

Beyond Framing: Source Cues and Persuasion in Global Politics

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Over the last decade, constructivist work in International Relations (IR) has begun to focus on persuasion as a mechanism of state socialization and norm diffusion. Early work in this literature tended to understand persuasion in a Habermasian sense, as a phenomenon driven by a “logic of truth seeking” or “argumentative rationality” (Risse 2000). More recent work, however, has increasingly adopted a model of persuasion akin to that in social psychology (Eagly and Chaiken 1993), where actors attempt to persuade others – that is, to change their targets’ attitudes – through the use of persuasive messages. Attitude change in this case does not depend on a shared commitment to discover the “truth”, but rather on individual-level psychological mechanisms like the framing effect (Chong and Druckman 2007a). Indeed, as I argue below, framing has taken on a central role in constructivist IR through the concepts of “frame resonance” (Sundstrom 2005, 422) and “strategic framing” (Payne 2001), both of which also feature prominently in the social movements literature (Benford and Snow 2000; Smith 2002).

In this paper I argue that work on persuasion in IR has until now neglected a second avenue to persuasion suggested by the social and political psychology literature – the source cue effect. The term refers to how the identity of a messenger (the message “source”) influences the persuasiveness of her message, typically in reference to the source’s credibility. While the importance of source identity to persuasion is remarked upon in some of the IR literature (Cass 2005, for example) to the author’s knowledge it has not been systematically theorized, despite the fact that Social Identity Theory features so prominently in the discipline (Wendt 1999). This paper makes the case for integrating source cue effects into IR theory, arguing that the concept provides a valuable new tool to study persuasion in global politics. Moreover, by developing the concept of “identity resonance”, which can be thought of as a “mid-range” theory of socialization through persuasion (Johnston 2005), I also aim to contribute to the more detailed specification of theories of state socialization (Alderson 2001; Johnston 2001). I proceed in the following manner.

In Part 1 I trace the use of framing and related concepts in the constructivist literature in IR and the literature on transnational advocacy, and introduce the concept of source cue effects as an alternative route to persuasion. In Part 2 I discuss how source cue effects can have politically meaningful effects by introducing the concept of identity resonance, and generate some expectations about when identity resonance is most likely to occur. I use public opinion data drawn from a national survey experiment to illustrate my argument empirically. In Part 3, I argue that source cues matter in *international* politics by using opinion data drawn from a second survey to show that international cues can have an effect on policy attitudes even in unlikely circumstances. Finally, in Part 4 I consider two likely objections to this paper’s argument and provide some responses. I conclude by pointing to some potential avenues of research to further develop the use of source cues in understanding global politics.

Part 1: Persuasion in International Relations

Constructivist work in IR on state socialization has long relied on the concept of “resonance” – the way in which a norm’s prescriptions and an actor’s underlying values “match” – to help explain when actors are likely to be persuaded to support or adopt a norm (see, for example, Cortell and Davis 1996; 2000; Legro 1997; Sundstrom 2005; Busby 2007). While it was originally a somewhat static concept, in recent years scholars

have also begun to focus on the dynamic mechanisms of resonance. Chief among them is “strategic framing”, an active process whereby entrepreneurs seek to maximize the resonance of the norms they advocate by linking them rhetorically and symbolically to widely-held values or beliefs (Payne 2001; for the same concept under other names, see Price 1998; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Krebs and Jackson 2007; Price 2003, 596). The success of strategic framing can therefore be explained in reference to “frame resonance” (Sundstrom 2005, 422; Benford and Snow 2000, 619-22) – that is, when a rhetorical frame deployed by a political actor taps into a prominent set of underlying values or beliefs.

The work on frame resonance can be better understood by breaking the phenomenon down into its three components: the micro-level causal mechanism, meso-level strategy, and macro-level process. As mentioned above, the concept of “frame resonance” refers to the macro-level process through which the arguments in support of a norm “resonate” with the underlying values of a targeted population in a politically advantageous manner, thereby increasing the probability that the norm’s prescriptions will be adopted. At the meso-level, norm advocates attempt to maximize macro-level frame resonance by choosing the arguments they deem most likely to tap into widely-shared values (this is strategic framing). Both of these aggregate-level processes, however, depend on an individual-level psychological mechanism – the framing effect (see Chong and Druckman 2007a for a comprehensive review), which has received increasing attention in political psychology and political communication over the past two decades. Because the politically interesting aggregate phenomenon (frame resonance) fundamentally depends on the operation of the micro-level framing effect on a sufficient number of individuals in the population, understanding framing effects at the micro-level is the key to a better understanding of when and how strategic framing is likely to succeed in inducing frame resonance.

Work on message-based persuasion, however, points to another causal mechanism – the *source cue effect* – that also has the potential to influence both advocate strategy and socialization outcomes. A source cue effect occurs when the identity of the source of a persuasive communication has an independent effect on the persuasiveness of her message that goes above and beyond the content of the argument. While the idea that the identity of an actor can influence her persuasiveness is intuitive, work in constructivist IR has largely ignored this question. Some work does provide empirical examples of what are in effect source cue effects – Cass 2005, for example, describes how the lack of U.S. credibility on emissions trading influenced the position of other actors on the issue. Moreover, in his agenda-setting article, Johnston (2001) points to an audience’s “affective relationship to the persuader” (497) as one of the three avenues to persuasion, though to the author’s knowledge other IR scholars have not since followed-up on this insight. Social Identity Theory (SIT), for its part (see Wendt 1999 and Flockhart 2005 for applications to IR), clearly suggests that whether a norm is accepted by an actor partly depends on whether the norm is associated with a group that the actor in question positively identifies with. SIT, however, focuses primarily on “social influence,” a more passive mechanism of attitude change than persuasion, though there is no reason to suspect that this insight would not also hold for message-based persuasion in

international relations.¹ In short, while the influence of a persuader's identity and attributes on persuasion does arise in the IR literature, the phenomenon has not been systematically theorized in the same way that frame resonance and strategic framing have been. This paper proposes to begin that process.

Source Cues in Political Psychology

The literature on source cues in political psychology provides us with a platform from which to begin integrating the concept into IR. Using a variety of methods, most prominent among which is the survey experiment (Gaines et al. 2007), scholars have documented source cue effects in a wide variety of settings. The kinds of sources studied include presidential cues (Sigelman and Sigelman 1981; Mondak 1993; Bailey et al. 2003; Mondak et al. 2004), partisan elites (Bullock 2008), countries (Ashmore et al. 1979), religious elites (Robinson and Goren 1997) and talk show hosts (Lupia 2000).

Explanations for source cue effects in political psychology usually rely on the proposition that individuals use environmental cues as a way to make decisions about political issues while expending the least amount of cognitive effort – that is, as “heuristics” or judgmental shortcuts (Sniderman et al. 1991).² Different scholars focus on different attributes of the sources in question as the key variables underlying the source cue effects. Key attributes include “feeling” (positive or negative) towards the source (Mondak 1993) and the perceived “credibility” of the source (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Lupia 2000; Druckman 2001; Chong and Druckman 2007b). The latter is hypothesized to be a function of the perceived “knowledgeability” or expertise of the source and the extent to which the source is perceived to share the target's interests. A perception of common interests, in turn, is typically understood as either resulting from trust in the source (which we would expect to correlate with common social identification or positive feeling – Lupia 2000) and “costly” cues, in which the position a source advocates goes against its own interests (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; see also Howell and Kriner 2007).

Two findings of this literature are particularly relevant to the application of source cues to the study of persuasion in IR. First, the literature has found that source cue effects can be *negative* as well as positive. In other words, not only may targets of persuasive communications be more likely to accept a message because they have positive view of the source of the message; they may also be more likely to take a position *opposite* to that advocated in the message because they have find the source to have little credibility. As I argue below, negative effects can influence the way in which individual-level source cue effects aggregate to have politically important effects. Second, to the extent that source cues function heuristics, their effect should increase with moderating variables that increase the difficulty of engaging in systematic (i.e., reasoned) processing of the persuasive message. While a number of these moderators exist, the most relevant for our purposes is the level of information. The intuition is that the greater the level of policy-specific information available to an individual, the less she

¹ Note that when advocates rely on countries' desire to “belong to a normative community of nations” (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 29), they are in effect incorporating “social influence” into persuasive messages.

² Framing, on the other hand, operates by manipulating the salience of considerations which individuals take into account when attempting to come to a reasoned position on an issue (Nelson et al. 1997; Chong and Druckman 2007a).

will have to or be inclined to rely on heuristics like source cues when evaluating the policy. We should therefore expect greater source cue effects when individuals possess lower levels of policy-specific information (Bullock 2008).

Part 2: Identity Resonance – Source Cues at the Macro-Level

Having established source cues as a distinct individual-level mechanism of persuasion, I now present one approach to integrating the concept into the IR literature on persuasion. I argue that as a micro-level mechanism, source cues imply a type of macro-level effect analogous to frame resonance. I begin this section by defining the concept, continue with a discussion when we might expect this phenomenon to occur, and conclude with two empirical illustrations.

Identity Resonance – a definition

The earlier discussion described how “frame resonance” can be understood as the macro-political effect of the operation of the micro-level framing effect. Similarly, source cues imply a different form of macro-level resonance, where the probability that a policy or norm will be accepted by a given jurisdiction is a function of how its population views the actor(s) advocating the norm. I call this phenomenon *identity resonance*. As an analog to frame resonance, identity resonance refers to a second major contextual variable (the distribution of identities and perceptions of the source among the target population) that moderates the effectiveness of an attempt to persuade a targeted jurisdiction to adopt an international norm or policy.³

An obvious way of operationalizing identity resonance is as the change in the aggregate level of public support for a policy caused by the identity of the actor(s) advocating that policy. In other words, is a campaign by actor X likely to increase overall public support for a policy P more than an identical campaign led by actor Y? While this operationalization will not necessarily be appropriate for all situations, it has the benefit of being simple and easy to measure, and indeed, a substantial body of research points to the influence of aggregate policy opinion on public policies (Wlezien and Soroka 2007), so it is also a politically meaningful definition. The crucial task, then, is identifying the conditions under which identity resonance is most likely to occur.

When Does Identity Resonance Matter?

As noted above, two findings in the source cues literature are particularly relevant to this task: 1) the possibility of negative source cue effects, and 2) the moderating effect of policy information.

The first finding is important because populations do not typically experience a homogenous response to source cues. As mentioned earlier, source cues operate in reference to the source’s credibility, which is in part a function of trust in the source. In practice, “trust” is usually operationalized by identifying groups in the population that share a political identity with the source. For example, in the case of partisan identity, Democrats in the United States are assumed to, on average, trust Democratic sources more than they trust Republican sources (Howell and Kriner 2007). As this example suggests, we would typically not expect any large population to share exactly the same

³ With respect to frame resonance, the relevant variable is the distribution of a given value or values among the target population.

political identity. As such, we would expect different responses to the source in different subgroups of the population, and can therefore conceptualize identity resonance (the change in aggregate attitudes) as the weighted average of the aggregate effects in each of the relevant subgroups. Moreover, because we would expect a *negative* effect among the subgroups that identify themselves *in opposition* to the source's identity group, there may be occasions in which effects in different subgroups may cancel out at the aggregate level (Robinson and Goren 1997), or in which a negative effect in one group may overwhelm the positive effect in other groups, resulting in negative identity resonance.

The magnitude of identity resonance to a particular source, then, depends on the *ratio* in the target population of those who positively identify and those who negatively identify with the source's political identity – I call this quantity the *source identification ratio*. As Figure 2 shows, if the ratio of positive to negative is greater than one, we would expect positive identity resonance, if the ratio is less than one, we would expect negative resonance, and if the ratio is one, we would expect the two effects to cancel each other out as suggested above. Now, this expectation comes with at least two caveats. First, the source identification ratio points influences the probability of a certain identity resonance outcome. In no way do I claim that this is the only variable influencing the identity resonance of a source. Second, it is worth keeping in mind that co-identification with the source serves as a *proxy* for more proximate variables influencing the source cue effect, such as trust in the source and perceived knowledgeability. This suggests that 1) when direct measurements of these variables are available, they should be better at predicting overall identity resonance (though perhaps less politically meaningful), and 2) that identifying the relative source and population “identities” for this type of analysis is a key, though complex, task that should involve both theoretical expectations and intimate knowledge of the polity in question.

The second key finding of the source cue literature that I identify above is the moderating effect of the level of policy-specific information. This finding is politically relevant to identity resonance in two ways. First, if there is an asymmetric distribution of policy-specific information across the different identity subgroups, it might cause a source cue effect to be stronger in one of the groups, thereby changing the calculus described in the previous paragraphs. While this is an intriguing possibility, there are no clear theoretical expectations for one *identity* subgroup to have more information than another, so I focus on the next point in this paper. The second way in which information can influence identity resonance is with respect to issue-type. That is, there is good reason to expect that policy information will be less available for some types of issues than for others. For example, newer issues – those that have just emerged on the policy agenda – should be characterized by lower levels of familiarity among the public, and therefore lead to a greater susceptibility to source cue effects and identity resonance among the public. Similarly, highly technical or complex issues, where causality is not easily grasped or, indeed, disputed, are more difficult for people to understand and should therefore also be characterized by a greater susceptibility to source cue effects.

To sum up this section's argument: identity resonance (positive or negative) should be most likely when 1) the source identification ratio is not close to one, and 2) the issue in question is relatively new or highly technical. In the next section I use data from a survey experiment on attitudes towards the International Criminal Court to illustrate these two expectations. In this survey, the source identification ratio is nearly

one, and, consistent with expectations, identity resonance is zero because positive and negative effects in different identity subgroups cancel each other out. Unfortunately, most existing data does not lend itself to cross-issue comparison, due to different question formats and source attribution designs, so I am not able to test my second expectation directly. However, I illustrate the influence of policy information on source cues by using within-sample variation of perceived information on the ICC.

Identity Resonance in the United States: Partisan Cues and the ICC

All of the surveys I use in this paper were sponsored by the Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS) project. Original data and detailed documentation is available from the project's website (www.experimentcentral.org). In the first survey, conducted on behalf of Beth Simmons and Michael Hiscox⁴, greater support for the ICC is attributed either to "leaders of the Republican Party" or to no one before the respondents are asked whether they support or oppose the ICC.⁵

In conducting an analysis of this data, I use party identification as the natural identity cleavage with respect to this source cue. As discussed in an earlier example we would expect that Republicans would tend to trust Republican party leaders and Democrats would tend to mistrust them. Independents likely mistrust both parties (which is why they are independents), but this feeling is likely to be much weaker than that among partisans. We would therefore expect a positive source cue effect among Republicans for the GOP source cue in this experiment, a negative effect among Democrats, and perhaps a mild negative effect among independents. The overall distribution of party identifiers in the control group and the GOP source group is: 586 Democrats, 234 Independents, and 536 Republicans. Therefore the source identification ratio (positive ID : negative ID) is $536/586 = 0.915$. Seeing as this is close to 1, we would expect modest identity resonance, if any, for the source cue.

Table 1 shows aggregate levels of support for the ICC by party identification and by source attribution condition.⁶ On the rightmost column, we find total levels of support for the control group and for the group with the GOP source attribution. Identity resonance is effectively zero, with 72.71% and 73.07% support in each group, respectively. This does not mean, however, that the source cue did not have an effect. When we break down the sample into partisan groupings, we find that the pattern of subgroup effects fits our expectations. The Republican source cue had a positive effect among Republicans (+ 12 percentage points), a negative effect among Democrats (- 8 percentage points), and appeared to have a mild (albeit not statistically significant)

⁴ Details, data, and documentation for this survey can be found at: <http://www.experimentcentral.org/data/data.php?pid=325>. The survey was fielded in late 2005 and early 2006, with a final sample of 1834 respondents. The survey includes partisan source attribution, but also varies a number of framing conditions. However, these are assigned independently of the sources, so can be reasonably ignored.

⁵ GOP source attribution is: "Here in the United States, Republican Party leaders have expressed more support for the creation of such a court than have Democratic Party leaders." Dependent variable is: "Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the International Criminal Court?", with two follow-ups probing for attitude strength. This results in a 4-point support variable.

⁶ The three-point measure of party identification was created from a seven-point scale by assigning "strong," "moderate," and "leaning" partisans to each partisan group, leaving only true independents as independents.

negative effect among Independents. Both the Republican and Democratic effects were statistically significant at the 0.05 level, using a Chi-squared significance test. In short, the negative effect among Democrats effectively counterbalanced the positive effect among Republicans, leading to negligible identity resonance.⁷

While the aggregate dynamics of this source attribution are consistent with our theoretical expectations, it is worth investigating whether the micro-level dynamics are also consistent. After all, the point of developing the concept of identity resonance is to theorize one way in which micro-level persuasion effects aggregate to political interesting macro-outcomes. In order to test whether the source cue has micro-level effects consistent with the our expectations and with the macro-outcomes, I regress the four point variable indicating support for the ICC on a dummy variable indicating the GOP source attribution, on party identification, and on an interaction between the two variables to account for the expected divergent effects of the source cue. I also include measures of political ideology and of generic support for the United Nations as control variables.⁸ Table 2 presents the results. First, note that the source cue dummy and the interaction with party identification are both individually statistically significant at the .01 level and jointly significant ($F=6.90$, $p=.001$). Moreover, note that the signs of these two terms are in the expected directions, suggesting a negative joint effect for democrats and a positive effect for Republicans. Figure 1 shows predicted source cue effects (the joint effect of the two terms) for different values of the party identification variable. The micro-level results mirror the aggregate dynamics described above. Attribution to the GOP has a negative effect on Democratic respondents' support for the ICC and a positive effect of comparable magnitude among Republican respondents. The predicted effect on independents is effectively zero. Note that both of these effects are modest, but non-trivial - the positive effect among Republicans accounts for about 9% of the range of the dependent variable, while the negative effect among Democrats accounts for about 8% of the range.⁹

In sum, attributing support for the ICC to Republican party leaders increases support for the ICC among Republicans, and decreases support among Democrats at the individual level. Given an approximately equal number of Democrats and Republicans in the sample, the countervailing effects cancel each-other out, resulting in no overall identity resonance. This is consistent with the theoretical expectations laid out above, and illustrates the importance of taking into account both the possibility of negative source cue effects and the source identification ratio in a targeted population.

I now return to the effects of levels of information. As stated earlier, adequate comparable data does not exist to test the hypotheses the types of issues that are most likely to be susceptible to source cue effect. That said, this same survey allows me to illustrate the moderating role of within-sample variation in information. One of the questions in the survey asks respondents: "Overall, how informed do you feel regarding

⁷ Even ignoring independents, we would expect only a 3 percentage point increase in overall support for the policy ($12 * .91 - 8$).

⁸ The 4-point dependent variable was rescaled to have a range of 0 to 1. Political ideology is coded from 1 to 7, with 1 as extreme liberal and 7 as extreme conservative; party identification is also coded from 1 (strong democrat) to 7 (strong republican); UN support is coded 1 to 4, with higher variables indicating greater support for the UN.

⁹ Note that because the dependent variable is rescaled, the predicted effects can be easily transformed into a percent of the range of the dependent variable by multiplying them by 100.

the International Criminal Court?”. The response options are “very informed”, “somewhat informed”, “not too informed”, and “not at all informed”. While this measure of perceived “informed-ness” is not an ideal measure of the actual level of policy-specific information available to respondents, it serves as a reasonable proxy for illustrative purposes. In fact, one might argue that it is the *perceived* level of information that ultimately moderates the source cue effect, since perceptions of being well informed should lead to more certain attitudes and therefore to less recourse to heuristic processing.

In order to test for the effects of information, I split the sample into “high information” respondents, which include those who answered “very informed” and “somewhat informed,” and “low information” respondents, which include the rest. It is worth noting that only 6% of respondents considered themselves “very informed”. Tables 3 and 4 present the same cross-tabulation used in Table 1, but with separate results for high information and low information respondents. Again, the results generally conform to expectations. In the low-information sample (Table 4), the GOP source attribution decreases support among Democrats by about 12 percentage points and increases support among Republicans by about 15 percentage points. Both of these effects are statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Support among independents decreases slightly, but the difference is not statistically significant. In short, among low-information respondents, the effect in the overall sample is replicated, but with larger effects where expected (among partisans), and a smaller change among independents. In other words, the low-information sub-sample fits our expectations better than the full sample. In the high-information sample (Table 3), however, we find that the GOP source cue has no effect among Democrats and a reduced effect among Republicans (+ 10 percentage points). Among independents, aggregate support drops by about 10 percentage points, but that sub-sample only has 86 respondents, so it would be unwise to read much into it. Moreover, none of the aggregate effects in the high information sample are statistically significant, and certainly do not approach the 0.01 p-values observed in the low information group. In short, the data strongly supports the idea that source cues are likely to have a stronger effect when individuals lack information about the policy in question.

Discussion

The data on attitudes towards the ICC that were presented above illustrate both the moderating effect on policy-specific information and the importance of taking into account the source identification ratio when considering the likelihood of identity resonance. Now, at first glance, the importance of considering the ratio might seem obvious and somewhat trivial. One might correctly argue that it is natural to expect that positive identity resonance should become more likely as more of the target population identifies with the source. However, this expectation would only apply to situations in which only positive identifiers and individuals indifferent to the source existed in the population. While these situations are possible, in many if not most contexts, both positive and negative identifiers will exist. It is when the possibility of negative source cue effects is taken into account that the source identification ratio becomes most useful. A ratio of one, as illustrated above, is likely to result in no resonance - in other words, in a failed attempt at persuasion, even if there is a substantial contingent of positive identifiers in the population. Moreover, a ratio of less than one is likely to result in negative identity resonance – that is, the attempt at persuasion may backfire. The difficult task, of course, is correctly identifying the relevant identity groups in the

population for any given source, especially for international sources that may be less familiar to target publics. Theorizing this process, however, is beyond the scope of this paper, and is, regardless, likely to remain a process that is highly dependent on the specific political context of the jurisdiction in question, and therefore dominated by an interpretive method.

Part 3: International Source Cues in Global Politics

Now, at this point readers may be convinced that source cues are an interesting phenomenon, but may remain skeptical about how applicable they really are to international relations and to global politics. It is true that the overwhelming majority of the literature on source cues cited above is U.S.-based and typically involves both domestic policies and domestic source cues. Moreover, the empirical illustration I have provided, while dealing with a prominent issue in global politics, again relies on a domestic source cue. This section uses a second survey to demonstrate that source cues are indeed relevant to the study of global politics. I do this by examining two “hard” cases for the impact of attributions to *international* sources, and show that even in this context, source cues can have substantive effects on opinion.

I pick my “hard” cases according to two criteria. First, I consider sources that are “international” in character. One might reasonably expect that international cues (international organizations or other countries, for example) might not be as meaningful to individuals in a given state as domestic political actors might be, and as such should be less likely to have an influence on policy attitudes. Second, I pick two policy areas – the use of force and immigration policy – in which the probability of international sources having an effect on attitudes should be lower than in other areas. On questions of war and peace – that is, “high politics” –, we might expect that the U.S. public to “rally around the flag” (Baum and Groeling 2007) and focus on the pursuit of U.S. national interest, regardless of its self-professed multilateralist tendencies. Immigration policy, on the other hand, while still possessing an international component, is a primarily domestic policy that has significant domestic political implications. As such, we would expect international source cues to carry less credibility on this issue than domestic cues. In short, on these three issues, we would expect international cues to either not have an effect, or have a substantially weaker effect than prominent domestic cues like partisan support. If these expectations do not hold up, it would suggest that international source cues

In order to test the effect of international source cues empirically, I use a second survey of U.S. public opinion. Conducted on behalf of Michael Howell and Douglas Kriner by the Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS)¹⁰, it examines support for two hypothetical U.S. military interventions – one in Eritrea on the grounds that it is harboring terrorists, the other in Liberia as a response to human rights abuses by its government – and support for instituting a guest-worker program in the United States.¹¹ Before they are asked for their opinions on the policies, respondents are

¹⁰ Data and documentation can be found at <http://www.experimentcentral.org/data/data.php?pid=437>. The survey was fielded in early 2006, with a final N of 1617.

¹¹ Descriptions are: [Eritrea] “According to President Bush, Eritrea (a small country in the east of Africa) is harboring terrorists. President Bush is prepared to use military force against this country.”, [Liberia] “According to President Bush, the government of Liberia (a small country on the west coast of Africa) is

assigned to one of nine source attribution conditions. In all cases, President Bush is cited as supporting the proposed policies. Respondents are then informed that the source cue either agrees or disagrees with President Bush's position. The source cues used include both domestic cues – “Many Republican members of Congress” and “Many Democratic members of Congress” – and international cues – “Many members of the United Nations” and a reference to international organizations.¹² Finally, the control group is told only that the policies are supported by President Bush.

To facilitate a comparison of source cue effects, I rescaled the seven-point policy agreement variables to a 0 to 1 range. As such, the difference in means between a source condition group and the control group represents the proportion of the range of the dependent variable by which the source cue has changed mean opinion. Table 5 presents differences between the means of the dependent variable for each source attribution condition and its relevant control group.¹³ A number of source cue effects emerge from a comparison of means analysis with a two-tailed t-test to determine statistical significance, despite the relatively small sample sizes of the subgroups (average size of 53 for the Republican and Democratic subgroups). The effects are generally modest but are still substantively significant, ranging between 5% and 20% of the range of the dependent variable. Moreover, all statistically significant results are consistent with the valence of the source cues (that is, oppositional source cues exert a negative effect and vice-versa).

Most interesting for our purposes, the international cues – UN members and international aid organizations – have statistically significant source cue effects that are comparable in frequency and magnitude to those for the domestic partisan cues.¹⁴ Unsurprisingly, international cues appear to have more frequent effects on Democrats, but both the UN members and international organization cues have effects on Republicans as well, and the magnitude of these effects is near the upper range of the effects reported in Table 6. Note, moreover, that the international cues also have an effect on immigration policy attitudes (both among Republicans and among Democrats), even though their relevance to what is effectively a domestic policy is not as obvious as for the use of force abroad.¹⁵ Admittedly, the two military interventions are hypothetical, and as such respondents are likely to have little information on which to base their judgments, which increases the likelihood of observing source cue effects. This should,

violating the human rights of its citizens. President Bush is prepared to send the U.S. military to this country.”, [Immigration] “According to President Bush, current government policies to deal with illegal immigration into the United States are flawed. President Bush supports a guest worker program to allow Mexican citizens to enter and legally work in the United States.” Respondents are then asked whether they agree or disagree that: “The U.S. military should become involved in Eritrea.”, “The U.S. military should become involved in Liberia.”, and “The U.S. government should establish a guest worker program.”

¹² For the military interventions, the cue is: “Many organizations such as the Red Cross”. For the guest-worker program, it is: “Many international aid organizations”.

¹³ Many of these results are reported in Howell & Kriner 2007. They do not report results for the Immigration variable or for the international aid organizations condition in that paper, however. Moreover, I code the partisanship variable in differently, coding only strong and moderate partisans to the partisan groupings – this stacks the deck against the international cues having a comparable effect to the partisan cues. Results for independents are not reported in Table 5.

¹⁴ The average magnitude of statistically significant effects is 0.140 for domestic cues and 0.117 for international cues.

¹⁵ Greico et al. (2007) argue that international cues have an effect on attitudes towards the use of force because the public uses them as “second opinions” when it has low confidence in the sitting president.

however, hold equally for both the domestic and the international sources, and therefore does not weaken the implications of these findings for whether international cues are more or less influential than domestic cues.

To sum up, the results of this survey indicate that international source cues can have effects on U.S. public attitudes comparable to that exerted by domestic partisan cues. This finding holds both for policies directly relevant to international relations, such as the use of force abroad, and for more domestically-oriented policies like whether to establish a guest-worker program. Moreover, while international cues appear to have greater influence on Democrats, they do influence Republicans as well. In short, there is every reason to think that source cues, and therefore identity resonance, are as relevant to international relations and global politics as they are to domestic politics. My argument in this paper, then, is that we should begin to incorporate them into our theories on state socialization. The obvious entry point into socialization theory is the mechanism of persuasion, which has received increasing attention in recent years. My discussion of identity resonance aims to begin this process by interpreting the political significance of source cues in a manner analogous to the way in which the concept of framing has been used in the constructivist IR literature.

Part 4: Objections

In this final section, I consider two likely objections to the argument I have made above: 1) that public opinion does not influence policy and therefore does not matter, and 2) that source cue effects are not independent of framing effects. Both of these points have some merit (particularly the latter), but, for the reasons I outline below, neither fundamentally threatens the argument.

Does Public Opinion Matter?

Some readers may object to this paper by arguing that while source cues may indeed influence public opinion on issues relevant to IR and global politics, they are nevertheless not particularly important, because opinion has little effect on policy. While it is true that public opinion does not fully determine governmental policy, however, there is significant evidence that public opinion can influence policy under certain conditions. Wlezien and Soroka (2007) review this vast literature, distinguishing between studies that merely show that public opinion is consistent with changes in policy (consistency) and those that provide better evidence for a causal connection between opinion and policy (covariation and congruence). They also point to cross-national variation (electoral system, separation of powers) and cross-issue variation (issue salience) that can influence the degree to which policy is responsive to public opinion. This is consistent with work by constructivist scholars, such as Risse-Kappen (2001), who argues that domestic political structures channel the way in which mass public opinion is represented by elites. Now, while the bulk of the evidence in the representation literature relates to domestic policy, this does not necessarily mean that it is irrelevant to the study of global politics. Indeed, many of the issues currently of interest to IR scholars and students of transnational advocacy involve changes in what is effectively domestic policy (abolition of the death penalty or domestic greenhouse gas emission abatement, for example). Moreover, some of the literature does point to the role of public opinion in specifically *foreign* policies and directly-related domestic policies

like defense spending (Soroka 2003). In short, while public opinion is only one of many variables that influence policy, it matters to policy outcomes, and as such, studying how publics can be persuaded by international actors and in relation to global politics issues is an important element of gaining a better understanding of state socialization. As Alderson (2001) puts it: “Attitude change on the part of judges, business leaders, politicians, students and *members of the public* is part of what we mean when we say that a state ‘internalizes’ norms arising elsewhere in the international system” [italics added by the author] (418).

This quote also suggests a complementary response to the objection that studying public opinion is not relevant to global politics. This response begins by pointing out that the effect of source cues need not be limited to mass public attitudes. Much work in IR suggests that elites are persuadable (see Busby 2007 on Bono and Jesse Helms, for example). Indeed, since elites are also people, there is no reason *a priori* to believe that source cues will not influence elites in the same ways they influence members of the public. Of course, elites are probably more likely to have high levels of political sophistication and political information, and may therefore be less likely to engage in heuristic processing, but there is evidence that elites may not always be as informed as we would imagine. In a 2002 survey by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, for example, a sample of U.S. foreign policy elites was asked to estimate the proportion of the federal budget that was devoted to foreign aid. The mean response was 5%, which, while more accurate than the general public’s mean response of 31%, but was still a large overestimation of the true value of around 1%. In short, while elites may be more resistant to persuasion, it may be that we can apply insights gleaned from the study of public attitudes to understanding elite persuasion.

Are Source Cue Effects and Framing Effects Independent?

A second objection to this paper’s argument might be that source identity cannot be disentangled from the frames that a source will use in arguing for a specific policy. The Pope, for example, necessarily uses religious language and imagery in making arguments about policy. In what sense, then, is considering the effect of the source’s identity on persuasiveness meaningfully different than considering the effect of the frames it uses? I have two responses to this point.

First, it is worth making a distinction between the independence of frames and sources in theory and in practice. In theory, while actors are unlikely to simply state their support for a policy without providing reasons (frames), existing evidence suggests that sources do have an independent effect on attitudes above and beyond the effect of the frames. Chong and Druckman (2007b), for example, find that a credible source “strengthens” a frame, leading to a stronger framing effect, while the same frame used by a less credible source will be “weaker” and less effective. The real question is whether actors in the real world are likely to use the same frames (as we do in experiments that gauge the effect of source cues). Would not political actors play to their strengths and use frames with respect to which they are more credible – in the Pope’s case, religious themes? This question leads to my second response.

I begin by noting that the Pope is an example drawn from an extreme end of the spectrum. Most political actors will be less constrained by their identity in terms of what frames they can use, and indeed, effective use of religious framing is not limited to

religious figures (Busby 2007). The extent to which source identity constrains different actors' use of frames, however, is an interesting question. It has been studied to some extent in the context of "issue ownership" in the political behavior literature (Petrocik 1996 or Brug 2004, for example). Might the same phenomenon apply in international relations? Is the United Nations, for example, more credible on some issues than on others? How about the European Union? And how does this constrain the sorts of arguments these actors can make on the world stage? These are all interesting questions and point to a complementary route to integrating source identity into the study of persuasion in global politics.

Conclusion

This paper's main contribution is theoretical. It begins by pointing to a phenomenon that has yet to be studied in the constructivist literature on persuasion – the role of a messenger's identity in the success of her persuasive communications – and proposes that this gap can be corrected by importing the concept of source cues from political psychology. It then introduces the concept of identity resonance as a way of conceptualizing the *political* importance of source cue effects at the individual level. The concept is further elaborated by describing two general conditions under which source cues are likely to matter most: 1) when the source identification ratio is not equal to one, and 2) when an issue is new or highly complex. The former is particularly important because it takes into account the fact that a messenger's identity can *constrain* the success of her message, and, indeed, the possibility that an attempt at persuasion may backfire.

In addition to these theoretical contributions, this paper makes two empirical contributions. First, it provides an empirical illustration of identity resonance using data on attitudes towards the International Criminal Court (ICC), an issue that is directly relevant to global politics and transnational advocacy. These data show how overall resonance is unlikely when the source identification ratio is close to one, and that source cue effects vary with the level of policy information available to individuals. Second, it uses a different set of data to argue that international sources such as U.N. member-states and the International Red Cross can have effects on attitudes about both foreign and domestic policies comparable to those exerted by high-profile domestic sources. In short, the empirical analyses provide evidence that source cues matter to global politics and help to illustrate and reinforce the theoretical argument about when and how source cues are likely to have an effect on attitudes towards policies.

Appendix: Tables and Figures

Table 1: Support for ICC by Party Identification and Source Condition

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Support (%) GOP Source	74.61	69.01	73.58	73.07
Support (%) No Source	82.70	74.85	61.54	72.71
Difference Chi ²	5.2958	.8551	7.1442	0.36 0.0192
P-value	.021	.355	.008	0.89
N =	586	234	536	1,365

Table 2: OLS Regression of ICC Support

Variable	Coefficient
Political Ideology	-0.031 0.005*
UN Support	0.145 0.009*
Party Identification	-0.003 0.005
GOP Source	-0.110 0.035*
Source X Party ID	0.029 0.008*
Constant	0.323 0.044*
Adjusted R-squared =	0.2398
N =	1344

Note: Standard errors are shown below the coefficients.

* p < .01

Table 3: Support for ICC by PID and Source Condition (High Information)

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Support (%) GOP Source	80.56	71.43	63.77	72.09
Support (%) No Source	82.80	81.03	53.47	70.72
Difference				1.37
Chi ²	0.1696	1.0124	2.0153	0.1074
P-value	0.681	0.314	0.156	0.743
N =	229	86	213	534

Table 4: Support for ICC by PID and Source Condition (Low Information)

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Support (%) GOP Source	70.83	67.44	81.11	73.62
Support (%) No Source	82.55	71.43	66.52	73.91
Difference				-0.29
Chi ²	6.4849	0.2321	6.6543	0.0077
P-value	0.011	0.630	0.010	0.93
N =	355	148	323	829

Table 5: Domestic and International Source Cue Effects on Three Issues

Full Sample	International Cues			Full Sample	Democratic Cues		
	Eritrea	Liberia	Immigration		Eritrea	Liberia	Immigration
UN Members (Pro)	0.035	0.091	0.034	Republicans (Pro)	-0.015	0.045	-0.039
UN Members (Con)	-0.047	-0.040	-0.047	Republicans (Con)	-0.116	-0.010	-0.034
Intl. Orgs. (Pro)	0.041	0.020	-0.012	Democrats (Pro)	-0.005	0.036	0.038
Intl. Orgs. (Con)	-0.076	-0.008	-0.073	Democrats (Con)	-0.042	0.041	-0.083
Republican Sample	Eritrea	Liberia	Immigration	Republican Sample	Eritrea	Liberia	Immigration
UN Members (Pro)	0.056	0.179	-0.097	Republicans (Pro)	0.086	0.163	-0.041
UN Members (Con)	-0.019	0.019	-0.101	Republicans (Con)	-0.090	0.003	-0.071
Intl. Orgs. (Pro)	0.075	0.064	-0.001	Democrats (Pro)	0.056	0.056	-0.066
Intl. Orgs. (Con)	-0.055	0.018	-0.179	Democrats (Con)	0.028	0.039	-0.131
Democratic Sample	Eritrea	Liberia	Immigration	Democratic Sample	Eritrea	Liberia	Immigration
UN Members (Pro)	0.100	-0.001	0.153	Republicans (Pro)	0.023	-0.011	-0.006
UN Members (Con)	-0.015	-0.105	0.003	Republicans (Con)	-0.040	-0.015	-0.026
Intl. Orgs. (Pro)	0.100	-0.036	0.081	Democrats (Pro)	0.076	-0.001	0.205
Intl. Orgs. (Con)	-0.033	-0.029	0.028	Democrats (Con)	0.010	-0.054	-0.022

Notes: Figures are differences between the policy support means of the cue condition and the control condition. Bolded figures are statistically significant at the 0.10 level using a two-tailed t-test.

Figure 1: Predicted GOP Source Cue Effects by Party Identification

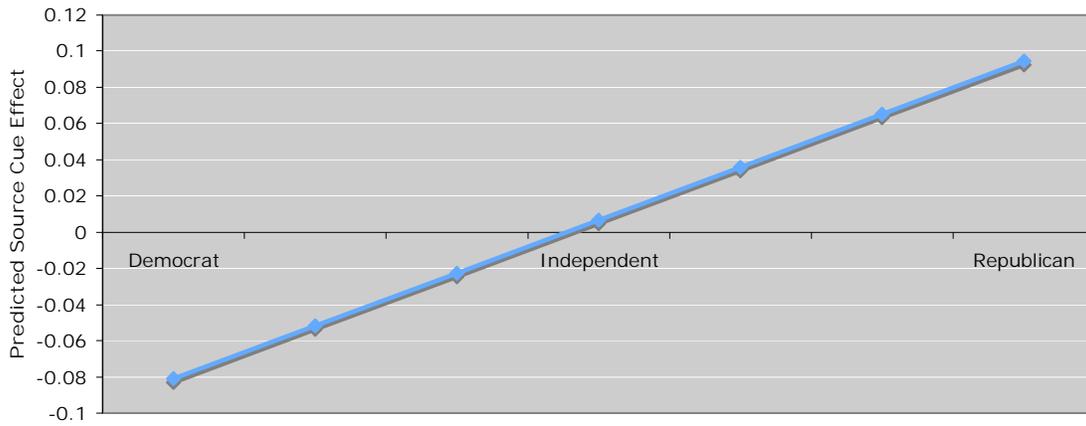
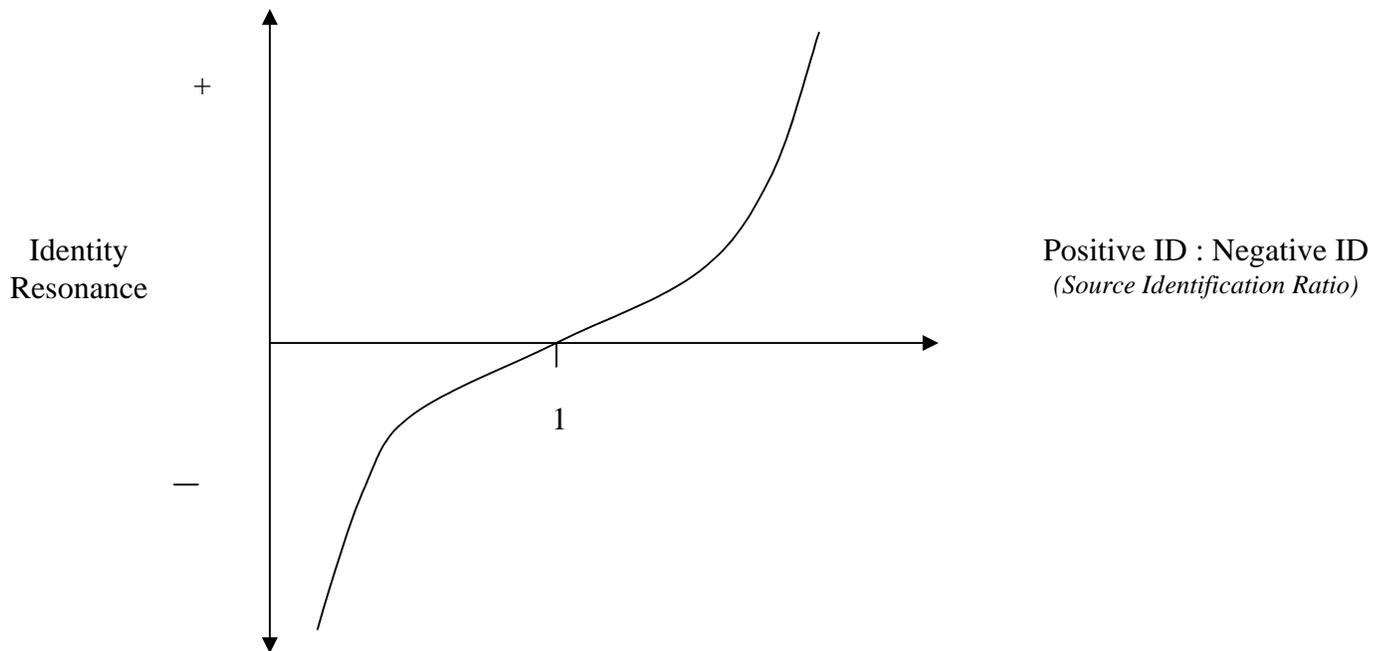


Figure 2: Identity Resonance as a Function of the Source Identification Ratio



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