismatic (Focus is on achieving one’s agenda by engaging others in the process and persuading them to act)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respects Constraints</td>
<td>Closed to Information</td>
<td>Directive (Focus is on personally guiding policy along paths consistent with one’s own views while still working within the norms and rules of one’s position)</td>
<td>Consultative (Focus is on monitoring that important others will support, or not actively oppose, what one wants to do in a particular situation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respects Constraints</td>
<td>Open to Information</td>
<td>Reactive (Focus is on assessing what is possible in the current situation given the nature of the problem and considering what important constituencies will allow)</td>
<td>Accommodative (Focus is on reconciling differences and building consensus, empowering others and sharing accountability in the process)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Hungarian Summary


A kutatás célja, hogy Tony Blair, brit munkáspárti miniszterelnök példája által szemléltesse az egyén fontosságát a külpolitikai döntéshozatalban, mivel évtizedes miniszterelnöksége nagymértékű paradigmaváltást idézett elő a brit külpolitikában. Részben újraértelmezte a brit hagyományos megközelítést a globális kihívásokhoz, valamint az értékalapú külpolitika irányvonalának megteremtését követően annak nemzetközi szinten való elfogadatlatására törekedett. A szakdolgozat azokat az értékeket, nézeteket és világfelfogást tárja fel, amelyek Blairt döntéshozatalában vezették. Ehhez azonban szükséges a strukturális tényezők és az egyén hozzáállásából fakadó események összegyoztetése, valamint annak feltárása, hogy milyen mértékben köthető a brit hagyományok továbbvitelének vagy személyes hatásnak a hozott külpolitikai döntés.

Mivel a külpolitikai elemzés a nemzetközi kapcsolatok aldiszciplínája, így nagy mértékben merít annak elméleti kereteiből. Ennek következményeként a realista látásmód dominanciája volt számottevő, mely vallja, hogy az elemzés központja az állam, amely racionalista aktor. A nemzeti érdek a hatalom koncepciójával függ össze, így a


Mivel Tony Blair hivatalba lépésével nem csak a hatalmat vette át, hanem az ország történelmi hagyományait, kulturális kapcsolatait és működési törvényrendszerét is megörökölte, így személyes nézetei előtt ezek is tisztázásra szorulnak. Ezek ismeretében


Arra a kérdésre, hogyan vált nemzetközi szinten meghatározó politikai vezetővé úgy, hogy kezdetben a leghalványabb jelét sem mutatta a külpolitikában való érdekeltségének, Blair válasza, hogy számára a belpolitika és külpolitika nem különült el (Blair, 2010 p. 223). Véleménye szerint a külföldi konfliktusok mindig is hatással voltak a belügyekre, a mai még összefonódóbb világban pedig jobban összeér a két irány, amit a média globális térnyerése és információszolgáltatása is elősegít. Így egy miniszterelnök nem teheti meg, hogy ne kapcsolódjon be külpolitikai eseményekbe.
Blair vallásossága az a tényező, amely nélkül egy politikáját érintő elemzés sem lehet teljes, hiszen egész munkásságában ezek vezették. Véleménye szerint mindig nagyobb szenvedély fűzte a valláshoz, mint a politikához (Blair, 2010 pp. 662-663). Így a politika számára alárendelt szerepben állt a hitével. Látásmódjában mégis szoros összefüggést vélt köztük, hiszen számára egyrészt a vallás értékeket képvisel, a politika pedig a társadalom megváltoztatásáról szól, de mégis vannak a politikában értékek és a vallás gyakran irányul a társadalom megváltoztatására (Blair, 2010 p. 79). Ehhez a nézethet társult az ő tenni akaró mentalitása, ami a modernizáló és progresszív gondolkodásmódját tükrözi. Így döntéshozatali helyzetben gyakran értékek mentén foglalt állást. Egy erős és hatékony társadalom legfőbb mozgatórugójának is a hitet lát, hiszen véleménye szerint ebben rejlik a virágzó, globális társadalom békés együttélése (Blair, 2009b p. 95).


A második elemzési részben kvantitatív szövegetelemzési módszer alkalmazásával Blair személyiségű jegyeire és vezetési stilisára tevődik a hangsúly. Young and Schafer által 1998-ban kifejlesztett ProfilerPlus program segítséget nyújt a szövegetelemzés gyors

Blair eredményei Hermann táblázata alapján 122 politikai vezető értékeivel kerültek összevetésre. Ennek alapján Blair átlagos eredményt ért el abban a kategóriában, ami az eseményeket befolyásoló hitét vizsgálja. Hatalomra való törekvésében pedig az átlagosnál jelentősen alacsonyabb eredményt ért el. A kettő eredmény kapcsolata ad képet Blair korlátokhoz való viszonyáról. Mivel az első értéken átlagos eredményt ért el, így arra következtethetünk, hogy az adott helyzettől függ reakciója, és mindkét eshetőség bekövetkezhet. Felfogásának komplexitását vizsgáló értékei szignifikánsan magasabbak Hermann átlagértékénél, mutatva, hogy több dimenzióban képes felmérni egy adott helyzetet, nem lát mindent fekete-fehérben. Magabiztosgágának vizsgálata során közel extrém alacsonyságú értéket ért el. Ez arra utal, hogy nem magát tekinti a legfontosabbnak adott helyzetekben. A két értékből arra utalhatunk, hogy Blair kifejezetten nyitott az új információra és meghallgatja tanácsadóit döntéshozatal során. Feladatfőkuszában átlagos eredményt produkált, tehát egy feladat elérése során egyformán fontos számára a probléma megoldása és a csapatszellem fenntartása. Másokba vetett bizalmatlanlásának mértéke közel kiugróan alacsonynak számít, ez az

Mindent összegezve, Blair miniszterelnöksége egyedülálló például szolgál az egyén fontosságának rávilágítására a külpolitikai döntéshozatalban. Az elemzések ből látható, hogy sem a környezet kizárólagos elemzése, sem az egyén kognitív jellemzőinek feltárása elegendő egy átfogó kép megteremtéséhez, hiszen a politikai vezető nem egy üres térben tevékenykedik, és az országok kapcsolatai sem értelmezhetők a tényleges cselekvő analízisbe integrálása nélkül. Blair miniszterelnökségének korlátait kijelölte a brit politikai rendszer és az elődeitől örökölt kormányzási hagyományok. Személyiségéből fakadóan ezekre az eszközökre viszont nem hátráltató tényezőként, hanem céljainak eléréséhez szükséges eszközként tekintett. Blair személyes nézetéből fakadóan egy nemzetközi közösség megteremtésére törekedett, amelyben az amerikai hatalmat egy multilaterális keretbe emeli, így megteremtve annak elsődlegességét, de nem kizárólagosságát. Elképzelése szerint ennek legitimációját az európai partnerség biztosítja, megteremtve ezzel Nagy-Britannia közvetítő híd szerepét a rendszerben. Meggyőződése alapján ez az értékalapú együttműködés az egyetlen olyan megoldás, amely a nemzetközi kihívásokra hatékonyan képes reagálni.