Protesters On Message?

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Examining Frame Alignment Between Demonstrators, Social Movement Organizations and Mass Media

Proefschrift voorgelegd tot het behalen van de graad van doctor in de sociale wetenschappen aan de Universiteit Antwerpen te verdedigen door

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Promotor
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Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen
Politieke Wetenschappen

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PROTESTERS ON MESSAGE?

The cover picture shows adherents of the eye-catching Provo movement, marching through the streets of Amsterdam on June 30th 1966. The Provos had been organizing protests and happenings for over a year, provoking fierce responses from authorities by combining nonviolence and absurd humor. This day's action, however, was especially remarkable. The activists did not carry placards with persuasive slogans or tantalizing mottos. Instead, they held large, empty, white sheets. And so they seemed to broadcast no message or claim. The opposite was true, of course. The activists did make a point and they were swiftly arrested for it by the police. Earlier demonstrations had been forbidden because of—according to the authorities—'inflammatory' slogans like Freedom of Speech *and* Right to Democracy*. By getting jailed for merely holding white sheets, they lay bare the flaws of the administration and the judiciary. In reality, there was no right to demonstrate. Even walking on the streets with 'no message' was clamped down.*

Cover Photo: ANP Historisch Archief, J. Klok (1966). Provo-demonstratie met leeg spandoek ondanks verbod van de Amsterdamse burgemeester van Hall, 30 juni 1966.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURES

TABLES

VOORWOORD

Een proefschrift is pas echt af als het voorwoord geschreven is. Minstens zo belangrijk als het doctoraat zelf, is het *proces* van doctoreren en het bedanken van de mensen die daarbij een belangrijke rol hebben gespeeld, zowel in donkere dagen—"waar ben ik in hemelsnaam mee bezig?" —als tijdens euforische momenten—"joepie, een significant effect!".

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heeft jullie daar overigens tijdens presentaties ook kunnen spotten. Met **Paul** en **Roel** veranderden jullie Nederweert van een rustige plek in een prettige chaos, met bijna elk jaar een nieuw neefje of nichtje. Eén voor één schatten die ik niet meer kan missen. **Luc**, **Nadine**, **Liselot**, **Bert**, **Veronique**, **An** en **Tom**, ik ben blij dat ik binnenkort ook echt lid van familie Desmet word. Jullie zijn een heerlijke schoonfamilie.

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Antwerpen, 26 oktober 2015

I

INTRODUCTION

Ghent, April 13th 2015. The Flemish branch of the anti-Islamic Pegida movement organizes a demonstration in the city center. Following in the footsteps of the by origin German initiative—Pegida stands for 'Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes'—the Belgian counterpart mobilizes people to protest "against the spread of Islam in our culture", to express "solidarity with victims of Muslim terrorism", and to show "love for our Western freedoms". From the beginning, the organizers also make clear that they are not a racist movement, and they explicitly forbid "hateful, racist and xenophobic expressions or activities".

News reports later that night, however, show that not all adherents agree with Pegida's official line of communication. Danira Boukhriss, a journalist with Moroccan roots, is on site to cover the demonstration for Flemish television. She is called a "macaque"—referring to a genus of monkeys—and a "nigger" by one of the protest participants. On camera, moreover, the protester adds: "I'm not a racist, stupid chick. I just can't stand to smell or see you".[1]

While the incident described above is rather 'extreme', it illustrates a more general observation that can be made. It exemplifies that the beliefs of people who take part in protest demonstrations, are not always in line with what the organizers of the protest convey in their mobilizing messages. People can have all kinds of reasons to participate in protest, and these can differ from what social movement organizations (SMOs) communicate to the media, the public, and (political) targets. Within the social movement literature, however, scholars have generally assumed that the motives of people who join demonstrations are congruent with the messages advocated by SMOs organizing the events. In their studies, social movement scholars mostly ignore that some demonstrators may be less *aligned* with protest organizers than others and that activists can express other grievances and formulate alternative solutions for the protest

problem. Journalists and politicians as well mostly assume or expect protesters to be 'on message'.[2]

In this dissertation, the connection between protest participants and social movement organizations takes center stage. The main dependent variable is *frame alignment* which refers to "the linkage of individual and social movement organizations' interpretive orientations" (Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986, p. 464). A frame can be defined as a mental model that consists of various cognitions or frame components, like beliefs, values, goals, and norms. A protest participants' frame is the combination of reasons that motivate this person to participate in protest. Basically, a frame contains answers to three simple questions: What is the problem? Who or what is to blame for it? And, how can the problem be solved? Frame alignment, then, is the degree to which the frames of protest participants overlap with the frames of social movement organizations. This linkage has thus far not received the up-close investigation it deserves.

Frame alignment can have important consequences for social movements. It relates to individual recruitment and participation processes and to the internal cohesion of social movement organizations. As I will point out below, frame alignment also correlates with the potential political success of social movements and it can tell us something about the role of protest and social movements in democracies. All in all, there are a number of socially relevant reasons why frame alignment deserves our attention. In addition, I think that frame alignment specifically deserves our attention *now*. Protest is on the rise (Dalton, 2014). More and more people are engaged in social movement activities. Never before did so many people with such different backgrounds participate in demonstrations (Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst, 2005). At the same time, however, people are increasingly individualized and less loyal to organizations (Norris, 2002). The diffusion of protest ideas and tactics is changing. The internet has improved the capacity of single events to attract people who are more loosely connected to protest organizers (Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010). Since the power of protest is growing—or, to the very least, people are increasingly using it to raise their voice—studying the motives of protesters is warranted. Since people simultaneously are better able to bypass organizational membership and become ever more 'users' of protest (Earl & Schussman, 2003), the looming question is to what extent these motives are actually aligned with the ideas and motives of social movement organizations.

This thesis has three research goals. First, my aim is to examine to what extent the frames of demonstrators are in line with the frames of social movement organizations. To what

degree do participants agree with the problems, solutions and culprits identified by the protest organizers? The second purpose is to *explain* different degrees of frame alignment between individuals and SMOs. Why are some protesters in certain demonstrations more aligned with the messages of SMOs than activists in other events? And, why do some of the organizers' frames resonate widely with protesters while other frames do not? Finally, the third goal is to move beyond the communication of protest organizers, as this only appears to tell part of the protesters' story. Demonstrators' and social movement organizations' frames will be linked to mass media coverage of the protest issue. Are the frames that challenging groups use to gather support part of the debate in mass media? And, to what extent do demonstrators align with (alternative) frames present in media reports about the protest issue?

In the following sections of this introduction I will further elaborate on why it is important to study protesters' frames and frame alignment in particular. Subsequently, I discuss the contributions I make to the literature and I conclude with an overview of the chapters of this dissertation.

WHY STUDY FRAME ALIGNMENT?

The conceptualization of the frame alignment approach in the 1980s marked an important turn within the social movements literature. Criticizing the overly structural theories of collective action that were prevalent at the time—which focused on organizational strength, network embeddedness and political opportunities—, various scholars stressed the subjective component of mobilizing people for political action (Gamson, Fireman, & Rytina, 1982; Klandermans, 1984). They made clear that perception and consciousness are essential. Even when macro political circumstances are advantageous (Meyer, 2004) and challenging groups have a lot of resources at their disposal (Edwards & McCarthy, 2004), people still have to be convinced to act at the micro level (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996). Grievances or concerns do not automatically pull people to the streets. Discontent is subject to interpretation, and the right framing of dissatisfaction can make the difference between action and inaction.

In line with framing theory, I hold that the way in which people frame an issue is essential to understand their participation in protest activities. People who, for instance, interpret their low salaries as an unchangeable misfortune are very unlikely to engage in protest. Convincing them that low incomes are *unjust* and *possible to change* is key to motivate them to join a movement on this topic (Piven & Cloward, 1977; and see McAdam, 1982 on "cognitive

liberation"). Contrary to frame alignment theory, however, I argue that protesters' frames are not necessarily in line with social movements organizing the protest. As I will discuss in the next section, frame alignment between demonstrators and SMOs should be treated as something that varies across protesters, issues, movements, and time—instead of as a static precondition for people to take part in protest activities.

As a variable, participants' frame alignment can have significant consequences for the internal and external functioning of SMOs. Internally, frame alignment can affect important individual level factors like recruitment, forms of taking action, and sustained activism. It has been widely established that 'being asked' by people in one's network is an important determinant for protest participation (see e.g. Diani & McAdam, 2003). Although little research has been done on the flipside process of 'asking others', we can expect that people who are strongly aligned with the views of SMOs, are the most active ones to recruit others. A recent study of Walgrave and Wouters (2014) points in this direction, as they show that recruitment is particularly done by participants who are strongly motivated.[3] Furthermore, frame alignment may be associated with the type of action individuals take. We can expect that the more someone is aligned with 'their' organization, the higher the costs this person is willing to pay for his or her political participation—going from signing an online petition to tying oneself to a building or tree. Also, highly aligned activists are probably more committed and loyal followers who continue to be involved in movement organizations in the long run. Additionally, at the organizational level, frame alignment is important for internal cohesion. If activists disagree about the issue they are protesting for or if particular groups put emphasis on different domains, movements run the risk of falling apart in various fractions. Diversity is not a problem per se, but if it surfaces repeatedly, schism might be the consequence.

Externally, frame alignment matters for SMOs as well. The extent to which challenging groups broadcast a coherent, homogeneous message to the outside world affects their potential success. According to Charles Tilly (1999, 2004, 2006), unity is one of four factors that determine the impact of a protest event. Together with 'worthiness', 'numbers', and 'commitment', unity is part of an "implicit scorecard against which participants, observers, and opponents measure demonstrations" (Tilly, 2006, p. 291). Protest targets often try to discredit demonstrations by questioning whether participants really endorse the same claim. A report of the 2009 G20 summit in Pittsburgh, for example, illustrates how low levels of unity can undermine a movement's integrity:

> "The Daily Show sent a correspondent to Pittsburgh and reported on a spectrum of messages that included: a Free Tibet marching cymbal band, Palestinian peace advocates, placards condemning genocide in Darfur, hemp and marijuana awareness slogans, and denunciations of the beef industry, along with the more expected condemnations of globalization and capitalism. One protester carried a sign saying 'I protest everything', and another dressed as Batman stated that he was protesting the choice of Christian Bale to portray his movie hero" (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012, p. 761).

In order to convince political targets that something should be done, protest organizers need to communicate a shared meaning of 'their' problem or situation. When activists agree among themselves they display credibility. It shows that they are sincere, that they should be taken seriously, and that they are a unified force politicians should pay attention to.[4]

Finally, frame alignment is relevant for people who take part in social movement activities. Degrees of alignment indicate how well the concerns of rank-and-file participants are actually represented by the movement elite. This is, for instance, important when organizational leaders are invited by protest targets to talk about their demands. The more grassroots protesters and leader activists care about the same issues, the higher the chance that people on the ground are effectively represented in these meetings. From a broader perspective, this has implications for the functioning of democracy as well. In most Western societies institutional forms of participation like voting and party membership are declining (Gray & Caul, 2000). Scholars have argued, though, that the erosion of institutionalized forms of participation should not be equated with political apathy (Dalton, 2008). People are increasingly using other forms of civic engagement—like protest participation—to influence the political decision-making process. As Hooghe and Marien (2012, p. 538) remark, however, the question remains "whether non-institutionalized forms of participation actually succeed in providing a linkage mechanism between citizens and the political system". Part of the answer on this question regards the connection between individual demonstrators and social movement organizations. The degree of frame alignment between protesters and SMOs indicates to what extent protesters' beliefs are linked with the messages that social movement organizations convey to decision makers, and accordingly, whether participation in social movement activities is a successful way for people to get information about their preferences and demands across to politicians.

Although the previous paragraphs primarily point to the advantages of frame alignment, low degrees of frame alignment are not necessarily a bad thing. One could, for instance, hold that diverse or even deviant interpretations within a movement can be refreshing or even essential in order to regularly reevaluate the organizations' viewpoints. Some social movements might even strive to unite people with varying views, creating a broad movement with adherents

who are only aligned to the movements' frames to a small extent, in order to reach many people and trigger a wide debate. The point is not that frame alignment is good or bad, but that degrees of frame alignment are relevant to social movement organizations, to people who attend social movement activities, and to society in general.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

In this section I discuss several lacunae in the current academic literature and I describe how this dissertation addresses those gaps. Five contributions are highlighted: (1) empirically testing the core premise of frame alignment theory, (2) developing a quantitative method to measure degrees of alignment, (3) linking protest participants' and SMOs' frames with mass media coverage, (4) restoring attention for the individual level, and (5) using comparative evidence about participants in multiple street demonstrations.

Testing the frame alignment premise

In their seminal 1986 article Snow, Rochford, Worden and Benford state that frame alignment is a "necessary condition for movement participation, whatever its nature or intensity" (1986, p. 464). For people to take part in movement activities, their beliefs about the issue at stake have to be in line with the protest motives that SMOs put forward. This is the basic premise on which the framing theory is build. It is the underlying motivation for social movement scholars to do research on the types of frames that organizations use, what kind of movement frames are most successful, and what the various consequences of SMO framing are. Up to now, though, this proposition has rarely been put to the test, nor has the 'nature' or 'intensity' of frame alignment been analyzed.

In general, the basic frame alignment theory can be understood as follows. Social movements try to link their frames with the frames of individuals via various framing efforts. Anti-nuclear organizations, for instance, try to convince people that we need to eliminate nuclear weapons and that their production should be stopped. They try to convince people of this cause via four types of frame alignment processes: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation (see Snow et al., 1986 for what these processes entail). The result of these frame alignment processes, depending on how successful social movements are, is that some people's frames are aligned with the SMOs, while others' are not. Only people who are aligned—as it is a necessary condition—will participate in movement

activities. Framing scholars have generally adopted this model. It seems rather logical indeed; of course people who participate in a protest event agree with the groups organizing it. As such, it is the job of social movement organizations to align a lot of people with their frames in order to make the pool of potential participants as large as possible.

As a consequence, consciously or unconsciously, scholars have treated frame alignment as a kind of self-evident truth. A premise that is taken for granted and never tested. When examining frames' successfulness for instance—as a major part of framing scholars do—, authors show a positive relationship between the use of particular frames by SMOs on the one hand and protest participation or movement emergence on the other. From these studies we know that frames with certain characteristics mobilize a higher number of people (see e.g. Hewitt & McCammon, 2004; McVeigh, Myers, & Sikkink, 2004; Pedriana, 2006). The studies, however, skip the step of measuring frame alignment. Whether people who participate are aligned with the frames of the staging organizers—whether the frames indeed resonate—is a question that is often not asked nor answered. It is an assumption that is implicitly made. Or, put differently: "Frame resonance and mobilizing potency are distinct phenomena. The latter is, at best, a proxy for the former that is useful in preliminary steps of theory building, but equating the two assumes that all people who mobilized did so in response to the (resonant) frame in question—an assumption that is usually never tested" (Noakes & Johnston, 2005, p. 16). The first contribution of this dissertation is testing the core assumption of the frame alignment approach. Instead of accepting alignment between protesters and social movement organizations as a premise, I turn it into a matter of empirical investigation.

Empirically investigating frame alignment means that I have to operationalize it as a variable. The literature suggests that frame alignment is dichotomous: you are either aligned or not. Yet, it is unclear what the criteria are to speak of an aligned protester and how we can distinguish between aligned and nonaligned people (Opp, 2009). Because determining a 'cut-off point' would be arbitrary, I propose to study *degrees* of frame alignment. It is subjective to decide who is aligned and who is not, so it is better to measure the variable on a scale. Also, degrees of alignment seem to be better able to catch reality, differentiating between demonstrators who to a large extent share the frames of the protest organizers, and those who align partly, to a very small extent, or even not at all. One could for instance think about people joining demonstrations as if they were Christians attending Sunday church. Some are real converts who are highly committed to Christianity. Others attend the service, even participate in religious rituals and activities, but they have not fully adopted the church's value orientation

(Snow & Machalek, 1983). Some might even not believe in God, but only go there to meet with friends and family.

The notion that people can be members or participants of the same organization or movement with varying degrees of commitment is not new (see e.g. Etzioni, 1975; and see Turner & Killian, 1987 on the "illusion of homogeneity"). Gamson (1995, p. 89) for instance remarks that there is a difference between professional activists and rank-and-file participants: "Activists may read a variety of movement publications and attend meetings and conferences where the issues that concern them are discussed. But they cannot assume that their constituency shares these or other forums or is aware of this discourse". Still, while diversity in degrees of frame alignment has been *acknowledged*, it has hardly been empirically examined. A recent overview of framing studies—listing all articles in major sociology and social movement specialty journals between 2000 and 2011—shows that scholars examine movements' framing strategies or frames as such (Snow, Benford, McCammon, Hewitt, & Fitzgerald, 2014). They investigate how organizers' frames influence and can be influenced. None of these studies analyze activists' frame *alignment*, neither as a dependent nor as an independent variable.

Developing a quantitative method

Because I want to study frame alignment as a variable, I need a method to measure degrees of frame alignment. While framing was introduced in the social movement literature more than thirty years ago—with Gamson, Fireman & Rytina's study (1982) on injustice frames—scholars agree that there is a lack of standard measures (Johnston & Alimi, 2013; Snow et al., 2014). For a long time framing scholars focused on the elaboration of framing concepts and it appeared as if the primary research goal was "to identify the universe of specific frames" (Benford, 1997, p. 414). Although scholars now increasingly work explanatory, the large majority of framing research is qualitative and descriptive in nature (for exceptions see McCammon, 2009, 2012; Snow, Vliegenthart, & Corrigall-Brown, 2007). Qualitative framing studies are valuable and provide detailed insights into (the consequences of) movements' framing and frame alignment processes. In this dissertation I build on these insights, but I apply a quantitative design. I carry out clear-cut content analyses with reliability checks among coders. I develop a replicable method to systematically identify and code protesters' frames and to determine their congruence with frames of social movement organizations and frames in mass media coverage. This allows me to quantify alignment differences between protesters and to explain them in multivariate models, testing for various factors that might be at play.

Hence, the second contribution to the current literature is providing a method to quantitatively measure frame alignment on a scale. In a separate chapter I explain the methodological choices in detail (see Chapter 2). While alignment is the dependent variable of this study, future studies could use it as an independent variable as well. Are aligned activists more active recruiters and more loyal participants? Can frame alignment explain the type of movement activities that people are willing to participate in? Do protesters come across as more unified when frame alignment is high, and does this influence protest success? Has frame alignment decreased or increased over time, and how can we explain this? Investigating degrees of frame alignment can be a fruitful new way to compare protesters, demonstrations and social movement organizations across types of protest, countries, and time.

Adding the mass media

When trying to understand the frames that motivate people to take part in street demonstrations, it is essential to look further than the communication of the organizations staging the protest. As Gamson observed: "Much of what adherents of a movement see, hear, and read is beyond the control of any movement organization and is likely to overwhelm in sheer volume anything that movement sources try to communicate" (1992b, p. 71). I therefore gather mass media coverage of protest issues and link it to the beliefs of protest participants. When it comes to political matters, at least on the national level, people often rely on mass media for information (Iyengar, 1987). Politics are hardly ever perceived directly by the public (McCombs, 2013). Media shape individual political perceptions and—subsequently—political conversations and discussions with peers (Desmet, 2013). That way, the media for an important part define the context in which people decide to protest (McLeod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999).

The relationship between social movements and mass media is a topic that often falls between two stools. Communication scholars are in general more interested in political parties or members of parliament than in political outsiders such as social movement organizations (Vliegenthart & Walgrave, 2010). Social movement scholars, on their part, regularly use media data, but they are mostly not really interested in media coverage as such. They rather use media data to track protest cycles and mobilization levels (see e.g. Oritz, Meyers, Walls, & Diaz, 2005; Rucht, Koopmans, & Neidhardt, 1998). Nevertheless, the literature on the relationship between movements and mass media is steadily growing. Still, there are some questions that haven't been answered yet.

The studies that inquire into the link between movements and media focus by and large on media reporting of protest *activities* (see e.g. Ketchum, 2004; McCluskey, Stein, Boyle, & McLeod, 2009; Oliver & Maney, 2000). Considerably fewer studies look at coverage of social movement organizations and the framing of protest *issues*. Furthermore, scholars foremost take SMOs as the starting point, investigating how movements (try to) influence media reporting. The opposite process, how media coverage affects social movements, is not so often addressed (Koopmans, 2004a). The studies tackling the effect of media on movements have shown that public discourse can provide opportunities for mobilization (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004), that visibility of movements in the media positively influences membership figures (Vliegenthart, Oegema, & Klandermans, 2005), that congruence between movement and media framing increases levels of protest (Cooper, 2002), and that media frames can influence people's attitudes and their willingness to become active (Terkildsen & Schnell, 1997; Callaghan & Schnell, 2005). The underlying assumption of this research is that media messages shape people's cognitive processes. Still, we know relatively little about this particular macro-micro link between mass media coverage and protest participants. I contribute to this literature by investigating how media coverage of protest issues affects the frames of demonstrators.

Bringing the individual level back in

Individuals are the starting point of the frame alignment approach. It is about people's cognitions, perceptions, and interpretations. The motivation for the development of the theory was in fact that "questions concerning the interpretation of grievances and their alignment with social movement organizations' goals and ideologies" were "ignored or taken for granted" (Snow et al., 1986, p. 466). The theory bridges the gap between social movement organizations and individual protest participants. It offers an understanding of how the participants' micro level is connected to the organizational meso level.

In the end, however, the framing approach brought individuals only seemingly back in. Scholars approach framing predominantly as something that social movements do. According to Williams, the approach "is subject to a strong movement centrist bias" (2004, p. 94). Although William Gamson and collaborators have concentrated on the individual level (Gamson, 1988, 1995; Gamson et al., 1982), most framing scholars did not follow suit. As Noakes and Johnston (2005, p. 6) explain: "Snow and Benford's emphasis on framing tactics, as planned and implemented by social movement organizations, synchronized more easily with the organizational focus that dominated the field in the 1980s." Accordingly, scholars have primarily

stressed the strategic use of frames by organizations and mainly approach framing from the sender perspective. They for instance examine political and cultural consequences of frames (McCammon, Muse, & Newman, 2007; Snow, Tan, & Owens, 2013), the effects of strategic framing (Chakravarty & Chaudhuri, 2012), why particular SMO frames are successful (Cadena-Roa, 2002; Pedriana, 2006; Williams, 2015), or what the determinants of frame variation are (Haalboom, 2011; McCammon, 2012).

While an increasing number of framing studies now examine frames of individuals (Ernst, 2009; Hadler & McKay, 2013; Mika, 2006) most of this scholarly attention went to organizational members. Instead, I focus on protest participants in general. Modes and styles of participation are changing and are less driven by organizations (Rheingold, 2007; Walgrave & Verhulst, 2006). Activists are increasingly individualized participants of protest rather than members of challenging groups (Earl & Schussman, 2003; Tilly, 2004). As Bennett and Segerberg (2012, p. 760) put it: "Individuals are relating differently to organized politics, and many organizations are finding they must engage people differently: they are developing relationships to publics as affiliates rather than members, and offering them personal options in ways to engage and express themselves."

Comparing evidence across demonstrations, issues, and countries

Finally, an important gap in framing research is that it is mostly focused on single cases. There is a lack of studies across movements which makes it difficult to generalize (Johnston & Alimi, 2013; Polletta & Ho, 2006). The overview provided by Snow and colleagues (2014) that was mentioned above, listing all important framing studies between 2000 and 2011, supports this point. The large majority of the studies are based on case studies of particular organizations or movements. While some articles compare different groups or organizations *within* movements (see e.g. Cress & Snow, 2000; Dove, 2010; Reese & Newcombe, 2003), none of the forty studies listed by the authors compare *across* social movements or protest issues. In this dissertation I compare protest participants in 29 demonstrations on four different issues—anti-austerity, environmental, anti-discrimination, and democracy protests. And because I use data from three countries—Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom—I can assess whether the results I find are generalizable and robust across these countries.

The fact that I focus on frames underlying *street demonstrations*—the most popular and wide-spread type of protest in Western democracies—differs from most previous framing studies as well. Scholars mainly scrutinize frames of a certain movement as such, analyzing

newspaper articles, texts or documents communicated by organizations over longer periods of time (see e.g. Coley, 2015; Ferree, 2003; Haalboom, 2011; Noonan, 1995). From the perspective of individual demonstrators, however, it makes more sense to study frames of particular events. Political participation is very situation-based, and the frames that motivate a person to participate in action can vary from one event to the other: "Seldom do individuals join a movement organization per se, at least initially. Rather, it is far more common for individuals to agree to participate in some activity or campaign by devoting some measure of time, energy or money" (Snow et al., 1986, p. 467). Accordingly, thinking of social movements as sequences of events rather than as organizations seems useful when studying frame alignment.

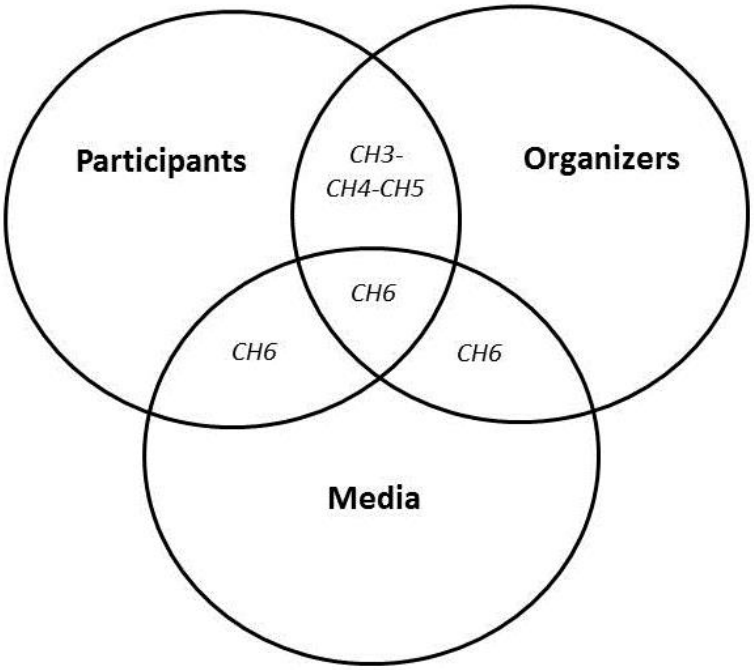
DISSERTATION OVERVIEW

This thesis consists of seven chapters. There are four core chapters (CH3, 4, 5 and 6), written as scientific articles. Each can be read as a study in itself, containing an introduction, theory, a data and methods section, results and a conclusion. Chapter 2 is a methodological chapter. There I define and operationalize frames, and I describe the overall data selection, collection and analysis. Chapter 7, finally, knits the key findings of the various studies together and discusses the broader conclusions that can be drawn.

The backbone of this dissertation is the overlap between the frames that motivate people to participate in protest, the frames of social movements who organize demonstrations, and the frames that are present in media coverage of the protest issue. Figure 1.1 shows which overlap is addressed in each chapter. Chapter 3 sets out to explore the relationship between demonstrators and organizers. The main goal of the study is to investigate to what extent their frames overlap. I calculate a series of different frame alignment measures in order to provide a diverse look on the connection between individuals and SMOs. Also, different framing functions are examined. Frames identify problems (diagnoses), hold something or someone responsible for that problem (blame attributions), and suggest possible solutions (prognoses) (Snow & Benford, 1988).[5] In the study I try to find out whether the alignment between demonstrators and organizers differs across these frame functions. Do protesters, for instance, agree more with the organizers about who is to blame for the protest problem than about how the problem should be solved? Furthermore, Chapter 3 digs into differences between protests across issues and countries. Are the alignment patterns of protesters in anti-austerity events different from demonstrators in environmental, democracy, or anti-discrimination events? And is the

connection between individuals and SMOs in Belgium different than in the Netherlands or the United Kingdom?

Figure 1.1: Schematic overview of the core chapters



Chapter 4, then, tries to explain demonstrators' different frame alignment levels. In this study I argue that protesters' alignment with SMOs is primarily a function of their exposure to organizational information on the one hand and alternative (or confounding) information on the other. Basically, I hold that protesters who are more exposed to the organizers' messages will be more aligned, while activists who are confronted with alternative information about the protest issue will be less aligned. In order to measure exposure to the organizers' frames I look at people's membership of the staging organizers, how people are recruited, the structure of the organizing movements, and the number of organizers. To account for exposure to alternative frames, I gather information about demonstrators' membership of other organizations, their political interest levels, and the degree to which there was political attention for the protest issue before the demonstration took place. As such, this chapter provides a first empirical take on how we might explain different degrees of alignment, both at the level of individual demonstrators and at the level of demonstration events.

Chapter 5 is comparable with Chapter 4 because it tries to explain different degrees of alignment. This study, however, takes a different perspective, and looks at the characteristics of the frames that are proffered by social movement organizations. Are there frame components

with certain qualities that generally resonate more with demonstrators? Specifically, the chapter digs deeper into two frame characteristics that have often been mentioned but whose effect has rarely been systematically tested. Firstly, frame components are analyzed for their 'daily-life character'. Frames can be expected to resonate more when protest issues are viewed from people's everyday-life perspective. Secondly, frame components that attribute blame to something or someone are further inspected. I argue that frame elements that put responsibility on a specific person, institution or organization resonate more with protesters than frame elements that blame intangible forces or circumstances. While many scholars have studied frame resonance, they mostly failed to ask participants what their cognitive motives to join actually were. In this chapter I directly tap demonstrators' frames and therefore—instead of assuming what kind of frames motivated them to protest—I am able to empirically determine the outreach of frames with particular characteristics.

As is shown in Figure 1.1, the media data are added in Chapter 6. Protest participants' frames are linked with frames of organizers and with the frames of actors in the media. In this chapter I approach frame alignment as a two-step flow process, with social movement organizations affecting the mass media, which in turn influence protest participants. I argue that social movements to some extent will be able to reach people directly—via pamphlets, adds, meetings, and newsletters—, but that they mostly depend on mass media to communicate their views to potential participants. In the first part of the study I therefore reflect on the link between SMOs and mass media, and to what extent movements are able to get media coverage of 'their' issues. In the second part I focus on protesters, and I try to trace where the frames that motivate their participation stem from. Does media coverage of the protest issue affect the reasons why people take part in demonstrations? And if so, which political actors' media framing mostly influences them?

Together, these chapters attempt to expand frame alignment theory, approaching alignment as a conditional process with heterogeneous outcomes for protesters. The studies test and refine existing insights, but they also provide a new take on a much debated concept and theoretical perspective, giving a more nuanced view of people's rationales to take part in collective action.

NOTES

1. Translated into English by the author. In Flemish dialect, the protester called her “makak” and “zwetzak”, and said: “Ik ben geen racist, kieken. Ik kan u gewoon niet rieken of zien”. Sources are http://www.demorgen.be/tvmedia/danira-boukhriss-ik-dacht-niet-dat-zoiets-anno-2015-nog-bestond-a2286432/ and https://pegidavlaanderen.wordpress.com/

2. To be ‘on (or off) message’ is mostly used to describe politicians who adhere to the official line of their party or government. But it can apply to other organizations as well.

3. With the data that are used in this dissertation I can actually test this hypothesis. It turns out that protesters who are more aligned with the protest organizers, indeed more actively ask other people to join the demonstration. A multilevel logistic regression on ‘asking others’—controlling for gender, age, educational level, determination to protest, timing of decision to protest, issue of the protest, and country—shows that every ten percent increase of relative frame alignment (on a 0-100 scale) means three percent more chance to ask someone to take part in the protest.

4. The first results of a recent experiment done by Ruud Wouters and Stefaan Walgrave confirm the idea that unity affects the potential political success of protest. More than 250 Belgian politicians were exposed to television news items of protest marches with various features. Especially when the video clips showed a large crowd (numbers) or protesters who endorse the same claim (unity), politicians were inclined to take political action.

5. Besides these functions, frames also have a motivational task. See Chapter 3 for why they are not addressed here.

II

DATA AND METHODS

The concept of framing goes back quite a long time (see the first use of "frame" in Bateson, 1954). It is widely used within the social sciences, and can be conceptualized and operationalized in different ways. In this chapter I therefore explain how I define and operationalize frames. I will also discuss how the data used in this dissertation are gathered and analyzed.

WHAT'S IN A FRAME?

Within political communication studies, framing is part of research on mass media effects. A media frame is "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events" (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, p. 143). Media frames are tools for journalists to organize a report, to classify information, and to give meaning to the events and situations they cover. By using them, reporters can reduce the complexity of issues and make topics comprehensible to the public at large. While media frames have an effect on the perceptions and attitudes of audiences (see e.g. Delshad & Raymond, 2013; de Vreese, Boomgaarden, & Semetko, 2011), journalists generally do not intend to persuade people or to convince them to take action of some sort. The opposite is true for frames used by social movement organizations—or other political actors who try to gather support. SMO frames are called collective *action* frames, as they imply the need and desirability of taking action. Like journalists, SMOs use frames to organize, simplify and give meaning to events and situations, but on top of that they want to "mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists" (Snow & Benford, 1988, p. 198).

Frames can be analyzed at the macro or at the micro level. "As a macro construct, the term 'framing' refers to modes of presentation that journalists and other communicators use to

present information in a way that resonates with existing underlying schemas among their audience" (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 12). At the micro level, on the other hand, frames are individually held cognitions. They are "internal structures of the mind" (Kinder & Sanders, 1990, p. 74). As it is not easy to study cognitions, most scholars rely on a macro level analysis of frames—both within political communication studies (Scheufele, 1999) and in social movement literature (Johnston, 1995; Williams, 2004). While many studies within the political communication literature are devoted to (how media affect) public opinion, frames of individuals are studied considerably less.

The starting points of this thesis are the frames that motivate people's participation in protest demonstrations. Consequently, I focus on *action* frames and I study them at the *micro* level. In a second step I compare participants' frames with the frames of social movement organizations. Finally, in the third step, these are linked with frames in mass media. To be clear, I do not study media frames in the way that they are defined within political communication research, i.e. as central organizing ideas of media messages. Rather, I study the frames that are expressed by political actors *within* media messages.

Frame components

In order to analyze frames I foremost build on the work of social movement scholar Hank Johnston. In several articles and book chapters he works out a methodology to systematically study frames (see Johnston, 1995, 2002, 2005; Johnston & Alimi, 2013). While Johnston develops the method particularly to make comparisons across movements and time, I use it to compare frames of protest participants with social movement and mass media frames. Johnston defines frames as "hierarchical cognitive structures that pattern the definition of a situation for individual action" (1995, p. 237). They are "bundles of beliefs and meanings that are related in a systematic way" (Johnston, 1995, p. 234). In their definition of collective action frames, Benford and Snow (2000, p. 614) also talk about "sets" of beliefs and meanings. People have cognitive elements stored in their memory, and a person's frame regarding a particular issue or situation is a mental model that consists of multiple of these components. Frame components can be all kinds of cognitions: "Important for the field of social movements are goals, norms, beliefs such as perceived influence or expected sanctions, attribution of causality for a grievance and normative justifications" (Opp, 2009, p. 242). Frame components are an important aspect of Johnston's method: "If we acknowledge that frames are constructed from a cultural fabric and

that they have a specific content, we can describe the "materials" that make them up – that is, the components of an interpretative schema" (Noakes & Johnston, 2005, p. 7).

Frame components are the units of analysis in this dissertation. For each protest participant I list the elements that are part of his or her individual frame scheme. Social movement organizations' frames are recorded in the same way. For each demonstration all frame components that underlie the protest campaign are recorded. This allows me to make a careful comparison between the content of the frame structures of demonstrators and the content of the frame structures of SMOs.

This approach differs significantly from methods used by other social movement framing scholars. Many operationalize frames vaguely and broad. The movement's messages are summarized into two or three themes that encapsulate the main arguments without investigation of the larger set of claims that make up the argumentation (see Babb, 1996 for an exception). Scholars tend to analyze the general description of a mobilization campaign without taking account of subordinate elements. Yet, SMOs typically provide elaborate frame schemes with detailed contents of diagnoses and prognoses when they mobilize people for collective action (Johnston, 2002). Karl-Dieter Opp stipulates that it is indeed important to break frames down into various components: "This is typically not done in existing research: frames are assigned labels (such as 'injustice frame'), but it is far from clear what the elements of the frames are" (2009, p. 246). To study frame alignment at the frame component level enables me to speak about frames with empirical grounding, by staying close to the data instead of making abstractions and loose interpretations: "To be convincing, the frame analysis must not journey too far from the original texts on which it is based" (Johnston, 2002, p. 67).

From other streams of literature that analyze overlap or alignment, we know that the way congruence is measured can have certain consequences. Looking at studies about substantive congruence between voters and political representatives, for instance, suggests that scholars who use broad ideological dimensions to compare voters and politicians usually conclude that levels of congruence are high (Andeweg, 2011). Researchers who, on the other hand, draw on concrete policy proposals mostly find the opposite (Walgrave & Lefevere, 2013). A similar pattern can be expected for congruence between protesters and social movement organizations. If I would, for instance, identify a 'feminist frame' within a movements' campaign, two protesters with very different understandings of feminism could nevertheless both be aligned. But what it means to be feminist differs across movements, countries, and time. It is only by identifying specific frame components—e.g. attitudes towards women should be

changed via education, we need a government strategy to address violence against women, women are conditioned to take their lead from men—that a real comparison of people's and organizations' frames can be made, and that frame alignment can actually be determined.

DATA SELECTION AND COLLECTION

Now that I have explained how I define frames, I describe in this section how the data I use are selected and collected. While framing is about the production of meaning and while frames are the result of "a set of dynamic, negotiated, and often contested processes" (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 56), to measure congruence between frames it is necessary to 'freeze' them at a particular point in time and to select sources that represent the frames of a particular actor (Johnston, 2002). This thesis relies on three sources that each measure a certain category of frames: protest participants' answers to survey questions (participants' frames), organizers' official protest pamphlets (SMO frames), and newspaper articles (media frames). In the next paragraph I will explain how data for this dissertation were selected. Next, I will explain how I gathered the three types of data, and I show for each source how I coded frames and how congruence between them was determined.

Data selection

The majority of the data are gathered via the project 'Caught in the Act of Protest: Contextualizing Contestation' (CCC) (also see Klandermans, 2012). In this project, protest participants are surveyed while they take part in street demonstrations. The data for this dissertation cover 29 street demonstrations staged between 2009 and 2012 in three countries—eight in Belgium, ten in the Netherlands and eleven in the United Kingdom. The selected protest events cover the most important and visible street demonstrations that were held in the countries during the research period. The aim of the project was to survey the significant street demonstrations during this time. As a consequence, only relatively successful mobilization campaigns are included. It must be noted as well that, for the safety of the interviewers, only non-disruptive events were surveyed. The three countries are West-European nations with a long tradition of parliamentary democracy. Belgium and the Netherlands have a tradition of street protests, more than the United Kingdom, but throughout the dissertation I do not formulate any specific expectations regarding differences between countries. The selection of the countries was foremost pragmatic, because coding frames requires sufficient knowledge of

the language. Nevertheless, I think the three countries present a robust test for answering the goals set out for this thesis.

Sixteen of the 29 demonstrations are *anti-austerity* events (four in Belgium, eight in the Netherlands, four in the UK). They consist of protests from various groups against government cuts and one politicized International Workers' Day rally is included as well.[1] Four events are on *environmental* issues: climate change demonstrations or protests against nuclear energy (two in Belgium, two in the UK). Furthermore, four are *anti-discrimination* demonstrations, such as fighting for women's rights or condemning racism (one in the Netherlands, three in the UK). Finally, there are five *democracy* protests in the sample: demonstrations aiming for changes in the political system (two in Belgium, one in the Netherlands, two in the UK). Although the occupy movement was triggered by the economic crisis, I place two occupy events in the sample in the democracy category. Rather than aimed against austerity measures they opposed the political system, capitalism, and corruption. Table 2.3 in the Appendix gives an overview of the 29 demonstrations in the sample.

Data collection: protest surveys

The data on protest participants are provided by the protest surveys distributed via the CCC project. The protest survey method offers some clear advantages compared to other methods. In contrast to population surveys, for instance, these questionnaires allow to take the context of protest participation into account. Population surveys tend to ask people about their political activities *in general*. While they can tell us something about who is likely to participate in protest and who is not, they give no information about the issue that spurred people to the streets, the organizations that mobilized them, or the political circumstances at the time of the protest. Protest participation, in this case, is analyzed as a decontextualized phenomenon. In-depth case studies, on the other hand, are very rich in context. They can provide detailed insight on protesters, how they are mobilized, and the role that the organizational and political context play. The results from case studies, however, are very difficult to generalize as they typically study one or only a handful of movements or events. The protest survey design combines the best of both worlds. It allows for generalizability by surveying large numbers of protest participants in multiple protest events, while still keeping track of the specific context in which these demonstrations take place (Walgrave, Wouters, & Ketelaars, forthcoming).

The protest survey method detaches the selection of respondents (the sampling phase) from interviewing respondents (the interviewing phase). This is important because, when

interviewers can select their own respondents, they tend to choose the ones that are more 'approachable' which leads to selection bias (Walgrave & Verhulst, 2011). The sampling phase is led by pointers. They estimate the size of the crowd before the demonstration begins and they decide how many rows are skipped between two respondents. In very large crowds many rows are skipped (e.g. one respondent every 20th row). Otherwise it would be impossible to cover the whole crowd. In small demonstrations, the pointers skip few rows (e.g. one respondent every 2nd row) to make sure that enough protesters are interviewed.

The pointers alternate the selection of a respondent between the left, the middle and the right side of the row. The interviewers carry out the interview and only approach the respondents that were selected by the pointers. They shortly introduce themselves and the project and ask the respondent to accept a questionnaire, fill it in at home, and send it back via mail (postpaid by addressee). With every fifth person they take a short oral interview (eight questions) on the spot as well. The oral interviews and postal questionnaires are marked and linked to each other to test for nonresponse bias (see Walgrave et al., forthcoming). During each demonstration there are two groups consisting of one or two pointers and several interviewers. When a demonstration moves from point A to B—stationary events are covered similarly—one groups starts at the head of the crowd and works its way back. The other group does the same starting at the tail of the demonstration. This way the whole crowd gets covered, which is important because each participant should have an equal chance to be interviewed.

More than 20,000 postal surveys were distributed in the 29 street demonstrations in the sample, of which 6,096 were send back. Overall, the response rate was thirty percent.[2]

Data collection: organizers' protest platforms

For each demonstration the official platform texts are collected. These are the formal claims and points of view put forward by the staging organizations. They are mostly published in print flyers or online and they were gathered per country by the responsible teams of the CCC project. I use the pamphlets that are signed by all supporting organizers (see Figures 2.1 to 2.3 in Appendix for three examples, one for each country). Sometimes, for demonstrations that were organized by multiple SMOs, there were also leaflets available only signed by a single organization. But these were not used.

The pamphlets might not cover all relevant frames, they often are a compromise. When putting together platform texts social movements often engage in disputes about how the issue should be framed (Benford, 1993a). Some ideas might not have made it to the final cut. It is

possible as well that organizers do not want to trumpet all their reasons to protest in an official leaflet because some perspectives might repel potential participants. As a consequence, platforms may be more or less elaborate and/or vague in their formulations. Nevertheless, I think platform texts are a meaningful source and the best available point of reference. They represent a shared interpretation and are meant by the organizations to be presented to the outside world (Opp, 2009). According to Gerhards and Rucht (1992, p. 573), the leaflets signed by all supporting groups are "valid indicators for the groups' common frames".

Before each demonstration the protest organizers were interviewed. They were asked about the issue they were mobilizing for and why the demonstration was held. The answers to these questions were compared with the protest pamphlets for verification and to get more insight into the organizers' standpoints.

Data collection: newspaper articles

Collecting and coding media data for all 29 demonstrations is a tremendous task. Therefore, media data are only gathered for protest events on one specific issue: anti-austerity demonstrations. They comprise most of the demonstrations in the sample (sixteen events) and provide a good case for further examination. Although the groups that took part in these demonstrations vary—students, union members, civil servants, etc.—and though these groups protested against different policies, these events all had a clear target—the government—and they were all aimed against government cuts. Two of the sixteen anti-austerity demonstrations are left out of the media analysis (the *Labor Day March* and the *Non-Profit Demonstration*) because media attention was too limited for these events.

The media data for these fourteen anti-austerity demonstrations consist of newspaper articles about the protest issue prior to the demonstration. The research period covers the four months before the protest up to the day the event took place. Two newspapers per country are selected, one popular and one quality newspaper: for Belgium *Het Laatste Nieuws* and *De Morgen*, for the Netherlands *De Telegraaf* and *de Volkskrant*, and for the United Kingdom *The Daily Mail* and *The Guardian*. For each demonstration an issue specific search string is used to find articles that concern the protest issue. Articles that are actually not about the protest issue at all are excluded. Next, per demonstration one hundred articles are randomly selected for analysis. Table 2.4 in the Appendix lists the search strings that are used and shows the number of articles about the protest issue that are found per demonstration.

DATA ANALYSIS

Coding protest participants' frames

The protest participants' frames are derived from three open questions in the protest surveys. Respondents were asked:

Q1 "*Please tell us why you participated in this protest event?"*

Q2 "*In your opinion, who or what is to blame for [demonstration issue]?*"

Q3 "*What should be done to address this issue?"*

These are the first survey questions, assuring that respondents are not influenced by the remainder of the questionnaire. They touch upon top-of-mind beliefs and invite participants to tell in their own words what the demonstration is about (Zaller & Feldman, 1992). People's accounts may only reveal part of the cognitive frame scheme that motivated them to attend the event. But we can expect them to mention what is most important to them, and to present the 'vocabularies of motive' they use to justify their participation to themselves and to others (Mills, 1940; and see e.g. Benford, 1993b). As Johnston (1995, p. 220) notes: "It has been shown that there is a fundamental relationship between the structures of mental life and the production of written or verbal discourse". The average length of the answers is 95 characters for Q1, 37 for Q2 and 60 for Q3. This distribution corresponds with the answering space that was given.

Q1 asks for the diagnosis, the situation that is problematic. Granted, it does not literally do so. Respondents might interpret this question differently and—instead of referring to the issue underlying the protest event—mention other reasons why they participated (for instance because their friends went as well). However, of all elements written down on the three open questions only six percent did not refer to the issue at stake. These responses are coded as 'issue-unrelated' and are excluded from the analysis. I do not deny that these issue-unrelated answers are meaningful; they may form valid reasons to attend a demonstration. Yet, their number is very small and, most importantly, they do not provide information about someone's frame alignment. They are rather indicative of the degree to which people participate because of not directly content-related reasons. Q2 goes into the blame attribution, who or what is responsible for the problematic situation. Q3 tries to elicit a prognosis, a possible solution for the problem. Only people who responded to all three questions are included in the analyses (in total 5,495 of the 6,096 respondents). The respondent's triple answers are broken down into quasi-sentences, i.e. statements containing one message (up to a maximum of fifteen). A respondent's quasi-sentences represent the frame components that are part of that persons' frame scheme,

the elements of the 'mental model' that motivated this participant to take part in the demonstration.

Coding alignment with protest organizers

The next step is to determine the extent to which the frames of protest participants overlap with the frames of protest organizers. Frame alignment is measured by looking to what extent protest participants use the same arguments and refer to the same concepts, actors and institutions in their responses to the survey as the movement organizations did in their campaign material. The more the participants' reasoning corresponds with that of the staging organizations, the higher the frame alignment.

All the quasi-sentences that participants wrote down in the survey are compared with frames of the protest organizers. As indicated, the SMO frames are deduced from the protest platforms social movements spread to gather support. The full platform texts of all demonstrations are converted into series of frame components.[3] Each unique message in the platform text is operationalized as a frame component, which is then labeled and given a frame component number. Each element is coded as either a diagnosis (what is wrong) or a prognosis (what should be done). Within the diagnoses I also code whether the element attributes blame or not.[4] In total the 29 organizers' demonstration platforms contain 583 frame elements, on average twenty per demonstration, with a minimum of nine and a maximum of 37. See Table 2.3 in the Appendix for the number of organizational frame elements per demonstration.

Next, coders determine for each respondent's quasi-sentence whether it is congruent or incongruent with one of the organizers' frame elements. As it were, the frame structure of each protester is compared with the frame structure of the organizing SMOs. The sequence of the respondents' frame components does not matter and congruence between participants' and SMOs' frames is interpreted broadly. Since framing is about meaning and interpretations of reality, I compare overlap of content instead of simply comparing the literal use of particular words. Coders look at the meaning of what is said and often mark a quasi-sentence as being congruent even when participants use very different formulations than in the official platform text. An organizers' frame component is only coded one time per respondent. When someone mentions the same frame component several times, it is only recorded once.

In order to make the coding process more concrete, the first column in Table 2.1 shows the frame components that were identified in the organizers' pamphlet of the *Scream for Culture* demonstration in Amsterdam. The second column of the table lists the answers of two survey

respondents, and shows how quasi-sentences were operationalized and which answers were coded as congruent or incongruent.

Table 2.1: The frame components of *Scream for Culture* (Amsterdam) and two examples of coded respondent answers

SMO FRAME COMPONENTS	RESPONDENTS' ANSWERS (AND CODING)
Diagnoses (what is the problem?):	*Respondent 1*
1 Government cuts on culture are out of proportion	Question 1:
2 The taxes on culture will rise (from 6 to 19%)	• I am worried about the government cuts on culture. Austerities are necessary but this is just wielding the axe (congruent: 1)
3 'Muziekcentrum Omroep' will be abolished	Question 2:
4 The 'CVK-kaart' (cultural card) will be abolished	• The government (congruent: 8)
5 Arts and culture are seen as a 'leftwing hobbies'	Question 3:
6 These austerities will do irreversible damage to the cultural infrastructure	• We should improve cultural education (incongruent)
7 Arts and culture have positive effects in our society	• and keep taxes at 6% (congruent: 2)
Blame attributions (who is to blame?):	*Respondent 2*
8 The government	Question 1:
9 CDA (political party)	• Culture is an important element in society (congruent: 7)
10 VVD (political party)	• and I want to protest against Geert Wilders (congruent: 11)
11 PVV (political party)	Question 2:
12 The parliament	• The financial sector (incongruent)
13 Halbe Zijlstra (Secretary of State)	Question 3:
Prognoses (what should be done?):	• Austerities should be more balanced, the cheese slicer instead of the sledge-hammer (congruent: 1)
14 The policy plan should be better though through, with more vision	
15 Cultural entrepreneurship should be stimulated more	

The coding of the overlap between protest participants and SMOs was conducted by six coders. Each demonstration was analyzed by at least two different people who coded approximately 1,000 respondents each. Ten percent of the sample was double coded and Krippendorff's alpha (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007) was measured for the number of identified quasi-sentences in a respondent's answer (K-alpha=.93), the number of quasi-sentences congruent with the organizers (K-alpha=.72) and the number of incongruent quasi-sentences (K-alpha=.71).

Coding overlap with media frames

As mentioned above, the media data are only coded for fourteen anti-austerity events in the sample. Regarding these demonstrations, 2,496 respondents answered all three survey questions and the organizers' platforms of these events in total contain 275 frame components.

The coding of the overlap between SMOs and participants already categorizes about half of the respondent quasi-sentences into frame components—i.e. the ones that are congruent with one of the organizers' frame components. The other respondent quasi-sentences have up to now simply been coded as 'incongruent with SMO frames'. In order to trace protest participants' frames in the media, these incongruent answers have to be categorized as well. This is done via an inductive process, sorting all respondents' answers per demonstration and grouping the incongruent quasi-sentences with the same content under the same frame component. These frame components are again given a label and a frame component number. Via this process I identify 393 extra frame components that are part of respondents' frame schemes, but that are not found in the organizers' platforms. I do not apply a certain threshold when identifying the additional participants' frames. There is no reason, I think, to exclude answers that are only given by one or two respondents. There are no wrong answers here. Applying a threshold would be arbitrary and it would neglect individual heterogeneity. Examples are a single respondent of the student demonstration in The Hague who argues that universities should be fully privatized, or someone who blames the Dutch Green Party for the austerities on pensions. It might well be that political actors have framed these issues as such in newspapers or other communication channels. Not including these answers would lead to missing that kind of information.

Adding the 393 additional participant frame components to the 275 elements that are deduced from the SMO platforms, a total of 668 frame components are identified for the fourteen anti-austerity demonstrations—either belonging to participants' frame structures, SMOs' frame structures, or both. For all these 668 frame components (on average 48 per demonstration) I now want to know whether and how often they appear in the newspaper coverage in the four months prior to the demonstrations.

Per demonstration one hundred newspaper articles are selected for coding. Each article is read thoroughly and investigated for passages that overlap with one of the organizers' and/or participant frame components. Since it is difficult for coders to keep about 48 different frame components in mind per demonstration, they are structured in broad categories (five or six) to make searching for frame elements in the articles manageable. Coders first search for the broader categories and, subsequently, determine which one of the components within the category is mentioned in the article. Again, overlap is interpreted broadly. Coders do not compare exact words, but elements are considered congruent when the content overlaps. For each media frame component the source is written down. This can be any actor who directly or

indirectly expresses one of the frames in a newspaper article. Besides quoted, a source can be paraphrased or described in a situation. The same frame component is only coded once per article per actor. Only the media content that overlaps with participant and/or SMO frame components is coded, the rest of the article is not analyzed.

Table 2.2: Examples of congruent participant, organizer and media frames

FRAME COMPONENT	PROTEST PARTICIPANT	PROTEST ORGANIZERS	MEDIA FRAGMENT
People lose jobs due to cuts in education (Fund our Future-UK)	"I'm worried my husband could lose his job with these university budget cuts. That would be a double hit for us."	"Many jobs might be lost because of the cuts in higher education."	"Welfare cuts combined with cuts to funding in higher education does not add up to job creation."
Clarity/certainty should be provided for Defense employees (Military demo-NL)	"They should provide clarity".	"Everyone from the defense personnel has a right to clarity and certainty."	"Commander Van Uhm demands that his people know as soon as possible where they are going to be faced with."
Capitalism is to blame (March for work-BE)	"I blame unfettered capitalism."	"To blame: unbridled capitalism."	"These are the excesses of capitalism."

This part of the coding was done by two coders. Ten percent was double coded, and Krippendorff's alpha was measured for the number of frame components found per newspaper article (K-alpha=.89), and per article the number of frame components congruent with the organizers' pamphlets (K-alpha=.81) and with additional participant frames (K-alpha=.77). Table 2.2 shows examples of congruent participant, SMO and media frames.

The next part of the dissertation covers four studies that are based on the data analysis described in this methodological chapter. For each study different parts of the data collection and analysis are applicable. In the following four chapters I will therefore shortly repeat the essence of the methodology and I will describe the additional codings and variables used in each study.

NOTES

1. Each year on the first of May (leftwing) trade unions take to the streets to celebrate the *International Workers Day* to commemorate the fight for the eight-hour work day. Labor Day is a transnational annual event, but often these marches are politicized and have a domestic target. The claims, slogans and goals of the events then relate to current political debates. The Labor Day marches between 2009 and 2012 were in many countries marked by austerity measures and the impact of the economic crisis.

2. Unfortunately I do not have information about the number of surveys that were distributed at the 'Second Student Demonstration' in London. The surveys that were send back from this demonstration were not included when calculating the response rate.

3. Many thanks to Ruud Wouters and Jeroen Van Laer for their help with the coding of the organizers' platforms.

4. As I indicate in this paragraph, I code blame attribution within the diagnoses. It is also possible to code—within the prognoses—whether an element pinpoints a certain actor that should solve the problem. I choose not make this additional distinction. Blame attribution arguably plays a more important role in motivating human activities and has received significantly more attention within the social movement literature in general, and within the frame alignment approach in particular (see Chapter 5). Nevertheless, examining this aspect of framing would be interesting for future research.

Table 2.3: Covered demonstrations, and number of participants, respondents and frame components per demo

#	DEMONSTRATION	DATE	COUNTRY	ISSUE	# PARTICIPANTS	# RESPONDENTS	# SMO FRAME COMPONENTS
1	Climate Change	05-Dec-09	BE	Environment	15,000	334	34
2	No to Austerity	29-Sep-10	BE	Austerity	70,000	144	26
3	We have alternatives	02-Dec-11	BE	Austerity	70,000	169	37
4	Not in Our Name	02-May-11	BE	Democracy	700	202	17
5	Fukushima never again	11-Mar-12	BE	Environment	1,000	189	14
6	No Government, Great Country	23-Jan-11	BE	Democracy	45,000	365	9
7	March for Work	29-Jan-10	BE	Austerity	31,000	129	23
8	Non-Profit Demonstration	29-Mar-11	BE	Austerity	15,000	197	23
9	Retirement demonstration	21-Nov-09	NL	Austerity	7,000	294	9
10	Culture demo Amsterdam	20-Nov-10	NL	Austerity	15,000	176	15
11	Culture demo Utrecht	20-Nov-10	NL	Austerity	2,500	171	15
12	Stop budget cuts (care & welfare)	19-Sep-11	NL	Austerity	4,500	293	14
13	Occupy Netherlands	05-Nov-11	NL	Democracy	120	37	33
14	Together strong for public work	17-Feb-11	NL	Austerity	8,000	348	21
15	Stop racism and exclusion	19-Mar-11	NL	Discrimination	350	125	18
16	Student demo Amsterdam	21-May-10	NL	Austerity	15,000	163	30
17	Student demo The Hague	21-Jan-11	NL	Austerity	2,000	284	18
18	Military demo	26-May-11	NL	Austerity	4,000	204	21
19	National Climate March 2009	05-Dec-09	UK	Environment	50,000	243	27
20	No to racism, fascism & islamophobia	06-Nov-10	UK	Discrimination	3,000	194	15
21	Fund Our Future: Stop Education Cuts	10-Nov-10	UK	Austerity	30,000	147	18
22	National Climate March 2010	04-Dec-10	UK	Environment	1,500	359	17
23	Second Student National Demo	09-Dec-10	UK	Austerity	40,000	98	11
24	Occupy London	12-Nov-11	UK	Democracy	600	144	15
25	May Day Labour March	01-May-10	UK	Austerity	5,000	178	15
26	Million Women Rise	05-Mar-11	UK	Discrimination	3,000	178	35
27	Take Back Parliament	15-May-10	UK	Democracy	2,000	350	22
28	No to Hate Crime Vigil	23-Oct-10	UK	Discrimination	2,000	169	14
29	'TUC's March for the Alternative	26-Mar-11	UK	Austerity	250,000	211	17
Mean					84,879	210	20.1

Figure 2.1: Example of protest organizers' pamphlets: Fund our Future, London, 10/11/2010

WILL YOU stand up for EDUCATION?

Fund our Future
National March & Rally
10 November 2010

Assemble 12pm: Horse Guards Avenue, Westminster SW1A for 1pm start

Rally speakers:
- Sally Hunt, UCU General Secretary
- Aaron Porter, NUS President
- Frances O'Grady, TUC Deputy General Secretary

5pm: after-demo event at the Bread and Roses Pub, Clapham, London SW4 (http://www.breadandrosespub.com/finding-us.aspx)

FUND OUR FUTURE
NUS & UCU: STOP EDUCATION CUTS

UCU
University and College Union

WHY WE ARE MARCHING

The challenges facing further and higher education have never been greater

- The Coalition government looks set to make unprecedented funding cuts across our sector – 25% or more across further, higher and adult education.
- The Association of Colleges has warned that more than 20,000 jobs could be lost over the next four years and 800,000 learner places cut. These cuts will affect one-third of all adult learners.
- In higher education, university teaching and research budgets are being slashed and there is public discussion of universities closing or being taken over by profit-seeking companies.
- The state is retreating from funding education and asking students to pay more – the Browne review may make England the most expensive place to study within higher education in the world, in spite of widespread public opposition to making students pay more.
- In the UK, successive generations have pledged to expand learning and opportunity to the one that follows them. Now our political leaders are preparing to reverse this advance and people who benefited from free education are about to close the door on the aspirations of hundreds of thousands of young people.
- Further and higher education create wealth for our economy – estimated at over £60bn for the UK. We cannot afford the economic and human cost of weakening our education system.
- Other countries are not making this mistake – The United States, France, Germany, India and China are all investing in their education systems, recognising that education is a driver of economic recovery and social cohesion.
- Now is the time to strengthen it to meet the demands of the future, not to burden the country with a skills deficit and betray generations of our people.

JOIN THE MARCH
- Join thousands of trade union members and students on the 'Fund our Future' march and rally on Wednesday 10 November.
- We must send a clear message to the Coalition government that these cuts must stop, for the sake of our communities, our economic prosperity and our future.
- It doesn't matter whether you have never attended a demonstration in your life or you are a seasoned marcher.

NOW IS THE TIME TO STAND UP FOR EDUCATION

FUND OUR FUTURE
NUS & UCU: STOP EDUCATION CUTS

UCU
University and College Union

Figure 2.2: Example of protest organizers' pamphlets: We Have Alternatives, Brussels, 02/12/2011

Het is hun fout, het is hun schuld, niet de onze

De financiële markten slaan volledig op hol. Ze hebben ons in de miserie gestort. Ze steken ons in de schulden. Na vette dividenden en schandalig grote bonussen, blijven ze maar doorgaan en vragen ons de rekening te betalen.

Dominique Leyon, haachtsesteenweg 579, 1030 Brussel, Rudy De Leeuw, Hoogstraat 42, 1000 Brussel, Jan Vercamst, Poincarélaan 72, 1070 Brussel - Niet op de openbare weg werpen aub

Voor hen garantieplannen, voor ons bezuinigingsmaatregelen? Geen sprake van!

De nieuwe regering moet 11,3 miljard vinden, alleen al voor de begroting van 2012.
Volgens de werkgevers en de rechterzijde moeten wij :

- de index afschaffen;
- de welvaartsvastheid van de sociale uitkeringen afbouwen;
- het brugpensioen afschaffen en de pensioenleeftijden optrekken;
- de wacht- en werkloosheidsuitkeringen verminderen en/of in de tijd beperken;
- het tijdkrediet en de landingsbanen uithollen;
- de jacht organiseren op alle oudere werklozen en bruggepensioneerden;
- duizenden ambtenaren ontslaan en de openbare diensten privatiseren.

Saneren zonder te verarmen!

Tot nu toe kon ons land de schok van de crisis beter opvangen dan de buurlanden. Dankzij de index en onze sociale zekerheid, in het bijzonder de verzekering tegen werkloosheid . Dankzij het behoud van onze koopkracht en het op peil houden van de consumptie. Zonder die schokdempers zou de motor zijn vastgelopen. Door bezuinigingsmaatregelen zinken we alleen maar verder weg.

- De lonen en de koopkracht zijn de motor van de economie.
- De index volgt enkel de prijzen. Niet de index, maar de prijzen moeten worden afgeremd. Zeker de energieprijzen.
- Kwaliteitsvolle en voor allen toegankelijke gezondheidszorg moet behouden blijven.

Werk, kwaliteitsvol werk, werk voor iedereen

De werklozen verarmen, van bruggepensioneerden oudere werklozen maken, van ambtenaren werkzoekenden maken en nadien een jacht op de werklozen organiseren, zijn geen oplossingen!
Om uit de crisis te geraken, moeten er meer banen komen, moeten degelijke lonen worden betaald, en moet er werk zijn voor iedereen.

- Oudere werknemers aan het werk houden in plaats van ze aan de deur te zetten. Verlicht hun werk zodat ze meekunnen;
- Werknemers opleiden in plaats van ze te ontslaan. Stel hen in staat hun loopbaan te organiseren via tijdkrediet;
- Ophouden met de precarisering van jongerenjobs. Biedt hen degelijke jobs.

De openbare diensten en de social profit versterken. Zij werken immers ook herverdelend.
Dat zijn de oplossingen. Handen af van tijdkrediet, landingsbanen,brugpensioen en pensioen. En handen af van wacht- en werkloosheidsuitkeringen.

Het geld halen waar het zit !

De overheidsfinanciën saneren is een noodzaak. Maar men moet het geld halen waar het zit, bij wie meest verdient , bij wie meest bezit, bij wie het verstopt, bij wie de Staatskas leegzuigt.
Daarom willen wij:

- een echte strijd tegen fiscale fraude en tegen de loon- en bijdragefraude;
- inkomens uit vermogen en vermogensaanwas even zwaar belasten als inkomens uit arbeid;
- heffing op de financiële transacties en speculaties die de economie verstoren;
- woekerwinsten belasten en nodeloze cadeaus aan de bedrijven afschaffen (zoals die via de notionele intrestaftrek);
- een rem op de ontwijking van belastingen en bijdragen via vennootschappen en schijnzelfstandigheid.

Dat zijn de oplossingen. Daar zit 11,3 miljard!

**WE ZIJN NIET GEDOEMD BLIND TE BEZUINIGEN. WIJ HEBBEN ALTERNATIEVEN!
IEDEREEN NAAR DE NATIONALE BETOGING OP 2 DECEMBER
IN BRUSSEL!**

NEEN AAN BLINDE BEZUINIGINGEN !

HANDEN AF VAN DE INDEX, HANDEN AF VAN HET BRUGPENSIOEN EN HET PENSIOEN, HANDEN AF VAN DE WACHT – EN WERKLOOSHEIDSUITKERINGEN

WIJ HEBBEN ALTERNATIEVEN

- *een economische relance*
- *kwaliteitsvolle jobs, in het bijzonder voor jongeren, en degelijke lonen*
- *welvaartsvaste sociale uitkeringen*
- *strijd tegen de fiscale en bijdragefraude*
- *echte opheffing van het bankgeheim*
- *een rechtvaardige fiscaliteit en belasting op kapitaal*
- *halt aan cadeaus voor de bedrijven via onder meer de notionele intrestaftrek*
- *belasting op financiële transacties en regulering van de banken*
- *sterke openbare diensten en de socio-profit*

ACLVB ACV ABVV

Figure 2.3: Examples of protest organizers' pamphlets: Stop Racism & Exclusion, Amsterdam, 19/03/2011

Table 2.4: Media search strings and number of newspaper articles found per demo

#	DEMONSTRATION	MEDIA SEARCH STRING	# ARTICLES FOUND
1	No to Austerity	(bezuinig* OR bespar*) AND (recessie OR werk OR werklo* OR koopkracht OR "economische groei" OR armoe* OR herstelplan OR job*) AND (Europ* OR EU)	109
2	We have alternatives	((bezuinig* OR bespar*) AND (index* OR pensioen* OR "economische crisis" OR werklo* OR "uitkering*"))	308
3	March for Work	(Opel AND (werk OR werkloos OR werkloosheid)) OR (crisis AND België AND (werk OR werkloos OR werkloosheid)) OR ((herstructurering OR reorganisatie) AND (werk OR werkloos OR werkloosheid))	176
4	Retirement demonstration	pensioenleeftijd OR (AOW AND leeftijd) OR (pensioen! AND leeftijd) OR (bezuinig! AND pensioen!) OR (vergrijz! AND pensioen!)	425
5	Culture demo Amsterdam	(bezuinig! OR subsidie! OR BTW OR belasting!) AND (cultuur OR kunst!) OR “culturele kaalslag” OR (schreeuw AND cultuur)	438
6	Culture demo Utrecht	(bezuinig! OR subsidie! OR BTW OR belasting!) AND (cultuur OR kunst!) OR “culturele kaalslag” OR (schreeuw AND cultuur)	438
7	Stop budget cuts (care & welfare)	(bezuinig! OR bespar! AND (gehandicapt OR welzijn OR wajong OR PGB OR “speciaal onderwijs” OR “sociale werkvoorziening!” OR “sociale werkplaats!” OR “publieke sector” OR “publiek werk”)	158
8	Together strong for public work	(bezuinig! OR bespar! OR ontslag!) AND (“publieke sector” OR “publiek werk” OR ambtena!)	203
9	Student demo Amsterdam	langstudeer! OR collegegeld OR studiefinanciering OR (bezuinig! AND onderwijs) OR basisbeurs OR sociaal leenstelsel OR (studie AND boete) OR (stude! AND boete) OR (crisis AND onderwijs)	288
10	Student demo The Hague	langstudeer! OR collegegeld OR studiefinanciering OR (bezuinig! AND onderwijs) OR basisbeurs OR sociaal leenstelsel OR (studie AND boete) OR (stude! AND boete)	250
11	Military demo	(bezuinig! OR ontslag! OR reorganisatie! OR waardering OR cao) AND (defensie! OR leger! OR militair!)	287
12	Fund Our Future: Stop Education Cuts	((funding OR funds OR austerit!) w/15 (educat! OR universit! OR student!))	429
13	Second Student National Demo	((funding OR funds OR austerit!) w/15 (educat! OR universit! OR student!))	488
14	'TUC's March for the Alternative	("budget cut!"OR austerit!) AND (alternative! OR unemploy! OR "economic growth" OR "economic crisis")	269

III

DEGREES OF FRAME ALIGNMENT:

Comparing Organizers' and Participants' Frames

ABSTRACT

The frame alignment approach is one of the most influential mobilization theories. This theory holds that frame alignment is a necessary condition for movement participation. The present study challenges this premise. Instead of treating frame alignment as a precondition for participation, I address it as something that should be empirically examined. Also, rather than distinguishing between either aligned or non-aligned protesters, I study frame alignment as a matter of degree. I draw on protest surveys collected during 29 demonstrations in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The following research questions take center stage: To what extent are the frames of protest organizers and participants aligned? And are there differences in degrees of alignment across framing tasks, countries and issues? The findings show that many participants are only partially aligned. The highest levels of alignment are found for the diagnostic framing task. While the article finds few differences across countries and issues for general alignment levels, sub-aspects do tend to differ.

This chapter is based on the following article:

Ketelaars, P., Walgrave, S. & Wouters, R. (2014). Degrees of frame alignment: Comparing organizers' and participants' frames in 29 demonstrations in three countries. *International Sociology, 29*(6): 504-524.

DEGREES OF FRAME ALIGNMENT

Comparing Organizers' and Participants' Frames

The frame alignment approach is one of the most influential theories among students of social movements (Snow et al., 2014). According to Benford and Snow (2000, p. 612), who introduced the idea of frame alignment (Snow & Benford, 1988; Snow et al., 1986), there has been an 'almost meteoric increase in articles, chapters, and papers referring to the framing/movement link since the mid-1980s'. The theory holds that for people to participate in a social movement event, their frames, or beliefs about the issue at stake, must be in line with the mobilizing message of the organizers: "frame alignment is a *necessary condition* for movement participation, whatever its nature or intensity" (Snow et al., 1986, p. 464 emphasis added). However, treating frame alignment as a precondition for participation is problematic (Opp, 2009). It suggests that frame alignment is a dichotomous variable: you are either aligned or you are not. Yet the literature remains silent about what alignment is in operational terms and what the criteria are to speak of an 'aligned' protester. Consequently, the idea that frame alignment is a precondition for participation is untestable. Instead of treating frame alignment as a precondition for participation, in this study I address it as something that should be empirically examined. And rather than (arbitrarily) distinguishing between aligned and non-aligned protesters, I study frame alignment as a matter of degree.

I empirically test, arguably for the first time (also see Opp, 2009, p. 254), the congruence between the frames put forward by the protest organizers and the beliefs and perspectives of protest participants. Though scholars have widely studied the conditions under which frames appeal to a targeted audience (Cadena-Roa, 2002; Hewitt & McCammon, 2004; McCammon, 2009, 2013) and have shown that framing matters for mobilization processes—like facilitating

collective action (Chakravarty & Chaudhuri, 2012) and recruiting new members (Mika, 2006)—we do not know to what degree organizational frames actually resonate with participants at protest events.

The data cover 29 demonstrations staged between 2009 and 2012 on various issues in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The frames of the protest participants are analyzed via open survey questions. The organizers' frames are deduced from the official demonstration platform texts. Degrees of frame alignment are measured by comparing the extent to which a participant's reasoning corresponds with the organization's framing regarding the diagnoses (what is the problem and who is to blame?) and prognoses (what should be done?). I tackle the following research questions: (1) To what extent are the frames of protest organizers and participants aligned? (2) Does the degree of alignment differ across the framing functions of diagnosis, blame attribution and prognosis? (3) Are protests on some issues and in some countries attended by on average more, or less, aligned participants than protests on other issues and in other countries?

In this study I make frame alignment quantitatively measurable and I show empirically that frame alignment is a matter of degree. The results show great variation in the degree to which protesters are aligned. In fact, the majority of participants (partly) have another understanding of the protest than the organizations staging the demonstration. Apparently, not all participants who show up for a street protest share the same understanding of the issue, how to deal with it, and who is to blame for it. I further find only slight country differences regarding alignment on diagnoses, blame attributions and prognoses, which indicates that the results are robust and that there is a generic pattern. With respect to variations between issues, especially participants in austerity events stand out. Their blaming is more congruent with the organizers', but their prognoses are less aligned compared to other activists, especially the environmentalists. Environmental and austerity participants seem to contrast in their alignment pattern.

FRAME ALIGNMENT

In this section I first briefly discuss frame alignment theory and recent developments. Then I identify three important lacunae in framing literature, and I subsequently formulate the three research questions.

Framing is a broad concept, popular both in communication sciences (Entman, 1993) and sociology (Goffman, 1974). In 1986, Snow and colleagues introduced framing in social movement studies and coined the specific concept of frame alignment: "the linkage of individual and SMO interpretive orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complementary" (1986, p. 464). The approach defines (collective action) frames as "action oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate social movement activities and campaigns" (Snow & Benford, 1992, p. 137). Through framing, social movement organizations try to gather support for their claims and mobilize potential participants by interpreting certain events. In operational terms we can think of frames as the sentences and words that movement ideologists and organizers use to put together a coherent package of meaning (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995). An important aspect distinguishing the frame alignment approach from other social movement theories is that it is concerned with signifying work. An essential motivation for early framing scholars was to counteract the prevailing theories that treated meaning as a given instead of something that is produced (Snow & Benford, 1988). As such, the rise of the frame alignment theory in social movement studies marked a much welcomed cultural turn. While political opportunities (Meyer, 2004) and organizational structures (Edwards & McCarthy, 2004) dominated theories of collective action, frame alignment theory injected the field with the belief that the meanings people attach to their situation are crucial.

Until the late 1990s the majority of framing research was descriptive and concentrated on the elaboration and application of framing concepts (Benford, 1997). Since then the empirical scope of the field has grown, and nowadays the bulk of framing research is explanatory (Snow, 2004). Recent studies, for instance, examine the determinants of frame variation (Haalboom, 2011; McCammon, 2012) and the effects of strategic framing (Chakravarty & Chaudhuri, 2012). More and more scholars analyze consequences of framing—like cultural change (McCammon, 2013) and political outcomes (McCammon et al., 2007). Nevertheless, there is still a lack of standard measures and systematic studies across movements (Johnston & Alimi, 2013), making it difficult to generalize about causes and effects (Polletta & Ho, 2006).

One of the most appealing features of frame alignment theory is that it connects the micro-level of protest participation with the meso-level of protest organization. Yet although the foundational framing studies were focused on micro-mobilization (see e.g. Gamson et al., 1982; Snow et al., 1986), scholars have up to now mainly analyzed framing as a meso-level phenomenon and primarily stressed the strategic use of frames by organizations (Johnston,

1995; Williams, 2004). The approach brought individuals only seemingly back in. This is remarkable because alignment by definition involves both senders and receivers. An appropriate design should investigate both levels at the same time. Increasingly more framing studies examine, instead of frames of organizations, frames of individuals—of members (Ernst, 2009), participants (Alkon, Cortez, & Sze, 2013; Hadler & McKay, 2013), or even non-activists (Mika, 2006). However, the congruence with the organizers' frames—the alignment—has not been studied yet (Opp, 2009).

Apart from a prevailing focus on the meso-level, most scholarly attention has focused on members of organizations. However, modes and styles of participation are changing and are less driven by organizations (Rheingold, 2007; Walgrave & Verhulst, 2006). Activists are increasingly individualized users of protest rather than members of organizations (Earl & Schussman, 2003; Tilly, 2004). Diani (2009) even distinguishes between two types of participation milieus: the associational and the protest milieu. Here I switch focus to the protest side of movements and analyze frames of participants in street demonstrations.

Finally, in most framing literature, frame alignment is treated as a kind of self-evident precondition for participation (Snow et al., 1986). People participate in events they agree with, not in events they do not share the goals and aims of. This premise, however, suggests that frame alignment is a binary phenomenon with an operational cut-off point that distinguishes people who are aligned from people who are not. Rather, I hold that frame alignment is a matter of degree and I argue that determining a cut-off point would be arbitrary (Opp, 2009). Instead of a 'given' frame alignment of protesters should be a matter of empirical investigation. Accordingly, the first research question reads: To what extent are the frames of protest organizers and protest participants aligned?

The second research question refers to framing tasks. Snow and Benford (1988) identify three core framing functions: diagnosis, prognosis and motivation. Does the degree of alignment differ across these functions? Diagnostic and prognostic framing are both part of the consensus mobilization process and must convince people of the rightness of the cause (Klandermans, 1984). Diagnostic framing is about identifying a problem and attributing blame or causality. What is the problem? And who or what is to blame? Prognostic framing is about suggesting solutions for the problem: what has to be done? Motivational framing, finally, is the call to arms beyond the diagnostic and prognostic components. After convincing potential adherents of what is at stake and what the possible solutions are, organizations have to convince them that attending the event is worthwhile. This study focuses on the consensus framing functions –

diagnosis and prognosis. Like Gerhards and Rucht (1992), I did not find specific motivation frame components in the platforms and only found implicit motivational framing, i.e. inherent to the diagnostic and prognostic frames.

The third research question is whether protests on some issues and in some countries are attended by on average more, or less, aligned participants than protests on other issues and in other countries. Much of the framing literature consists of case studies examining movement-specific frames, not comparing issues, let alone countries (Snow et al., 2014). Here I study participants in three different countries—Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom—taking to the streets on various kinds of issues. I do not formulate specific country or issue expectations, and mainly want to test whether patterns hold across countries and issues.

DATA AND METHODS

The data for this study were gathered using the protest survey method during 29 demonstrations in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The protests took place between 2009 and 2012 and were held on four different issues: sixteen anti-austerity events, four events on environmental issues, four anti-discrimination demonstrations, and five democracy protests. The general data selection process is described in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. The precise coding of protest participant and SMO frames is explained there as well. In the following paragraphs I will focus on decisions and codings that specifically apply to the present chapter.

In order to measure degrees of frame alignment, the frames of protest participants are compared with the frames of social movement organizations staging the demonstrations. The more a participant's reasoning to take part in the demonstration corresponds with that of the organizations, the higher the degree of frame alignment. In line with the work of Hank Johnston (1995, 2002, 2005), I identify the frame components that make up the frames of individual protesters and SMOs' mobilization campaigns. Three open questions in the protest survey are used to identify participants' frame components. The protest organizer frame elements are deduced from the official platforms underlying the demonstrations. Respondent answers are cut down into quasi-sentences, containing one statement or message. For each quasi-sentence that a respondent writes down, coders determine whether it is *congruent* or not with one of the organizers' frame components. Also, each identified frame element is categorized as either (1) a diagnosis, (2) a blame attribution, or (3) a prognosis.[1] Although blame attributions are part of

diagnostic framing, I code them separately since they might follow a different logic than the diagnostic problem components (Javeline, 2003).

On average, the demonstration platforms contain twenty frame components, consisting on average of ten diagnoses, 6.5 prognoses and 3.5 blames. All pamphlets cover diagnostic framing and provide one or more responsible actors. The fewest diagnoses are mentioned in environmental platforms (mean=6.6) and the most appear in anti-austerity demonstrations (mean=11.0). The number of blamed actors across issues is more or less equal. Prognoses are most often found in the environmental platforms (mean=13.5), and least in anti-austerity events (mean=4.7). For two anti-austerity demonstrations prognostic framing is absent (see Table 3.4 in Appendix).

Measuring frame alignment

I construct a dataset the on the individual respondent level, containing 5,495 cases. All organizers' frame components are dummy variables in this dataset and are coded 1 when the specific element was mentioned by the respondent and 0 otherwise. Next, a series of frame alignment measures are calculated, ranging from tolerant to strict. In total, there are five different measures. This might come across as overkill. However, presenting the first empirical take on frame alignment, I believe that a diverse look at such an elusory concept is both fruitful and necessary.

The first measure is *dummy alignment*. Respondents with at least one frame component in common with the organizers' platform are coded 1, the ones without any overlap are coded 0. The second measure is *full argument*: respondents who mention a complete argument—the combination of a congruent diagnosis, prognosis and blamed actor—are coded 1, the others 0. To measure *total alignment*, I simply add up the number of congruent frame components for each respondent. *Relative alignment* measures the share of congruent frame elements in proportion to the total number of elements the respondent produced (see Table 3.4 in Appendix for the relative alignment per demonstration). *Total non-alignment* measures the sum of frame components that are incongruent with the platforms. The descriptives of all alignment variables can be found in Table 3.1.

Using these measures I create a scale (0–4) for *degrees of alignment*. Respondents with no congruent frame component are coded 0 ('not' aligned). 'Low' alignment (1) captures respondents who share only one frame element with the organizers. Respondents who are 'moderately' aligned (2) mention more than one congruent element, yet more than half of their

frame components are incongruent. The 'highly' aligned (3) have more than half of their quasi-sentences in common with the organizers. Finally, when all respondents' frame elements are congruent with the organizers' pamphlets, the respondent is considered 'very highly' aligned (4).

Table 3.1: Variables and their descriptives

	MEASUREMENT	MEAN	S.D.	MIN.	MAX.
General Alignment (N=5,495)					
Dummy Alignment (0-1)	0 = no congruent frame component 1 = at least one congruent frame component	.90	.30	0	1
Full Argument (0-1)	0 = all other cases 1 = at least one congruent diagnosis, prognosis and blame	.13	.34	0	1
Total Alignment (#)	Total number of congruent frame components	2.10	1.30	0	7
Relative Alignment (%)	Total alignment divided by total number of frame components	.49	.28	0	1
Total Nonalignment (#)	Total number of incongruent frame components	2.02	1.47	0	10
Diagnoses (N=5,495)					
Congruent Diagnoses (#)	Total number of congruent diagnoses	.88	.87	0	6
Incongruent Diagnoses (#)	Total number of incongruent diagnoses	.70	.90	0	6
Total Diagnoses (#)	Total number of diagnoses	1.58	1.12	0	8
Relative Diagnoses (%)	Congruent diagnoses divided by total number of diagnoses given	.50	.44	0	1
Prognoses (N=5,495)					
Congruent Prognoses (#)	Total number of congruent prognoses	.71	.90	0	6
Incongruent Prognoses (#)	Total number of incongruent prognoses	.82	.78	0	6
Total Prognoses (#)	Total number of prognoses	1.53	1.05	0	8
Relative Prognoses (%)	Congruent prognoses divided by total number of prognoses given	.37	.42	0	1
Blames (N=5,495)					
Congruent Actors (#)	Total number of congruent blames	.55	.64	0	5
Incongruent Actors (#)	Total number of incongruent blames	.50	.73	0	5
Total Actors (#)	Total number of blames	1.05	.86	0	5
Relative Actors (%)	Congruent actors divided by total number of blames given	.41	.46	0	1
Platform Features (N=29)					
Frame components (#)	Number of frame components in the organizers' platform	20.10	7.75	9	37

As mentioned earlier, respondents' frame components are categorized into diagnoses, prognoses and blamed actors. For each of these categories I calculate per respondent the total number of congruent frame components (*congruent diagnoses*, *congruent prognoses*, *congruent blames*), the total number of incongruent frame components (*incongruent diagnoses*, *incongruent prognoses*, *incongruent blames*), the total number of frame elements in that category (*total diagnoses*, *total prognoses*, *total blames*) and the relative number of congruent frame elements (*relative diagnoses*, *relative prognoses*, *relative blames*). Descriptives of all variables are listed in Table 3.1.

RESULTS

Using the measures presented in Table 3.1 and looking at Figure 3.1, the first research question can be answered: To what extent are the frames of protest organizers and participants aligned? I find great variation in the degree of protesters' frame alignment. The picture that arises is clear: most demonstrators have some frame components in common with the organizers, but there are also many 'extreme' cases with—on the one hand—respondents who share no elements at all with the organizers, and—on the other hand—respondents whose answers are fully aligned.

Figure 3.1: To what extent (0-4) are respondents (%) aligned?

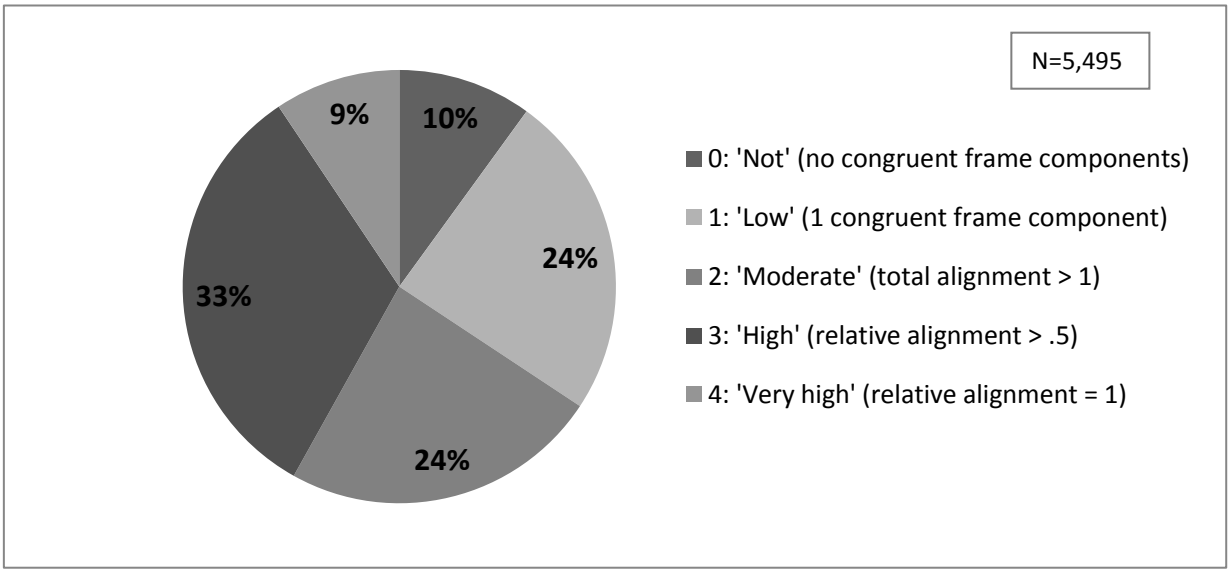


Figure 3.1 shows that about ten percent of the participants do not mention any frame element in common with the demonstration platform. This implies that 90% of the respondents can be considered aligned to a certain extent. However, a quarter (24%) have only a single

component in common with the organizers. These participants can be considered very loosely aligned, especially since respondents do mention a fair number of frame elements in their answers—the average number across demonstrators is 4.1. Combining the first two parts of the pie chart in Figure 3.1 ('not aligned' and 'low alignment') shows that more than a third (34%) of the protest participants are not aligned or only aligned to a limited extent.

The *full argument* variable measures whether respondents have at least one diagnosis, one prognosis and one blamed actor in common with the protest organizers. Do respondents replicate a full argument that was put forward by the organizers? The results in Table 3.1 indicate that 87% of the protest participants do not produce an answer that is covering a congruent diagnosis, prognosis and blame at the same time.[2] Relaxing this criterion—only taking into account diagnosis and prognosis—still 73% do not write down a fully congruent argument. This is strong proof of the fact that the extent to which participants are aligned is rather low. Note that only participants who answered all three open questions are included, which provides a conservative measure for degrees of alignment.

Furthermore, Figure 3.1 indicates that 24% of the protesters are 'moderately' aligned: they mention more than one congruent frame component, yet more than half of their frame elements were not part of the official call for action. This shows that many protest participants attribute an alternative meaning to the event in which they participate. Of all the frame components voiced by participants, half do not overlap with the message of the protest organizers (*relative alignment* = .49). One-third of the protesters (33% in Figure 1) can be called 'highly' aligned: at least half of their frame components are congruent with those of the organizers. Finally, only nine percent of the demonstrators are 'very highly' aligned: all the quasi-sentences they write down reflect the protest organizers' call for action.

The second research question regarded the different tasks of framing—diagnosis, prognosis and blaming—and whether frame alignment differs between these tasks. We start again by looking at Table 3.1. Protesters on average tend to mention an equal number of solutions (*total prognoses* = 1.53) and problems (*total diagnoses* = 1.58). They blame actors least (*total actors* = 1.05). Of all participants, eleven percent did not mention any solution, fifteen percent did not mention a diagnosis and 26% did not blame any actor (figures not shown in table). The main reason for the latter result is probably the fact that there are often only two or three blamed actors mentioned in a pamphlet, while there are generally many diagnoses and prognoses. Furthermore, blame can also be attributed to a certain situation or 'something' (which was coded as a diagnosis here) rather than to a person, party, or organization.

Looking at the degree of alignment, frame alignment levels are highest for the diagnoses. Of all diagnoses mentioned, half are congruent with the ones of the organizers (*relative diagnoses* = .50). The level of alignment is lower for blaming actors (*relative actors* = .41) and for prognostic framing (*relative prognoses* = .37). The same picture emerges when we look at respondents' non-aligned frame elements. About half of the respondents (48%) write down one or more incongruent diagnosis while a good deal more, 64%, mention at least one incongruent prognosis. Only 39% mention an incongruent actor (figures not in table). In short, demonstrators mention an equal number of problems and solutions, yet the problems they mention are on average more in line with the demonstration platforms than the solutions they formulate. Hence, organizers are more successful in getting the problem across to their participants than in persuading them of their preferred solution. Note that the actual causal chain may also be reversed. Organizers could be more reactive to the problems as defined by their potential participants and less responsive to their constituency when it comes to possible solutions. Since I do not have over-time data, I cannot tease out the direction—top-down or bottom-up—of the frame alignment.

Table 3.2: Average alignment, diagnoses, prognoses and blames per country

	BELGIUM (N = 1,562)	NETHERLANDS (N = 1,874)	UK (N = 2,059)	TOTAL (N = 5,495)	ANOVA (F) (η^2)
General Alignment					
Dummy Alignment (0-1)	.92	.89	.89	.90	55.43 (.00)
Full Argument (0-1)	.19	.10	.11	.13	6.72 (.01)
Total Alignment (#)	2.39	1.95	2.03	2.10	33.15 (.02)
Relative Alignment (%)	.53	.50	.45	.49	43.97(.02)
Total Nonalignment (#)	1.86	1.78	2.37	2.02	96.70 (.03)
Diagnoses					
Congruent Diagnoses (#)	.94	1.00	.73	.88	52.43 (.02)
Incongruent Diagnoses (#)	.73	.38	.96	.70	***217.95 (.07)***
Relative Diagnoses (%)	.50	.61	.39	.50	122.00 (.04)
Prognoses					
Congruent Prognoses (#)	.94	.27	.94	.71	***381.12 (.12)***
Incongruent Prognoses (#)	.73	.75	.96	.82	50.39 (.02)
Relative Prognoses (%)	.46	.20	.45	.37	***248.91 (.08)***
Blames					
Congruent Actors (#)	.63	.68	.36	.55	143.27 (.05)
Incongruent Actors (#)	.40	.65	.46	.50	56.74 (.02)
Relative Actors (%)	.46	.51	.28	.41	130.72 (.04)
Platform Features					
Frame components (#)	22.88	19.40	18.73	20.10	.711 (.05)

The third goal of the article was to test whether levels of frame alignment differ across countries and issues. For both countries and issues the answer is negative: there are no

substantial differences in frame alignment. Yet there are some underlying differences regarding diagnoses, prognoses and blames.

Table 3.2 compares the alignment measures across countries. The results are remarkably stable. Notwithstanding the real differences between the countries, e.g. in terms of the strength of the social movement sector and the issues that were high on the agenda, there are no significant differences in general alignment levels. Frame alignment seems to be the highest in Belgium. All alignment measures—except for *total non-alignment*—suggest that the beliefs of the average Dutch and British demonstrator are a little bit more disconnected from those of the organizers. Nevertheless, one-way ANOVA tests reveal that these general inter-country differences displayed in the upper panel of Table 3.2 are minor: the effect size (η^2) for all these variables is below .06.[3] The countries do differ, however, regarding the different framing tasks. Dutch protest participants write down fewer *incongruent diagnoses* than the Belgian and British activists ($F = 217.95$; $\eta^2 = .07$). Yet, their prognoses are less aligned than the prognoses of their Belgian and British colleagues (*congruent prognoses*, $F = 381.12$; $\eta^2 = .12$; *relative prognoses*, $F = 248.91$; $\eta^2 = .08$). It thus seems that—in comparison with Belgian and British activists—Dutch participants agree more with their organizers on 'what is the problem' and less on 'what should be done'. These results are probably due to differences across issues. Eight of the ten Dutch demonstrations were anti-austerity events, and—as we will see below—austerity demonstrations particularly differ from demonstrations on other issues.

Table 3.3 presents the results per issue. The story is similar: no overall differences, yet a few differences on sub-aspects. None of the general alignment figures in the upper panel produce large effects (η^2 is below .06 for all these variables). The only thing the aggregate measures indicate is that environmental protests score somewhat higher on both the *full argument* and the *total alignment* measure. This suggests that environmental protests may have higher or different alignment patterns than the other types of protest in the sample.

Issues do have a considerate effect on *congruent prognoses* ($F = 228.85$; $\eta^2 = .11$) and *relative prognoses* ($F = 144.14$; $\eta^2 = .07$). The scores on these prognostic variables are lowest for anti-austerity participants and highest for environmental activists. Also, issues have a significant effect on *congruent actors* ($F = 66.08$; $\eta^2 = .06$) and *relative actors* ($F = 84.34$; $\eta^2 = .06$), which—on the contrary—are highest for austerity demonstrations and lowest for environmental events. The fact that anti-austerity marchers, compared to the demonstrators on the other issues, are less aligned on prognoses and more on blamed actors makes a lot of sense. The 'problem' underlying austerity protests is quite clear: austerity measures. The agency to be blamed is

rather self-evident as well: the government. For nine of the anti-austerity demonstrations in the sample 'the government' was the most mentioned blamed actor. These results may also be explained by the fact that austerity demonstrations are usually staged by 'strong' organizations—most often unions—that have access to resources to publicize their protest messages. However, while austerity protesters agree with their organizers about what the problem is and who is to blame for it, they do not seem to be in line with the proposed solutions.

Table 3.3: Average alignment, diagnoses, prognoses and blames per issue

	AUSTERITY (N=3,019)	ENVIRON. (N=1,046)	DISCRIM. (N=599)	DEMOC. (N=831)	TOTAL (N=5,495)	ANOVA (F) (η^2)
General Alignment						
Dummy Alignment (0-1)	.90	.92	.87	.91	.90	6.94 (.00)
Full Argument (0-1)	.12	.16	.12	.11	.13	2.58 (.00)
Total Alignment (#)	2.06	2.27	2.06	2.08	2.10	5.53 (.00)
Relative Alignment (%)	.49	.50	.42	.52	.49	12.20 (.01)
Total Nonalignment (#)	1.94	2.14	2.49	1.83	2.02	29.14 (.02)
Diagnoses						
Congruent Diagnoses (#)	.94	.81	.87	.68	.88	26.00 (.01)
Incongruent Diagnoses (#)	.58	.82	1.00	.77	.70	53.20 (.03)
Relative Diagnoses (%)	.55	.44	.44	.39	.50	46.06 (.03)
Prognoses						
Congruent Prognoses (#)	.46	1.24	.80	.95	.71	***228.85 (.11)***
Incongruent Prognoses (#)	.82	.83	.95	.69	.82	9.85 (.01)
Relative Prognoses (%)	.26	.54	.40	.51	.37	***144.14 (.07)***
Blames						
Congruent Actors (#)	.65	.38	.39	.48	.55	***66.08 (.06)***
Incongruent Actors (#)	.54	.49	.54	.37	.50	8.39 (.00)
Relative Actors (%)	.48	.28	.26	.41	.41	***84.34 (.06)***
Platform Features						
Frames components(#)	19.56	23.00	20.50	19.20	20.10	.218 (.03)

Environmental protesters, to some extent, display just the opposite pattern. In their prognoses, environmentalists are more congruent with the organizations. They more often share the solutions for environmental problems with the official demonstration platforms. Again, these results make a lot of sense. Environmental organizations are part of an international movement, supported by international discourses and international solutions. Furthermore, the environmental movement can be seen as the prototype of the new social movements. They draw a different constituency to the street (Verhulst, 2011) and make more norm-, identity- and lifestyle-related claims (Williams, 2004). It seems that old social movement participants are more preoccupied with problems and expressing blame whereas new social movement protesters are keener to put forward solutions. This is in line with old social movements foremost protesting against the coming into being of material

disadvantages (or the loss of advantages) and new social movements foremost protesting for the development of certain solutions.

CONCLUSION

The study tested empirically, and across a wide range of protest events in three countries, to what extent frames of staging organizations resonate with protesters. Instead of treating frame alignment as a precondition for participation, I approach it as a matter of empirical investigation. Moreover, rather than proposing that someone is either aligned or not, I suggest that there are degrees of frame alignment.

The first finding is that there is great variation in the extent to which demonstrators are aligned with the frames of protest organizers. The majority of the respondents (90%) voiced at least one congruent frame component, and a third of the demonstrators could be considered highly aligned. However, few participants generated an account indicative of a systematic overlap between their and the organizations' beliefs. Additionally, many participants have, compared to the organizers, an alternative understanding of the protest they participate in. Nearly all participants (91%) mention frame elements that are absent in the demonstrations' platforms. In sum, using a variety of alignment measures that tap into the concept from different angles, a clear picture arises. In general, frame alignment is rather low, and this holds across issues and countries.

This does not imply that frame alignment is not helpful for getting people to take to the streets. This study only draws on people who actually showed up. If I had possessed evidence about non-participants I could have investigated whether being more aligned increases the chances of participation. It most likely does. The only thing that was shown here is that not all participants who do show up share the same understanding of the issue, how to deal with it and who is to blame for it. Added to that, my claim is not that less aligned activists are irrational. The fact that they are either not aligned or only partially aligned does not mean that their reasons to participate are not valid or wrong. Rather, they bring additional grievances and problem solutions to protest events. It may be the case that this leads organizers to reframe the issue for a next event (see the part on "frame extension" in Snow et al., 1986, p. 472).

The second finding is that there are different levels of alignment in terms of the different types of frame components. In general, protest participants are more aligned regarding diagnoses than with regard to prognoses and blames. People who take to the streets agree with

the organizers that a certain issue is problematic. The possible solutions for the problem provide reason for debate.

Third, there are hardly any differences between demonstrations in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Results are strongly similar across countries, reinforcing confidence that this study taps a robust and generic pattern. The same applies to issues: there are few differences regarding frame alignment in general. Yet there are some differences when it comes to the distinct aspects of framing. Austerity protesters and environmental protesters contrast in their alignment pattern. Prognostic framing resonates less and actor blaming resonates more with activists in austerity events while for environmental protesters this is the other way around.

One of the study's lacunae is that it only looks into protest participation. Social movement activism often also implies associational membership. The fact that frame alignment levels are low for protest participation does not mean that they are low for associational participation as well. Membership implies more commitment and durability. It increases the chance that individuals get socialized—and thus more aligned. It is possible as well that frame alignment levels have changed over time. There are reasons to expect that there is less alignment now than thirty years ago—when the concept was developed—since modes of participation and mobilization have changed and protesters have become more individualized. Fragmentation in the social movement sector and, especially, the ICT revolution may have furnished participants with more information, and potentially more diverging information, about the demonstration and its issues. It is likely that it has become much more difficult for protest organizers to control the information regarding their event. So, perhaps in earlier days the crowds were more homogeneous and more connected to the organizers.

In addition to that, the study remains silent regarding frame alignment processes. The analysis only tapped the outcome of these processes. I do not know whether the frames produced by organizations have actually changed the beliefs the participants hold. Is frame alignment the result of framing activities by organizers? Or do organizers and rank-and-file activists mutually influence each other? The fact that frames are aligned between organizations and participants may be, for example, because these recruits already held certain visions of the world before they joined (Jasper, 1997). It may be the case that organizers follow their members' frames, and not vice versa. This was not examined. The design did not allow studying the dynamic interactive process between participants and organizers.

A final methodological caveat is that frame alignment is measured after people participate; postal questionnaires were distributed among participants and were then sent back after the event. So, in a sense, it may be that protesters have become (more) aligned at the event itself—being exposed to messages, slogans and pamphlets during the event (see e.g. Calhoun, 1997; Zuo & Benford, 1995). This possibility makes the finding that many demonstrators are only partially aligned stronger. Even after being exposed to the protest event and its surrounding messages, many do not seem to echo the official diagnoses, prognoses and blames underlying the demonstration.

Since I studied one form of contentious action, peaceful street demonstrations, in three similar western countries, it may be interesting for future research to apply the method to other forms of action and to other countries. More risky and costly forms of action may require higher levels of frame alignment. Also, the three countries under study are characterized by high levels of individualization. It may be that general levels of alignment in such countries are lower than in less individualized countries, as participants might be more inclined to attribute their own interpretation to the events they join.

Furthermore, future studies could try to explain differential levels of frame alignment. I examined differences between countries and issues, and found mainly stability. This suggests that the differences in frame alignment that are clearly present are probably caused by determinants at the individual and the demonstration level (see Chapter 4). The way people are mobilized, whether they are organization members or not, may have an effect on their personal level of agreement with the protest organizers. The same applies for demonstration characteristics, like the size of the coalition organizing the event.

I believe that this study has contributed to the knowledge of framing in protest events. Frame alignment was quantitatively measured, across a wide array of events across countries and issues, and the study produced systematic and sensible results. I showed empirically, probably for the first time, that frame alignment is a matter of degree. Few participants are fully aligned with ‘their’ organizers; many of them attribute alternative interpretations to the event they attend. This seems to be a generic phenomenon, irrespective of the country in which the event takes place or of the issue the protest is dealing with. The next step, of course, is to explain differences in degrees of frame alignment between individuals and protest events.

NOTES

1. Frame components are coded as 'blame attribution' when actors are blamed for the problem in the pamphlet (the government, an organization, a particular politician, etc.). When something else—a situation, process, structure—is held responsible, this is coded as a diagnosis. Please note that this is not the case in Chapter 4.

2. One cannot argue that this finding is a consequence of questionnaire design. In fact, the three open questions primed/probed respondents to give answers that match the diagnosis, prognosis and blame attribution structure, presenting respondents with the opportunity to bring their arguments full circle (see Chapter 2 for the phrasing of the survey questions).

3. Because of the large N (5,495) of the study, almost all variables have a significant effect, even when differences between groups are very small. Therefore, rather than looking at significance levels, I look at the size of the effect (η^2). As a rule of thumb I use Cohen (1988): .01 = small; .06 = medium; .14 = large—and only report on medium and large effects.

Table 3.4: Covered demonstrations, and number of organizers, diagnoses, blames, prognoses and relative alignment per demo

#	DEMONSTRATION	COUNTRY	ISSUE	# ORGANIZERS	# DIAGNOSES[A]	# BLAMES[A]	# PROGNOSES[A]	R.A.[B]
1	Climate Change	BE	Environment	5	9	7	18	.67
2	No to Austerity	BE	Austerity	4	10	4	12	.47
3	We have alternatives	BE	Austerity	3	17	8	12	.43
4	Not in Our Name	BE	Democracy	1	11	5	1	.52
5	Fukushima never again	BE	Environment	4	7	4	3	.61
6	No Government, Great Country	BE	Democracy	1	3	1	5	.43
7	March for Work	BE	Austerity	3	11	5	7	.55
8	Non-Profit Demonstration	BE	Austerity	1	8	2	13	.53
9	Retirement demonstration	NL	Austerity	2	4	3	2	.47
10	Culture demo Amsterdam	NL	Austerity	5	7	6	2	.69
11	Culture demo Utrecht	NL	Austerity	5	7	6	2	.62
12	Stop budget cuts (care & welfare)	NL	Austerity	2	13	1	0	.45
13	Occupy Netherlands	NL	Democracy	1	19	6	8	.45
14	Together strong for public work	NL	Austerity	5	17	1	4	.41
15	Stop racism and exclusion	NL	Discrimination	4	14	3	1	.50
16	Student demo Amsterdam	NL	Austerity	3	22	3	5	.60
17	Student demo The Hague	NL	Austerity	5	11	3	3	.56
18	Military demo	NL	Austerity	4	14	4	3	.34
19	National Climate March 2009	UK	Environment	1	8	3	16	.38
20	Unite Against Fascism	UK	Discrimination	1	11	2	2	.23
21	Fund Our Future: Stop Education Cuts	UK	Austerity	1	13	5	0	.39
22	National Climate March 2010	UK	Environment	1	3	1	13	.35
23	Second Student National Demo	UK	Austerity	1	7	2	2	.40
24	Occupy London	UK	Democracy	1	6	3	6	.35
25	May Day Labour March	UK	Austerity	1	4	3	8	.50
26	Million Women Rise	UK	Discrimination	1	15	3	17	.60
27	Take Back Parliament	UK	Democracy	5	11	2	9	.62
28	No to Hate Crime Vigil	UK	Discrimination	2	3	3	8	.40
29	'TUC's March for the Alternative	UK	Austerity	1	7	3	7	.60
Mean				2.5	10.1	3.5	6.5	.49

Notes: a. Number of diagnoses, blamed actors, and prognoses in demonstration pamphlet b. R.A. = Relative Alignment

IV

PROTESTERS ON AND OFF MESSAGE

Explaining Demonstrators' Differential Degrees of Frame Alignment

ABSTRACT

The frame alignment perspective stresses the importance of congruence in beliefs between protest participants and protest organizers. Although frame alignment is widely used in social movement research and matters for important movement processes, the theory's premise remains largely untested. This study tackles this lacuna quantitatively. I show that frame alignment is a matter of degree—some participants are more aligned than others—and hypotheses on the contingency of alignment are tested. I argue that degrees of frame alignment relate to the broader communicative context in which people decide to attend a demonstration. The results show that frame alignment depends on exposure to organizational and alternative messages. Protesters who were recruited by fellow members or who found out about the event via organizers' information channels are more aligned. People attending events staged by multiple strong formal organizations are more aligned as well. Frame alignment levels are low, however, when the protest issue receives a lot of political attention and for activists with high political interest. Discussion centers on differential mechanisms that facilitate or constrain frame alignment.

This chapter is based on an article written together with Stefaan Walgrave and Ruud Wouters.

PROTESTERS ON AND OFF MESSAGE

Explaining Demonstrators' Differential Degrees of Frame Alignment

For people to take part in protest, ideas are crucial. While political circumstances (Meyer, 2004) and organizational structures (Edwards & McCarthy, 2004; McCarthy & Zald, 1977) create opportunities for collective action, the belief that something has to be done to alleviate the problem at hand is key for people to personally engage in protest. "Mediating between opportunity and action are people and the subjective meanings they attach to their situation" (McAdam, 1982, p. 48; for a similar argument see Goodwin, Jasper, & Khattra, 1999). The frame alignment perspective within social movement studies offers the most employed and compelling account of this cognitive dimension of protest participation (Snow et al., 1986). The theory states that for people to become active, their beliefs regarding the event should be (made) congruent with those of the organizers.

As frame alignment is "the *linkage* of individual and SMO interpretive orientations" (Snow et al., 1986, p. 186 emphasis not in original), the theory bridges the gap between social movement organizations (SMOs) and individual protest participants. Its main strength is that it offers an understanding of how the participants' micro level is connected to the organizational meso level. However, this is not what the bulk of framing research has been about (Johnston & Noakes, 2005). Researchers generally have focused on the strategic use of frames by organizations (Williams, 2004). The ideas of the receivers of the frames—members, participants and non-participants—have mostly been discarded and, consequently, so has the actual congruence with the frames put forward by organizers. It is often simply assumed that

participants' beliefs are congruent with the messages of SMOs. As a consequence, framing scholars have treated frame alignment as a kind of self-evident precondition for participation (Opp, 2009) instead of something that varies between protesters and protest events and, hence, as something that can, and should, be examined empirically. Notwithstanding the sizable frame alignment literature (see for overviews Benford & Snow, 2000; Snow, 2004; Snow et al., 2014) scholars have mostly ignored the fact that some participants might be more aligned with the organizers than others. To be sure, it has been *acknowledged* that there is more diversity within protest crowds than is often presumed (see Turner & Killian, 1987 on the "illusion of homogeneity"). But few studies have systematically *examined* frame alignment diversity and investigated differences in individuals' degree of alignment. A recent overview of framing studies by Snow and colleagues (2014)—listing all articles in major sociology and social movement specialty journals between 2000 and 2011—supports this observation. All studies listed there examine movements' framing or frames as such, none analyze activists' frame *alignment,* neither as a dependent nor as an independent variable.[1]

This gap is remarkable. While the concept of frame alignment is very widely used, the basic premise of the theory—that participants' alignment with the organizers' frames is a precondition for participation (Snow et al., 1986)—appears to be untested. Moreover, the extent to which protesters are aligned arguably has important consequences. For instance, it is likely that especially the participants whose ideas are most aligned with those of the organizers are the most loyal followers and the most active recruiters when it comes to spreading the word. At the organizational level, frame alignment is important for internal cohesion. If activists disagree about the issue they are protesting for or if particular groups put emphasis on different domains, movements run the risk of falling apart in various fractions. Diversity is not a problem per se, but if it surfaces repeatedly, schism might be the consequence. Following Tilly (2004) one might even expect that frame alignment matters for the impact of protest, as aligned and thus 'unified' protesters should have a higher chance to succeed, by broadcasting a clearer and stronger signal. When activists agree among themselves they display credibility. It shows that they are sincere and that they are a unified force politicians should pay attention to.

In this study, frame alignment between protest participants and protest organizers is put to the test. I argue that frame alignment is a matter of degree; some participants in some protest events are more aligned than others. To be clear, the study does not compare protest participants with nonparticipants, nor does it look into the mobilizing capacities of frames. The contribution it makes is showing that *within* the group of participants, there is variation in the

degree of alignment. Additionally, hypotheses are formulated on causes of frame alignment's contingency and they are tested based on new empirical evidence. Up to now scholars foremost focused on frame resonance, scrutinizing why some types of SMO frames are more successful than others to mobilize support (see e.g. McCammon, 2001; McVeigh et al., 2004; Pedriana, 2006; or see Feinberg & Willer, 2011 outside the protest context). Without doubt, frame characteristics are important to account for differences in frame alignment. Yet, I shift focus and look at the broader communicative context in which people decide to attend a demonstration. The research question is: *Which factors determine the degree to which the beliefs of protest participants are aligned with the mobilizing messages of the protest-staging organizations?* It is expected that the degree of alignment depends on the exposure of protest-related messages: exposure to the organizers' messages on the one hand and exposure to alternative messages on the other. And it is argued that these factors vary both across individuals and across demonstrations.

These ideas are tested drawing on a novel, quantitative approach. Between 2009 and 2012 about 4,000 participants were surveyed in 29 street demonstrations on different issues in three countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, and United Kingdom). Participants are asked three open questions: Why they participate, Who or what is to blame for the problem, and How the problem should be solved. Answers to these questions are compared with the official frames of the protest-staging organizations, captured by the formal platforms and pamphlets announcing the event. I consider the number of individual participants' arguments that are (in)congruent with the SMO platforms as indicators of the respondents' degrees of alignment.

FRAME ALIGNMENT THEORY

Since its development in the mid-1980s the frame alignment approach has become one of the most influential theories within social movement research.[2] Initially it was a response to the prevailing resource and organizational perspectives. Framing scholars aimed to bring interpretative, constructivist and cultural dimensions back into research of collective action. They spoke about 'collective action frames'—the language organizations use to gather support for their claims. Within this broad approach the specific frame *alignment* perspective deals with the congruence between participants' and organizers' frames. Frame alignment, according to Snow et al. (1986, p. 464), "refers to the linkage of individual and social movement organizations' interpretive orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values, and

beliefs and social movement organization activities, goals and ideologies are congruent and complementary". Frame alignment theory explains how movements can influence participants (and vice versa) and is about micro level processes, perceptions, consciousness and interpretations of individuals (Johnston & Noakes, 2005).

However, framing studies have analyzed this mainly from a social movement perspective (Williams, 2004). Whether analyzing framing strategies, processes, types, or consequences, the focus generally has been on the *organizations* communicating the frames (see e.g. Babb, 1996; Faupel & Werum, 2011; Gerhards & Rucht, 1992; Haydu, 2011; McCaffrey & Keys, 2000). The receivers—participants and non-participants—and their particular characteristics, were mostly discarded and, consequently, so was the actual link between the micro- and the meso-level. Recently, framing studies started examining frames of individuals—of members (Ernst, 2009; Johnston & Aarelaid-Tart, 2000; Mooney & Hunt, 1996), participants (Alkon et al., 2013; Hadler & McKay, 2013; Ladd, 2011), or even non-activists (Mika, 2006). These studies, however, typically deal with individuals in an aggregated way—they analyze whether particular frames resonate within a group—without considering individual heterogeneity. These studies cannot tell which features of individuals increase or decrease their degree of alignment.

Besides the shift to individuals the field has gradually become more explanatory (Snow, 2004). Instead of describing frames (Benford, 1997), scholars now analyze what explains the types of frames social movement organizations use (McCammon, 2012; Snow et al., 2007) and under which conditions particular frames are successful or not (see e.g. Cadena-Roa, 2002; Chakravarty & Chaudhuri, 2012; Mika, 2006; Pizmony-Levy & Ponce, 2013). Still, framing work is mainly based on single cases. The possible differences across movements, events or issues are mostly not dealt with. Students of framing have for instance focused on the animal rights movement (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Mika, 2006), the environmental movement (Knight & Greenberg, 2011), or the peace movement (Leitz, 2011). As they do not compare across movements or events, these separate case studies do not allow investigating which protest event or movement characteristics are associated with higher or lower levels of frame alignment.

Inspired by the individualistic and explanatory turn in framing work and drawing on extant case studies, the aim is to take the next step. I tackle the phenomenon at the individual level and at the same time add a comparative account to the literature by systematically comparing across demonstrations. By scrutinizing the overlap of what protest organizers publicly state about the protest and what demonstration participants individually say, this paper gets back to the roots of

frame alignment theory. It focuses on the alignment part of frame alignment. It deals with the *linkage* between individuals and organizations and sets out to *explain* the degree of congruence. Snow and his colleagues stated in their original article: "Frame alignment, of one variety or another, is a necessary condition for participation, whatever its nature or intensity" (1986, p. 464). But no study actually analyzed the variety, nature and intensity of participants' frame alignment.

EXPLAINING DEGREES OF ALIGNMENT

This chapter departs from the idea that people can have varying beliefs regarding the protest event in which they are participating and the underlying problem against which they take arms. The frames participants hold—what the problem is, who is to blame for it and how it should be solved—are not always in line with the formal message propagated by the organizers. People may, for example, agree with the problem definition, but they may disagree with, or simply be unaware of, the organizers' blame attribution or proposed solution (see the distinction between these different aspects of framing as theorized by Snow & Benford, 1988). Frames are beliefs about a whole range of aspects connected to the cause people are protesting for, and the match between organizers and participants can vary across these aspects, across participants, and across events. The point is that frame alignment is a matter of degree. Participants probably must have *something* in common with the organizers, unless they really show up by accident, but it is not necessarily much.

In line with most work on frame alignment a top-down logic is followed here: organizers' messages are or are not shared by potential participants. Snow et al. (1986, pp. 467–473) distinguish between different framing strategies which mostly follow a top-down logic whereby organizers try to reach potential adherents. Alignment also depends on the opposite process, namely organizers adopting the frames prevalent amongst their potential participants—the authors (1986, p. 473) call this process frame 'extension'. I do not deny this bottom-up process to exist but since I only have cross-sectional data it is impossible to tease out who leads and who follows.

The possible causes for protesters *not* being aligned with the organizers' messages are manifold. Firstly, potential participants, even when engaged, may miss bits of information, be ignorant, or distracted. Individuals' cognitive capacities are limited and the amount of information they can process is constrained (Miller, 1956). Secondly, participants may

consciously disagree with some aspects of the organizers' messages but decide to participate after all because they believe to have enough in common with the social movement organizations staging the event or with the people attending it. Thirdly, cognitive motives do not necessarily prevail in decisions to participate. Besides cognitions, emotions for instance can be at play (Goodwin, Jasper, & Polletta, 2004, 2009). In specific circumstances participation in a demonstration can be a means to vent anger (Stürmer & Simon, 2009). Sharing emotions of outrage about the target of mobilization can then provide enough motivation to protest even without sharing the frames of organizers. Positive emotions—feeling part of a larger group—can play a role as well (Jasper, 1998; Sabucedo & Vilas, 2014). Finally, frame alignment does not happen in a social vacuum in which organizers have the monopoly on communication. A lot of alternative messages regarding the protest float around in the public sphere and may affect what people think about the protest. Even if organizers were able to get privileged access to their potential supporters, their messages could be blurred, contradictory, and confusing. In short, framing takes place in a messy and heterogeneous environment with many confounding factors hindering and distorting the frame alignment process.

Still it should be possible to make sense of, capture and explain frame alignment. As mentioned above, I only have cross-sectional data and therefore I cannot examine processes of alignment—i.e. how or when individual beliefs become congruent with the organizers' views. Notwithstanding the particular process that takes place, I hold that alignment depends on the broader communicative context in which people decide to attend a demonstration. Firstly, I expect that alignment is a matter of exposure to organizational information. In line with the priming approach in psychology (see for example Althaus & Kim, 2006), whether an organization's message is adopted by individuals depends, among other things, on the prominence of the message—that is the frequency and recency of exposure to the message. The more people hear the same message over and again, the more accessible that message becomes, the more easily they can recall it from memory and the more likely it affects their behavior. Hence, the first hypothesis says that *Exposure to messages of protest-staging organizations increases the level of frame alignment* (H1). This might seem a rather trivial expectation at first, but I expect this to vary greatly across individuals and across demonstration events. Different types of SMOs have diverging ways to diffuse their messages, protesters can be recruited by different actors (fellow members, friends, colleagues, etc.), and they can be informed about the demonstration by various information channels (flyers, newspapers, social

media, etc.). These factors influence the extent to which protesters are exposed to the organizers' messages.

Secondly, potential participants are not only exposed to messages sent by the organizers but also to a range of other, potentially confounding messages pertaining to the protest. Exposure to alternative frames can be expected to vary greatly across individuals and demonstration events as well. Protest mobilization implies a signifying struggle between the organizers, targets and counter mobilizers, with observers and commentators as third parties. Koopmans (2004b), for instance, states that the forum *par excellence* for these framing wars are the modern mass media. Walsh (2004) shows that framing effects are attenuated when individuals are immersed in heterogeneous, crosscutting social networks. Knowing that many people are mobilized via so-called micro-mobilization networks consisting of colleagues and friends (Diani & McAdam, 2003), they may never have been directly confronted with the messages sent by the staging organizations but only with the potentially biased or even entirely different interpretations of these messages by their personal recruiters (Walgrave & Wouters, 2014). So, the more people are exposed to alternative messages and interpretations regarding the issue and the protest event, the less their views are expected to be in line with those of the organizers, and the lower the level of alignment. The second proposition is that *Exposure to alternative frames reduces frame alignment* (H2).

The next section further specifies these two hypotheses, and it presents the indicators of exposure that can operationalize this abstract concept in the case of peaceful demonstrations in Western countries.

DATA AND CODING

The study uses protest survey data gathered via the CCC project. It covers 29 demonstrations staged between 2009 and 2012 in Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. In total 6,095 people responded to the protest surveys; 4,438 answered all questions that are used in this chapter. Sixteen of the 29 demonstrations are anti-austerity events. There are four events on environmental issues, four anti-discrimination events, and five democracy protests.

Frame alignment is measured by comparing the frames that protesters use to motivate their participation and the frames that social movement organizations use to mobilize support. The protesters' frames are derived from three open survey questions, the SMO frames are identified via the official protest pamphlets. Frames are structures or schemes that consist of

frame components (see e.g. Johnston, 1995, 2005). For all respondents I identify the frame components that make up that persons' frame, and I compare these elements with the frame components that are part of the SMOs' frame structures. Each protest participants' frame component is coded as congruent (1) or incongruent (0) with the protest organizers. Sometimes protesters write down sentences that are not related to the protest issue—for instance "I participated because my wife asked me to". These answers are coded as issue-unrelated and are not included to measure alignment. They are not very telling regarding the degree of frame alignment. They are rather indicative of the degree to which people demonstrate for not content-related reasons. As is discussed below, these answers are used as a control variable. For a complete overview of the data selection and coding process, please see Chapter 2.

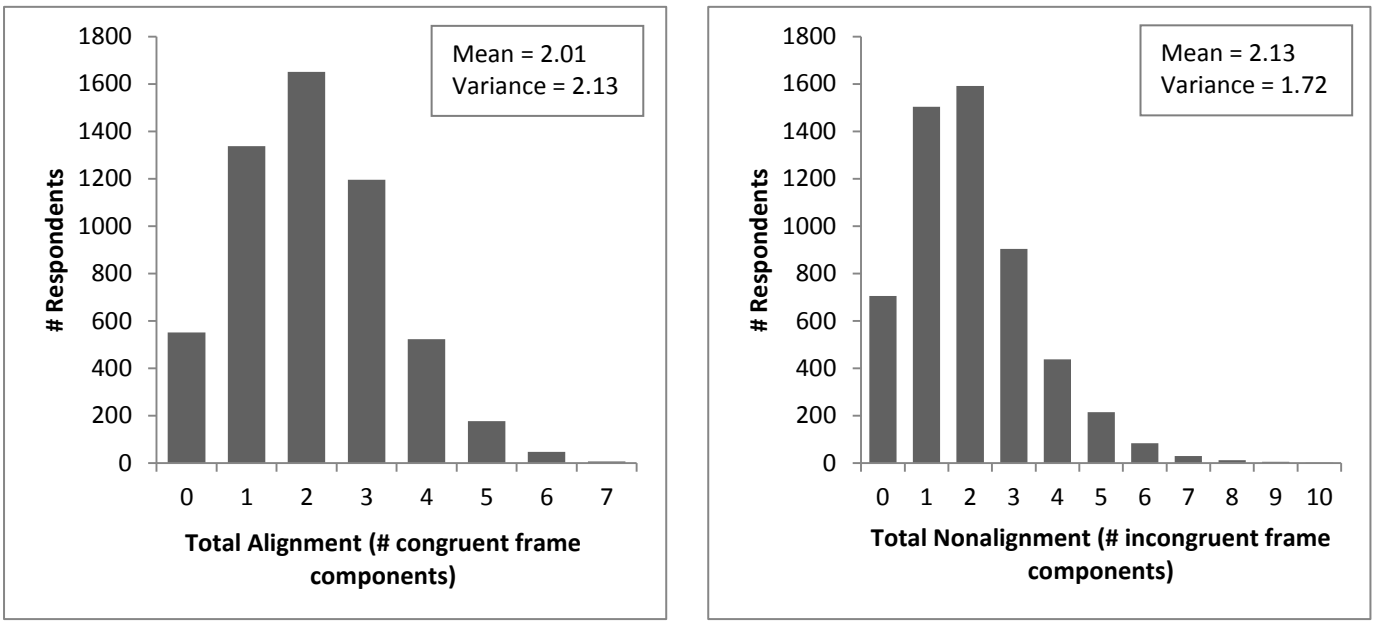
DEPENDENT VARIABLES: MEASURING FRAME ALIGNMENT

Frame alignment refers to the linkage between the beliefs of protest participants and social movement organizations. Both the respondent's congruent and incongruent answers are informative. Just looking at the ones that are in line with the organizations' frames, without taking alternative frames into account, would tell only half the story. This study therefore has two dependent variables: *Total Alignment*, which is the number of congruent frame components a respondent mentions, and *Total Nonalignment*, the respondent's number of incongruent frame elements. The dependent variables are correlated but not very strongly (Pearson's R = -.385; p = .000). I considered using a dependent variable combining both by measuring the share of congruent frames as a proportion of the total number of arguments, but such a combined dependent variable would hide the fact that congruence and incongruence might have partly different explanations. That people mention more congruent frames is probably mostly due to exposure to the organizers' frames (H1). Yet, that people mention *in*congruent frames should mainly be affected by exposure to alternative frames (H2). Keeping alignment and non-alignment separately allows for more nuanced and fine-grained tests of the hypotheses.[3]

Descriptives show that frame alignment is a matter of degree. Figure 4.1 and 4.2 present the frequency distributions of the two dependent variables. On average, respondents produce four quasi-sentences: two that can be traced back to the public appeal by the organizers and can be considered to be congruent, and two alternative elements—incongruent frame components—as well. The two dependent variables both follow a Poisson distribution; they are count variables skewed to the right. Tests reveal no sign of overdispersion so standard Poisson

regressions are run. Since protest participants are nested in demonstrations the dependence within demonstrations is modeled using multilevel random-intercept regression models.[4] I control for the country level by adding country dummies.

Figure 4.1 & Figure 4.2: Distribution of *Total Alignment* and *Total Nonalignment* (N=4,438)



INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Exclusively behavioral or stable attitudinal measures are used as independent variables. Since frames essentially are attitudinal constructs it is better to avoid using other attitudes as predictors; this would make the causal direction of the relationships unclear. It could be that frame alignment affects these other attitudes—for example, respondents who are more aligned are, as a consequence, more motivated to participate in the event. But it may also be the other way around: highly motivated protesters seek to align more with 'their' organizations.

Exposure to organizers' frames

The first hypothesis holds that respondents who are more exposed to frames put forward by organizers are more aligned. Applying this general idea to the street demonstrations that are studied here, I propose two organizational exposure indicators at the individual level (receivers) and two at the demonstration level (senders).

(1) *Member Staging Organization*. Members of the staging organizations should be more exposed to the official claims via co-members and via the targeted communication of the

staging organizations (like the website, meetings, and mailing lists). The question sequence is: "*Please list the main organizations staging this demonstration*." If participants filled in at least one organization, the follow-up question was: "*Are you a member of any of these organizations*" (0=no, 1=yes).

(2) *Mobilized Via Organization.* A second proxy measuring exposure to the organizers' frames takes into account two factors that tap into participants' recruitment. Firstly, respondents are asked whether they were explicitly asked by someone to participate in the protest (no-one; partner or family; relatives; friends; acquaintances; colleagues or fellow students; co-members of an organization of which I am a member of). Secondly, respondents are asked how they found out about the demonstration and what their most important information channel was.[5] Respondents were coded '1' when they answered that they were only asked by co-members of an organization, or when their most important information channel was either an organization (magazine, meeting, website, mailing list), (fellow) members of an organization or association, or ads, flyers and/or posters. Others were coded 0.

(3) *Formal Organization.* A social movement's structure influences the way protesters are mobilized and how information is disseminated (Rucht, 1996). I expect more exposure to the official protest frames when demonstrations are dominated by strong, formal, professional organizations planning the protest and recruiting participants. I expect less exposure when protests are initiated by organizations with a more loose and informal structure, characterized by less internal cohesion and more flexible forms of coordination. Formal Organization is a dummy variable with demonstrations dominated by centralized, formal and hierarchical coordinated organizations coded as 1 and demonstrations staged more loose, decentralized and informal organizations coded as 0. In the latter case membership organizations were not leading the way, and the protest was mostly organized by "digitally mediated action networks" (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012, p. 742). The coding is based on factsheets with descriptions of the main initiators of the demonstrations that were filled in by every country team in the CCC project.

(4) *Number of Organizers.* A larger number of organizers should lead to higher levels of alignment. More organizers means more diffusion of the protest frames by different actors through more diverse communication channels. Therefore the more organizations are involved in staging the protest, the more potential participants are frequently exposed to the protest frames. The number of organizers is coded by simply counting the number of staging organizations on the demonstration's official platform, up to a maximum of five.

Exposure to alternative frames

The second hypothesis states that when supporters of a movement get exposed to alternative messages not controlled by the movement, they are on average less aligned. Three indicators are presented to grasp alternative exposure in the case of the demonstrations in the sample, two at the individual level and one at the demonstration level.

(1) *Membership Diversity.* Activists who are member of various organizations—not only of organizations staging the event—are expected to be exposed to alternative frames (Heaney & Rojas, 2007). The questionnaire asks respondents to indicate whether they are an active or passive member of any of twelve listed types of organizations.[6] Membership Diversity simply counts the number of organization types that a respondent is engaged in. The participants that are a member of five or more organizations, all are in the highest category (scale: 0-5).

(2) *Political Interest.* Activists with high levels of political interest are likely to be more exposed to alternative frames than people with little interest in politics. Politically interested are more informed about politicized issues, read more political news, discuss politics more, and are more exposed to various political viewpoints. We asked respondents: "*How interested are you in politics?*" (1=not at all; 2=not very; 3=quite; 4=very).

(3) *Political Attention for Issue.* A message-confounding factor at the demonstration level is the pre-existing political attention for the protest issue. If an issue already receives political attention and is the object of political debate leading to the presence of pros and cons in the public domain, I expect the chance potential participants picked up these alternative frames (or deem them salient) to grow. Political attention is tricky to measure, though. Here I rely on a survey question that each national research team had to answer before each demonstration: "*Now before the demonstration, do the major political institutions (government, parliament etc.) devote a lot of attention to the issue of the demonstration, or not?*" (none at all, quite a bit, a lot). The two first categories are merged, leading to a variable with 'none at all' and 'quite a bit' coded as 0, and 'a lot' coded as 1.

The regression models also contain control variables. These include the classics gender, year born (age), and education, but also the total number of frame components (congruent and incongruent) given by a respondent. Furthermore, I account for whether or not (0-1) a participant gave one or more issue-unrelated answers. Participants who write down not directly content-related reasons for their participation, are probably less aligned. On the demonstration level I control for the number of frame components in the protest pamphlet and the number of

people participating in the event—the higher the demonstration size, the higher the odds that also nonaligned participants show up (demonstration size is divided by 1000 for interpretative reasons). Furthermore, I add issue (austerity, environment, anti-discrimination, and democracy) and country dummies (Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom). Table 4.1 gives an overview of all variables' descriptives.

Table 4.1: Descriptives of all variables

VARIABLE		MEAN	S.D.	MIN.	MAX.
Respondent Level Variables (N=4,438)					
Total alignment (DV)		2.13	1.31	0	7
Total nonalignment (DV)		2.01	1.46	0	10
Member staging organization (yes)		.50	.50	0	1
Mobilized via organization (yes)		.37	.48	0	1
Membership diversity (high)		2.37	1.58	0	5
Political interest (high)		3.28	.70	1	4
Gender (female)		.44	.50	0	1
Year born		1967	15.33	'24	'98
Education (high)		5.74	1.45	0	7
# Frame components respondent		4.14	1.54	0	10
Issue-unrelated answer		.23	.42	0	1
Demonstration Level Variables (N=29)					
Number of organizers		2.90	1.66	1	5
Formal organization (yes)		.76	.44	0	1
Political attention for issue (yes)		.34	.48	0	1
# Frame components in pamphlet		20.10	7.75	9	37
# Participants in demonstration (/1000)		23.91	48.12	.12	250
Issue	Austerity	.55	.51		
	Environment	.14	.35	0	1
	Anti-discrimination	.14	.35		
	Democracy	.17	.38		
Country	Belgium	.28	.45		
	Netherlands	.34	.48	0	1
	United Kingdom	.38	.49		

RESULTS

Table 4.2 shows two multilevel random-intercept Poisson regression models. In Model 1 the dependent variable is Total Alignment (the total number of congruent frame components a respondent mentions), in Model 2 the dependent variable is Total *Non*alignment (the total number of incongruent frame elements). The independent variables are divided into three groups. The first two panes correspond with the two hypotheses. The third pane comprises the control variables at the respondent and the demonstration level. Besides regression coefficients, standard errors and significance levels, incidence-rate ratios (IRR) are reported to make sense of

the size of the effects. The model fit statistics at the bottom compare the full with the intercept-only (empty) models. The full models fit the data better. The BIC and the AIC, as well as the Log Likelihood, substantially decrease in both models.

Table 4.2: Two multilevel random-intercept Poisson regressions

	MODEL 1 TOTAL ALIGNMENT		MODEL 2 TOTAL NONALIGNMENT	
	Coef. (Std.E.)	IRR	Coef. (Std.E.)	IRR
Exposure to organizers' frames				
Member staging organization	-.003 (.027)	.997	.004 (.027)	1.004
Mobilized via organization	**.049 (.024)***	**1.050**	**-.049 (.025)***	**.952**
Formal organization	**.645 (.179)*****	**1.906**	**-.591 (.223)****	**.554**
Number of organizers	.037 (.020)	1.038	**-.052 (.025)***	**.949**
Exposure to alternative frames				
Membership diversity	-.000 (.007)	.999	.011 (.007)	1.011
Political interest	.019 (.016)	1.019	**.035 (.017)***	**1.035**
Political attention for issue	**-.236 (.074)****	**.790**	**.303 (.095)****	**1.354**
Controls respondent level				
Gender	**.064 (.022)****	**1.066**	-.041 (.023)	.960
Year born	.001 (.001)	1.001	-.000 (.001)	.999
Education	.006 (.008)	1.006	-.009 (.008)	.991
# Frame components respondent	**.126 (.008)*****	**1.134**	**.235 (.007)*****	**1.265**
Issue-unrelated answer	**-.369 (.030)*****	**.691**	**.118 (.028)*****	**1.125**
Controls demonstration level				
# Frame components in pamphlet	.002 (.004)	1.002	-.001 (.005)	.999
# Participants in demo	.001 (.001)	1.001	-.000 (.001)	.999
Issues (ref. =Austerity): Environmental	-.192 (.104)	.826	.176 (.132)	1.193
Anti-discrimination	.226 (.135)	1.254	-.192 (.172)	.825
Democracy	**.633 (.197)****	**1.883**	**-.533 (.248)***	**.587**
Countries (ref. = Belgium): Netherlands	**-.245 (.097)***	**.782**	**.359 (.121)****	**1.431**
United Kingdom	**-.278 (.082)****	**.757**	.169 (.105)	1.184
Constant	-2.718 (1.558)	.066	1.074 (1.602)	2.927
Wald Chi² (df)	657.73 (19)		1248.47 (19)	
Prob > chi2	.000		.000	
Log Likelihood [a]	-6874.903 (-7206.227)		-6708.964 (-7268.980)	
Δ Log Likelihood	331.324		560.016	
BIC [a]	13926.16 (14429.25)		13594.28 (14554.76)	
Δ BIC	503.09		960.48	
AIC [a]	13791.81 (14416.45)		13459.93 (14541.96)	
Δ AIC	624.64		1082.03	
Rand.eff. variance 2nd level [a]	.135 (.224)		.177 (.292)	

Notes: a. empty model between brackets
N respondents = 4,438. N demonstrations = 29. * p<.05; ** p<.01; ***p<.001

The first pane of Table 4.2 tests the predictive power of exposure to the organizers' frames (H1). Two of the four variables yield the expected positive and significant results in the Total Alignment model. Participants mobilized via the staging organizations are more aligned than participants recruited via other routes. However, the effect is rather small (IRR=1.050): people

who were asked by (fellow) members or found out about the event via organizers' information channels write down five percent more aligned frames than people for which this was not the case. This variable relates to Total *Non*alignment as well: people who were recruited via the protest organizers write down five percent less alternative frames than their fellow participants (IRR=.952). Surprisingly, membership in one of the staging organizations does not affect alignment. Members are not more aligned than non-members. Maybe organization members are not per se highly involved. As checkbook or passive affiliates they do not necessarily support the organization's goals and ideas more than non-member participants. Being recruited by staging organizers and (fellow) members matters, rather than being a member as such. Demonstrations staged by strong formal organizations are populated by demonstrators that are on average more aligned. Compared to activists in more loose organized events, they mention almost twice as many congruent frames (IRR=1.906). Moreover, these participants also name about half less alternative frames, as can be seen in the Total Nonalignment model (IRR=.554). Whether a demonstration is staged by formal and hierarchically coordinated organizations is the strongest predictor in both models. The number of organizers does not affect Total Alignment. However, Model 2 shows that protesters in events with more organizers—larger coalitions, more diverse frames—mention five percent less frames that are incongruent with the frames of the movement (IRR=.949). The first hypothesis is generally confirmed. There is a positive correlation of the indicators of exposure to organizers' frames with Total Alignment and a negative relation with Total Nonalignment.

The second pane tests exposure to alternative frames (H2). Membership Diversity does not yield significant results. Respondents who are member of a broad range of organizations (all potential senders of countervailing or alternative messages) are not less aligned than other respondents. But Political Interest does matter. The Total Nonalignment model shows that participants with high political interest mention more alternative reasons for participation than respondents with low political interest. But they do not write down less congruent frames, as the Total Alignment model shows. This seems logical, while political interest provides them with more alternative frames, there is no reason why these individuals would be less exposed to organizers' frames. It must be noted however, that the effect is rather small (a one unit increase in Political Interest means a 4% increase of nonalignment; IRR=1.035). Political Attention, in contrast, correlates with both alignment measures. Demonstrations on issues that received a lot of political attention in the period before the event are populated with participants that, on average, mention more than twenty percent less congruent frames (IRR=.790) and about thirty-

five percent more alternative frames (IRR=1.354). If an event is in the center of a political debate, protest organizers cannot control the information flow; the informational environment becomes messy leading to lower frame alignment levels. Overall, the evidence supports the idea formulated in H2 that there is a negative relationship between frame alignment and the exposure to alternative interpretations and beliefs regarding the issue and/or event.

Finally, let's take a short look at the control variables. Few control variables significantly correlate with frame alignment. Yet, women seem to mention more frames in line with the organizers than men. There is also evidence that respondents who—besides their cognitive answers—write down issue-unrelated reasons for participation, are less aligned with the organizers' frames and they also mention more nonaligned reasons to participate. These participants probably primarily attend because of emotional attachments or social networks rather than because of cognitive motives, and as a consequence, the cognitive reasons they do write down are less aligned with the organizers' frames. Also, but not surprisingly, respondents who write down many frames, mention more congruent *and* more incongruent frames. Regarding the different issues, people in democracy protests most closely stick to the official protest platforms. Compared to austerity protesters their arguments are about twice as often congruent (IRR=1.883) and they only mention about half as many incongruent frames (IRR=.587). This might be explained by the fact that the claims of protests aiming for changes in the political system may be broader and contain more general principles that are easier to remember and reproduce. Finally, there are some country differences as well. Belgian activists are more aligned with the protest-staging SMOs than their counterparts in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Although this is merely speculation, this result might be explained by the fact that Belgium is a country where people are strongly embedded in organizations and where the distance between organizations and constituencies is small (Elchardus, Huyse, & Hooghe, 2001; Hooghe & Quintelier, 2007).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The frame alignment theory puts the subjective individual component of protest participation center stage by claiming that the beliefs of protest participants are related to frames of social movement organizations. However, the approach brought individuals only seemingly back in; the crucial individual component of frame alignment received far less attention than the organizational component. This study set out to remedy this lacuna by directly tapping the

outcome of frame alignment processes. It empirically examined the link between the official frames sponsored by protest organizers on the one hand and the interpretations of individuals participating in these events on the other. In contrast to earlier work, disaggregated evidence about individuals was presented and frame alignment was measured in a quantitative and replicable manner. The approach was applied to a large-scale dataset encompassing more than 4,000 protesters in 29 demonstrations across distinct issues in three countries. What has this new take on frame alignment taught us that we did not know before?

Frame alignment is a matter of degree. It varies greatly, and about half of the frames participants put forward when asked what the problem is, who is to blame and how the problem can be solved, are not congruent with what the organizers put forward. That people do not reproduce the official protest frames does *not* mean that they would *disagree* with those; it just means that they do not mention the organizers' frames when (implicitly) asked to do so. They may not be aware of, cannot recall, or may not agree with these frames. Either way, the organizers' frames are not top of mind for many people when taking to the streets.

I argued that frame alignment is a matter of exposure to organizational and alternative information. Contrary to my expectation, individuals being part of the organizational circle are not more aligned. Rather than membership as such, being recruited by the organizers is associated with people's mentioning of the mobilizing messages. Also, when a demonstration is staged by strong formal organizations and by multiple organizations, participants' frames are more in line with the protest pamphlets. Being exposed to alternative sources of interpretations regarding the protest issue has an effect on frame alignment as well; the more confounding messages potential participants are exposed to, the lower their alignment level. The framework that was set out passed the test; it seems to be able to produce plausible and empirically warranted predictions of who is aligned and who is not. As such, the study shows that frame alignment is about more than framing or frame characteristics, it is connected to features of individuals and the broader context in which the protest takes place.

It must be noted though, that only a partial theory was formulated and tested here. People adopting certain frames does not only depend on exposure, but on their willingness to *accept* the frames that are communicated as well (see for example Zaller, 1992 for a similar account of how public opinion is formed). Some people can be expected to be more willing to embrace the protest organizers' frames than others. Communication scholars have for instance shown that motivation and issue involvement make individuals process media messages more carefully, leading to higher acceptance and recall afterwards (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Also, if

the sender of a message is perceived as a credible source, acceptance of the message is more likely (Pornpitakpan, 2004; for a similar argument related to frame alignment see Benford & Snow, 2000). In contrast, some people are less inclined to accept (political) messages. Strong dispositions are likely to reduce frame alignment, especially if the organizers' messages go against previously held opinions (Brewer, 2002, 2003). Unfortunately, the evidence regarding the protest participants in my sample did not allow to measure acceptance.

This research has implications for frame alignment theory more generally. First, it was shown that people attend protest events for varying reasons and that not all their reasons are in line with what the demonstration officially is about. The extent to which people are aligned varies. This challenges the assumption that frame alignment is a *necessary* precondition for participation (Snow et al., 1986). It also suggests that cognitive motives do not necessarily prevail. For some people the decision to attend a demonstration might depend on factors such as emotions, group style, and social networks, rather than on held cognitions about the protest issue. Second, the study went beyond studying movements' framing or frames as such by analyzing frame *alignment* as a dependent variable, trying to tease out its antecedents. The study tapped and explained differences between individuals and a rare comparative element was added by showing that protest event characteristics matter. This allowed turning frame alignment from a constant into a variable. This provides opportunities for future framing studies to consider frame alignment as an *independent* variable as well. Are aligned activists more active recruiters and more loyal participants? Do protesters come across as more unified when frame alignment is high, and does this influence protest success?

While frame alignment is a process, this research only measured the outcome of it. A more complete picture would entail tracing the changing views of potential participants over time together with the strategic shifts in emphasis in the official stances of social movement organizations. Only such a dynamic analysis can shed light on the mutual adjustments between activists and organizations and disentangle the causal relationship. A second limitation of the study is related to the fact that only actual participants are investigated. An encompassing analysis would imply also tapping the views of non-participants in order to see whether they have been exposed to mobilizing messages, to what extent they have adopted the protest organizers' views, and whether their decision not to participate is related to the fact that they were less aligned than those who did.

Furthermore, the question remains whether what was found here for demonstrations in three Western countries also applies to other types of protest and contention in other countries.

Demonstrations may be the most popular type of protest nowadays, but studying other forms of political action, in other parts of the world, and in other moments in history may produce different results. For instance, it can be expected that more risky and costly participation requires higher degrees of frame alignment. People who strike or who engage in confrontational action are on average probably more aligned than the demonstrators that were studied here. Consequently, in authoritarian countries as well, average frame alignment of protesters should be higher. Yet, while the average degree of alignment may differ substantially across action forms, countries, movements or events, I claim that the *mechanisms* and paths that were highlighted—and that lead to (non)alignment—may be generic. The framework featuring the mechanism of exposure to organizational messages on the one hand and alternative information on the other, is likely to be relevant in other forms of protest participation and contention as well. The study has pointed out a way, both theoretical and empirical, to start tackling varying degrees of frame alignment.

NOTES

1. Interestingly, a 1983 study by Ladd, Hood and Van Liere examines congruence between SMOs and participants. Instead of frame alignment, they talk about "consensus of ideological themes" (1983, p. 253). This study, however, has not really been picked up (26 citations recorded by Google Scholar). And scholars that do cite the work refer to it because it analyzes the antinuclear movement and because it uses protest survey data, not because the study compares beliefs of movements and individual protesters.

2. The 1986 article of Snow and colleagues is in fact 'member' of the "ASR 500 Club" (Jacobs, 2005) and according to Google Scholar, the article has been cited more than 4,500 times (as of spring 2015). To put in perspective: it is cited more often than the seminal work by McCarthy and Zald (1977) introducing the resource mobilization theory.

3. An alternative approach would have been to employ a categorical dependent variable—distinguishing between fully aligned, mixed, and totally nonaligned protesters. But since almost all participants (80%) are of the mixed type—they provided aligned *and* non-aligned frame components at the same time—this analytical strategy was not very appealing.

4. The *meqrpoisson* command in STATA.

5. Possible answer categories were: 1 Radio or television; 2 Newspapers (print or online); 3 Alternative online media; 4 Advertisements, flyers, and/or posters; 5 Partner and/or family; 6 Friends and/or acquaintances; 7 People at your school or work; 8 (Fellow) members of an organization or association; 9

An organization (magazine, meeting, website, mailing list, …); 10 Online social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter).

6. Church or religious organization, trade union or professional association, political party, women's organization, sport or cultural organization, environmental organization, lesbian or gay rights organization, community or neighborhood association, charity or welfare organization, third world, global justice or peace organization, anti-racist or migrant organization, human or civil rights organization, or another organization.

7. Multilevel Poisson regression models with demonstration-specific random intercept:

$\mu_{ij} = \mathrm{E}(y_{ij}|x_{ij}, \zeta_{1j}) = \exp(\beta_1 + \beta_2 x_{2ij} + \cdots + \beta_{13} x_{13ij} + \beta_{14} x_{14i} + \cdots + \beta_{23} x_{23i} + \zeta_{1j})$ where:

$y_{ij} =$ total (non)alignment for respondent i in demonstration j

x_{2ij} to $x_{13ij} =$ covariates at the respondent level

x_{14i} to $x_{23i} =$ covariates at the demonstration level

$\beta =$ regression coefficients for the covariates

$\zeta_{1j} =$ demonstration-specific random intercept

Table 4.3: Covered demonstrations, formal organization, and number of participants, organizers, and frame components

#	DEMONSTRATION	DATE	COUNTRY	ISSUE	# PARTICIPANTS	# ORGANIZERS	FORMAL ORG.	# FRAME COMP.
1	Climate Change	05-Dec-09	BE	Environment	15,000	5	yes	34
2	No to Austerity	29-Sep-10	BE	Austerity	70,000	4	yes	26
3	We have alternatives	02-Dec-11	BE	Austerity	70,000	3	yes	37
4	Not in Our Name	02-May-11	BE	Democracy	700	1	no	17
5	Fukushima never again	11-Mar-12	BE	Environment	1,000	5	yes	14
6	No Government, Great Country	23-Jan-11	BE	Democracy	45,000	1	no	9
7	March for Work	29-Jan-10	BE	Austerity	31,000	3	yes	23
8	Non-Profit Demonstration	29-Mar-11	BE	Austerity	15,000	1	yes	23
9	Retirement demonstration	21-Nov-09	NL	Austerity	7,000	3	yes	9
10	Culture demo Amsterdam	20-Nov-10	NL	Austerity	15,000	5	yes	15
11	Culture demo Utrecht	20-Nov-10	NL	Austerity	2,500	5	yes	15
12	Stop budget cuts (care & welfare)	19-Sep-11	NL	Austerity	4,500	5	yes	14
13	Occupy Netherlands	05-Nov-11	NL	Democracy	120	1	no	33
14	Together strong for public work	17-Feb-11	NL	Austerity	8,000	5	yes	21
15	Stop racism and exclusion	19-Mar-11	NL	Discrimination	350	1	yes	18
16	Student demo Amsterdam	21-May-10	NL	Austerity	15,000	5	yes	30
17	Student demo The Hague	21-Jan-11	NL	Austerity	2,000	3	yes	18
18	Military demo	26-May-11	NL	Austerity	4,000	5	yes	21
19	National Climate March 2009	05-Dec-09	UK	Environment	50,000	1	yes	27
20	Unite Against Fascism	06-Nov-10	UK	Discrimination	3,000	5	no	15
21	Fund Our Future: Stop Education Cuts	10-Nov-10	UK	Austerity	30,000	2	yes	18
22	National Climate March 2010	04-Dec-10	UK	Environment	1,500	1	yes	17
23	Second Student National Demo	09-Dec-10	UK	Austerity	40,000	4	yes	11
24	Occupy London	12-Nov-11	UK	Democracy	600	1	no	15
25	May Day Labour March	01-May-10	UK	Austerity	5,000	1	yes	15
26	Million Women Rise	05-Mar-11	UK	Discrimination	3,000	1	yes	35
27	Take Back Parliament	15-May-10	UK	Democracy	2,000	5	no	22
28	No to Hate Crime Vigil	23-Oct-10	UK	Discrimination	2,000	1	no	14
29	'TUC's March for the Alternative	26-Mar-11	UK	Austerity	250,000	1	yes	17
Mean					23,900	2.9	-	20.1

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WHAT STRIKES THE RESPONSIVE CHORD?

The Effects of Framing Qualities on Frame Resonance Amongst Protest Participants

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the extent to which collective action frames with certain qualities resonate with protest participants. It goes beyond previous research on frame resonance by directly tapping the frames that demonstrators use to motivate their participation and by comparing them with the frames of social movement organizations. The data comprise protest surveys of more than 5,000 participants in 29 street demonstrations on various issues in three countries—Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Results show that frames that appeal to people's everyday experiences resonate more than abstract or technical frames. Also, resonance is higher when blame for the issue is put on specific persons or organizations than when intangible forces or causes are held responsible. The results are illustrated by a comparison of two Dutch student demonstrations that were similar in most aspects but differed in framing and in the extent to which protesters aligned with the organizers' frames.

This chapter is based on the following article:

Ketelaars, P. (forthcoming). What Strikes the Responsive Chord? The Effects of Framing Qualities on Frame Resonance Amongst Protest Participants. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly.*

WHAT STRIKES THE RESPONSIVE CHORD?

The Effects of Framing Qualities on Frame Resonance Amongst Protest Participants

Before people attend a street demonstration they must believe that something has to be done about a certain matter. Protest organizers therefore spend a significant portion of their time and energy framing the issue they are mobilizing for, trying to convince people that action is warranted. Some frames are more successful to drum up support than others (Snow & Benford, 1988) and social movement organizations frequently engage in debates on how to frame an issue in such a way that it will resonate with potential participants (Benford, 1993a). This study compares social movement frames with different qualities across various street demonstrations and investigates which frames are picked up by people who participate in protest events. Which frames strike the responsive chord?

Frame qualities and the strategic functions of frames have gained increasing attention within social movement research. Some scholars focus on the influence of frame characteristics on movement consequences—like cultural change (Snow et al., 2013) and political outcomes (McCammon et al., 2007)—while others discuss the effect on mobilization processes—like facilitating collective action (Chakravarty & Chaudhuri, 2012) and recruiting new members (Mika, 2006). This stream of research has shown that frames with certain qualities have greater persuasive power than others. However, the studies examine the persuasiveness of frames rather indirectly. Authors show a positive relationship between the use of particular frames by SMOs on the one hand and protest participation or movement emergence on the other (see e.g. Hewitt & McCammon, 2004; McVeigh et al., 2004; Pedriana, 2006), but the actual frames of the

individuals that joined the movement are often not examined. Most scholars who study frame resonance, generally fail to assess which frames actually resonate with protest participants.

This study analyzes frame resonance by surveying protesters about their reasons for participation and by comparing these motives with the frames proffered by the organizations staging the protest. I scrutinize whether features of collective action frames affect the extent to which participants in street demonstrations are aligned with the organizers' mobilizing messages. While most framing research proceeds qualitatively (for exceptions see McCammon, 2009, 2012; Snow et al., 2007) and is largely based on case studies, I use a quantitative approach and systematically examine frames of multiple protest events on different issues in three countries. The data comprise protest surveys of more than 5,000 respondents in 29 street demonstrations between 2009 and 2012 in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The results of the quantitative data are illustrated by a comparison of two student protests in the Netherlands.

Previous studies foremost focused on the framing quality of 'narrative fidelity' or 'cultural resonance'—i.e. the conjunction of movement frames with the culture of the targets of mobilization—while neglecting other characteristics (McCammon, 2009). This study examines two frame qualities that have, although often mentioned, seldom been systematically tested: the experiential commensurability of frames (Snow & Benford, 1988)—i.e. 'daily-life' frames —, and the specificity of the targets of the protest (Gamson, 1992a). The results indicate that frame resonance is higher for frames that appeal to people's daily life than for frames that are more abstract, technical or distant. Also, frames that put responsibility on a specific person or organization foster more alignment than frames that attribute blame to a general actor or to an intangible cause. The more specific the target, the more resonance with protest participants.

PREVIOUS FRAMING RESEARCH

Since its development in the mid 1980s the frame alignment approach inspired an abundance of scholarship and has become one of the foundational theories of the social movement literature (Snow et al., 2014). Contrary to other leading theories of collective action the framing perspective is concerned with 'signifying work'. Framing scholars deal with how social movements interpret relevant situations (Snow et al., 1986). An important tenet of the theory is that grievances do not automatically mobilize people to take part in collective action (Gamson, 1992a). Circumstances and events are subject to interpretation and the way that people

interpret them is critical to whether they will leave their house and engage in protest (Snow, 2004). For example, Halfmann and Young (2010, p. 8) describe how before the 1830s, "the tone of antislavery [in the US] was moderate and advocates generally took for granted that Southern slaveholders had inherited an evil system that they would gradually abolish". From 1830 onwards, however, the abolitionist movement framed slavery as a national sin and spread grotesque depictions of the horrors of slavery. This way the movement shattered the popular opinion that "Southern slaveholders were good Christians who generally treated their slaves well and the assumption that this sin could be gradually reformed" (2010, p. 8). As the example shows, much of the work of movements is to construct and reconstruct frames in order to assure people that something has to be done. Via framing, social movements try to align people with their version of reality.

Snow and Benford (1988) identify three core tasks of frames: diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing. Through diagnostic framing the problem in need of a remedy and the actor or cause held responsible for the problem are identified. In short, the diagnosis answers the questions 'what is the problem?' and 'who or what is to blame?'. Prognostic framing stipulates possible solutions or goals, as well as the strategies to achieve those objectives—i.e. 'what should be done?'. The diagnosis and prognosis are part of the consensus mobilization (Klandermans, 1984) and are meant to generate support amongst possible constituents. The third framing task, motivational framing, functions to activate the people who agree with the movements' views and aims. It is the call to arms that has to convince people that engagement is worthwhile. This study focusses on consensus mobilization as frame resonance is essentially about achieving support. Also, since protest *participants* are examined, we know for a fact that they have answered the call to arms.

Up to now framing mainly has been studied as a meso-level phenomenon. The majority of framing contributions—and studies on strategic framing in particular (Oliver & Johnston, 2000)—approach frames from an organizational point of view and have neglected the micro-level of individual constituents (Williams, 2004). This is remarkable given the fact that the theory actually connects individuals to movements. Frame alignment is "the linkage of individual and SMO interpretive orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complementary" (Snow et al., 1986, p. 464). The framing perspective has the potential to bridge the gap between individuals and organizations as it offers an understanding of how the micro-level and the meso-level interact. Though scholars have analyzed frames of individual movement leaders and activists (see e.g.

Johnston & Aarelaid-Tart, 2000; Kubal, 1998; Mooney & Hunt, 1996), the values and beliefs of rank-and-file protest participants—left alone their connection with the frames of organizations—have rarely been studied (for exceptions see Alkon et al., 2013; Hadler & McKay, 2013; Wahlström, Wennerhag, & Rootes, 2013).

Until the late nineties the majority of framing research was descriptive and concentrated on the elaboration and application of framing concepts. The approach lacked systematic empirical studies and it appeared as if the primary research goal was to identify frames used by SMOs (Benford, 1997). Since then, the empirical scope of the field has grown and nowadays the bulk of the research is explanatory (Snow, 2004). Nevertheless, an important and still prevalent gap is the single case orientation (Johnston & Alimi, 2013; Polletta & Ho, 2006). This makes it difficult to generalize about effects of framing. Furthermore, few researchers examine frames of specific street demonstrations or protest events (see Gerhards & Rucht, 1992 for an exception). Most scholars scrutinize frames of a whole movement, analyzing newspaper articles, texts or documents communicated by organizations over a longer period of time (see e.g. Ferree, 2003; Haalboom, 2011; Noonan, 1995). Accordingly, frames are usually operationalized in a broad sense. The movement's messages are summarized into two or three frames that encapsulate the core arguments without investigation of the larger set of claims that make up the argumentation (see Babb, 1996 for an exception). When SMOs try to mobilize people for collective action they typically provide elaborate frame structures with detailed contents of diagnoses and prognoses (Johnston, 2002). But most authors only analyze the general description of a mobilization campaign without taking account of subordinate elements.

This study aims to address these lacunae—the disregard of subordinate frame elements, the focus on the organizational level, the neglect of protest events, and the single case orientation—by dissecting protest organizers' frames *in detail* and by comparing them with the frames of *individual protest participants* in 29 *street demonstrations* on a *variety of issues*. By studying frame resonance at the level of individual participants—instead of at the meso level—it is possible to move beyond general observations and to assess with what kind of frames activists are actually aligned. While previous studies have shown that some frames positively affect movement and protest emergence, their design does not permit to test people's alignment with different frame qualities in a multivariate way.

FRAME RESONANCE

In a way, framing can be seen as the marketing task of social movements in order to package the issue and strategically link ideas, beliefs and values in such manner that it creates support of constituents and bystanders (Snow & Byrd, 2007). Still, it is important to realize that SMOs cannot choose any framing they would like. Some social issues are easier to frame in an attractive way. "For instance, small-scale, single-issue campaigns may have clearer targets and cleaner recipes for success than larger, global problems, like racism or global warming, which entail complex webs of causes and solutions" (Bergstrand, 2014, p. 125).

When talking about frames' successfulness or persuasiveness, scholars use the concept of *resonance*, trying to explain why some frames resonate while others do not or less. As Opp (2009) remarks though, it is unclear from the framing literature what resonance precisely means and what the difference is between frame resonance and frame alignment. The way I understand it, there is little difference between them: the more people are aligned with particular SMO frames, the more we can say that these frames resonate. The difference between the concepts is that frame resonance is a *frame* attribute—some frames resonate more than others—while frame alignment can be attributed to *individuals*—someone is aligned with a certain frame or not. This study tries to unravel the mechanism behind frame resonance. Why do particular frames resonate? Or, put differently, how can we explain that protest participants are aligned with some of the frames put forward by social movement organizations, and not with others?

The frame quality of 'cultural resonance'—the conjunction of frames with the culture of the targets of mobilization (McCammon, 2013)—has up to now received most scholarly attention. Cadena-Roa (2002), for instance, shows how a movement in Mexico City successfully drew upon the Mexican wrestling culture to frame the corruption and mismanagement of the state. Similarly, McCammon (2001) finds a positive effect of cultural resonance on the emergence of women suffrage organizations. While the use of the 'expediency' frame—claiming that women should be able to vote because they have special womanly skills—had a positive effect on the presence of suffrage associations in a state, the 'justice' argument—stating that women are citizens just like men—did not. The author argues that the latter frame is not culturally resonant, and thus not successful, because it challenged traditional held beliefs at the turn of the twentieth century. The concept of cultural resonance is important for the effectiveness of frames (Taylor & van Dyke, 2004). However, as McCammon (2009, p. 48) observes: "few scholars have moved beyond research on the importance of cultural resonance

to consider that other qualities of social movement frames may also have significant persuasive capacity".

Another important factor that is thought to contribute to a frame's resonance is what Benford and Snow (2000, p. 621) call 'experiential commensurability': "Are movement framings congruent or resonant with the personal, everyday experiences of the targets of mobilization? Or are the framings too abstract and distant from the lives and experiences of the targets?" When frames appeal to familiar matters and daily life, the issue will appear more salient to people. Correspondingly, Snow and Benford (1988) argue that diagnoses and prognoses shouldn't be framed too much in a technological manner: "To frame any issue in terms that are inaccessible to all but a select few, as is the case with technologically framed issues, is to reduce potential participants to spectators and so make the issue nonparticipatory" (1988, p. 204). Based on these insights, we can differ between frames that relate to daily-life and frames that do not. Daily-life frames appeal to personal experiences and the life situations of the targets of mobilization. In case of a workers demonstration, for instance, daily life frames could be asking for more respect at the workplace. Framing the workers' issue as a matter of international cooperation and solidarity, on the other hand, is less accessible and more abstract and distant from everyday life. The core idea of framing is that an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. I expect that, when protest issues are viewed from people's everyday-life perspective, frames will have more resonance. Frames that people can personally relate to should resonate more than abstract or technical frames that are distant from a person's reality. The first hypothesis is:

H1: Daily-life frames resonate more with protest participants than other frames.

Furthermore, an important part of framing is blame attribution. In order to take part in collective action, identifying something or someone responsible for the issue is essential (Javeline, 2003). Gerhards and Rucht (1992) distinguish between two types of blame attribution: causes and causal agents. And they expect that targeting causal agents is strategically more advantageous for social movement organizations than identifying causes. When responsibility for an issue is put on a specific person or party, people more easily align with the frame than when 'something' intangible is held accountable. When responsibility is specific, people get the feeling that the grievance can actually be alleviated. Javeline (2003), for instance, argues that workers are among the most frequent groups of protesters because their problems can be solved by a clearly identifiable actor: the employer. As Gamson (1992a, p. 32) elucidates: "When we see

impersonal, abstract forces as responsible for our suffering, we are taught to accept what cannot be changed and make the best of it. (…) At the other extreme, if one attributes undeserved suffering to malicious or selfish acts by clearly identifiable groups, the emotional component of an injustice frame will almost certainly be there". I therefore expect that protest participants are more aligned when blame attribution concerns concrete causal agents than when the culpability is assigned to more general targets or, in particular, when abstract forces are held responsible.

> *H2: Frames that attribute blame to a specific causal agent resonate more than frames that blame a more general causal agent or a cause.*

The two formulated hypotheses will be tested using a dataset comparing 29 street demonstrations (see the Data and Methods section below). However, in order to give some descriptive flesh to the rationale of this study, I illustrate the arguments made in the previous paragraphs by more closely comparing two of the demonstrations in the sample. I employ a most similar design, comparing protests that are alike on most dimensions, but different regarding the frames that were used by the organizers. The events under scrutiny are two Dutch student protests, with the same main organizers, staged around the same time, on the same issue. One was held in Amsterdam on the 21st of May 2010. The second one was organized eight months later in The Hague on the 21st of January 2011.[1] The protest campaigns for an important part covered the same topics. Interviews with the organizers and analyses of the demonstration pamphlets reveal that both events condemned the austerities on higher education, blaming the government for making studying more expensive by increasing student fees, by replacing student scholarships with student loans, and by giving students only a discount on public transportation instead of free public transport. Table 5.1 gives an overview of the similarities and differences between the two demonstrations.

In some respects the framing of the issue differed. In Amsterdam, the organizers predominantly spoke about education as the motor of economy, as the most important export product of the Dutch, and as a crucial quality to overcome the economic crisis. They pointed out that while the Dutch government wanted the Netherlands to be in the global top five of knowledge-based economies, the country descended to the twelfth place and was still dropping. In The Hague the economic—relatively abstract and technical—framing was present as well, but less prominent and extensive. Moreover, in the campaign for the The Hague protest, the organizers argued that students would no longer have opportunities for personal development alongside their studies. They claimed that, for a good position on the labor market, it is crucial

for students to do more than only studying for four or five years—like doing an internship, getting foreign experience, or becoming a member of the board of a fraternity. Because of the austerities, spending time on other activities would be way too expensive for most of the Dutch students. That way, the framing of the protest demonstration in The Hague was more relevant for students' daily life than the predominant macro-economic framing of the event in Amsterdam.

Table 5.1: Comparing the two Dutch student demonstrations

	AMSTERDAM	THE HAGUE
Date	May 21st 2010	January 21st 2011
Organizers	National Students Union (LSVB) National Chamber of Associations (LKvV) Intercity Student Council (ISO) Committee SOS Youth Organization of Vocational Education (JOB)	National Students Union (LSVB) National Chamber of Associations (LKvV) Intercity Student Council (ISO)
Main issue	Planned government cuts on education	Planned government cuts on education
Demands	• No increase of student fees • Student scholarships instead of student loans • Free public transport for students • Invest in education (instead of cuts)	• No increase of student fees • Student scholarships instead of student loans • Free public transport for students • Invest in education (instead of cuts)
Macro-economic framing	• The Dutch education system should be in the international top 5 • A knowledge-based economy is the motor of economic welfare. We need it to get out of the economic crisis • Knowledge-based economy is our best export product	• The cuts are bad for our knowledge-based economy
Daily-life framing	• Students shouldn't have to pay more to study	• Students shouldn't have to pay more to study • Students will no longer have opportunities for personal development
Who is to blame?	• The (previous/current) government • Politics in general	• The government • Christian Democrats • Halbe Zijlstra (State Secretary)

Furthermore, the blame in The Hague was attributed to more specific actors. In Amsterdam responsibility was put on the previous and current government, and on politics in general. In The Hague, besides the government, a specific politician—State Secretary of Education Halbe Zijlstra—and a specific political party—the Christian Democrats (CDA)—were held accountable for the announced cuts on higher education. The frames underlying the protest

demonstration in The Hague thus were more connected to students' everyday experiences and proffered more specific blame attributions. The final hypothesis therefore is:

> *H3: The organizers' frames of the student demonstration in The Hague resonated more amongst protest participants than the organizers' frames of the student demonstration in Amsterdam.*

DATA AND METHODS

The study's data were gathered via the CCC project using the protest survey design (Walgrave et al., forthcoming). In total 29 street demonstrations were covered between 2009 and 2012 in three countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. Sixteen of the events are anti-austerity protests, including one politicized Labor Day event. The other demonstrations that are included covered environmental issues (four), anti-discrimination issues (four) (e.g. protests against racism and women demonstrations), and events regarding democracy or the political system (five).

Frames are defined and operationalized based on the work of Hank Johnston (see e.g. Johnston, 1995, 2002, 2005; Johnston & Alimi, 2013). Johnston defines frames as cognitive schemata that shape people's behavior and that consist of multiple elements. An important aspect of his method are the various *frame components* that make up frames (Noakes & Johnston, 2005). Instead of analyzing frames as broad categories that cover a range of concepts I identify all 'materials' that make them up and examine each component separately (see for an example Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). The units of analysis, hence, are *frame components*.

I measure frame resonance by comparing the discourse of the frame articulator (social movement organizations) and the frame receiver (participants). The more the participants' reasoning corresponds with that of the staging organizations, the higher the frame resonance. In the first stage of the coding process the official platform texts of the 29 protest demonstrations are collected. These are converted into a series of frame components. In total 583 frame elements are identified for the 29 demonstrations. Each frame element is coded as either a diagnosis (292 elements), a prognosis (189 elements) or a blame attribution (186 elements). On average, a demonstration pamphlet contains twenty frame elements.

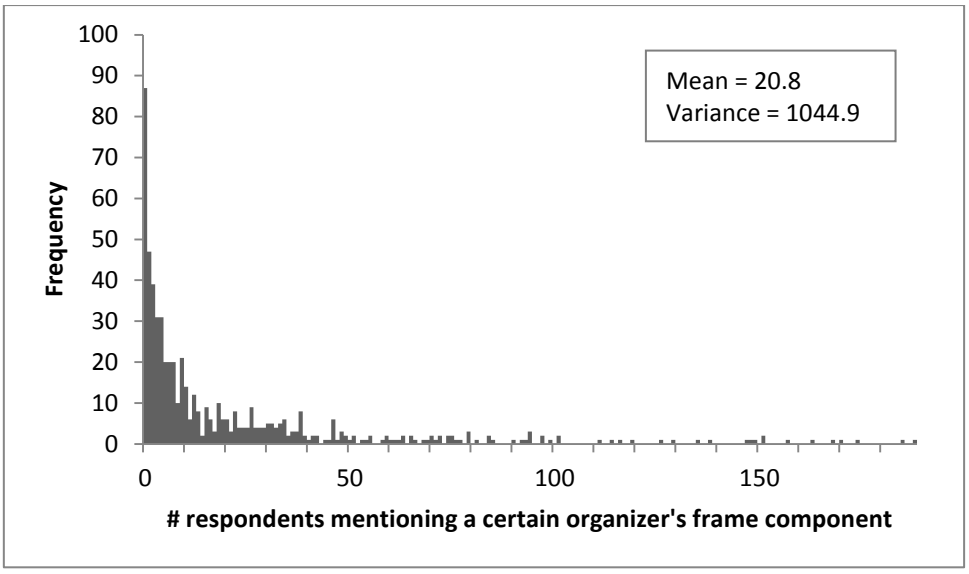
The second stage of the coding process analyzes the overlap between the frames of the organizers and the answers of participants to three open questions in the protest survey. Only respondents who responded to all three questions are included—which leaves us with 5,495

respondents. Respondents' triple answers are cut up in quasi-sentences containing one argument or statement. For every quasi-sentence coders examine whether it is congruent or not with one of the organizations' frame elements. With this information I create a dataset with frame components as units of analysis, containing 583 cases. Please see Chapter 2 for the complete description of the data gathering and data analysis.

Variables

The dependent variable is *frame resonance*, which counts how many respondents in a demonstration have mentioned a particular organizers' frame component when asked about their reasons for participation. Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of this variable. As is often the case with count data, I have to account for the number of times that frame resonance *could* have happened (the 'exposure'). The exposure variable is the *number of respondents* in each demonstration, controlling for how often a certain frame element could have been mentioned.[2] To test the hypotheses I will run negative binomial regression models. Poisson regressions are not appropriate because of overdispersion. Because frames elements are nested in demonstrations I use multilevel modelling.[3]

Figure 5.1: Distribution of the dependent variable *frame resonance* (N=583)



There are two independent variables. Firstly, a dummy variable measures for each case whether it is a *daily-life frame* (1) or not (0). Daily-life frames have bearing on personal experiences and people's life situations. They appeal to familiar matters, contrary to frames that

are more inaccessible, abstract, technical and distant from everyday life. Concretely, coders had to answer the following question: "Does the frame component talk about problems/consequences/solutions regarding the protest issue that affect or are important to people's daily life?" (no=0; yes=1). When coding this variable, the targets of mobilization are taken into account. In case of a women's demonstration, for instance, frame components are coded 'daily-life' when they are considered to be familiar to women, they might not necessarily be part of daily life for men. Frame elements that were coded 'yes' were for instance: 'students shouldn't have to pay more to study', 'the attitude/behavior towards women is very bad', 'there is too little respect for people working for the military', and 'people's jobs are threatened'. Examples that were coded 'no' are: 'fiscal transparency is too low', 'there is need for a socially just transformation regarding climate change', 'more cooperation between governments, employers and unions is needed', 'education is the motor of a knowledge-based economy', and 'the government must show leadership at the climate summit/take the lead'. This variable was not coded for frames components that attribute blame and therefore only regards 397 of the 583 cases. Coding was done by the author and a colleague (K-alpha=.84).

The second independent variable is *blame attribution*. Each frame component that attributes blame is categorized in one of three possible categories. When something abstract or immaterial is blamed, the blame is categorized as a *cause* and coded 0. For the coding of this category I followed Gamson's (1992a) passage about "abstract targets that render human agency as invisible as possible". These are according to him "actorless entities such as 'the system', 'society', 'life', and 'human nature" (1992a, p. 32). Examples of this blame category from the sample are 'privatization', 'the economic system', 'the way of life', and 'people's attitudes'. When blame is attributed to something less abstract, it is classified in the category *general causal agent* (1). For instance when the blame was put on 'banks', 'rich countries', 'world leaders', 'the financial sector', or 'the media'. Finally, the third category is *specific causal agent* (2) which accounts for frame elements that blame specific people, political parties, or organizations. The staging organizations in the sample for example blamed: 'the Minister of Defense', 'Geert Wilders', 'the current government', 'the Tories', and 'the British National Party'. This variable is only coded for frame components that attribute blame, which was the case for 186 of the 583 frame elements.

I measure four control variables. Firstly, I code for each frame element whether it is a *primary frame component* (1) or not (0). Frame components can have a higher or lower degree of saliency within a mobilization campaign. Frame elements are hierarchically organized and

within a frame scheme one can discern different levels (Johnston, 2002). The primary frame components are situated at the top level of this hierarchy. They summarize the overarching reason why the demonstration was held and cover the main diagnosis and prognosis. The lower levels are embodied by subcategories in which the core issue is further elaborated and in which more specific sub-diagnoses and -prognoses are identified (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). The central issue of the demonstration is the most visible and appealing message. I control for it because one can expect that protest participants are more aligned with the primary elements. While adherents might disagree with some of the specific proposed solutions or secondary diagnoses, we can expect them to be largely aligned with the central frame components when they show up to protest. The primary frame components are identified by looking at the titles and slogans of the demonstration. They are easily identifiable because of the use of large and bold letters on the pamphlet. In some pamphlets there is only one central slogan or heading, while others use more (see Table 5.4 in Appendix for an overview).

Table 5.2: Overview of the variables

VARIABLE NAME	RESPONSE CATEGORIES	N	MEAN	SHARE	MIN.	MAX.
Frame component level						
Frame resonance	# times respondents mentioned frame comp.	583	20.8	-	0	188
Daily-life frame	0 = not daily life	397	-	54.8	0	1
	1 = daily life			45.2		
Blame attribution	0 = cause	186	-	32.8	0	2
	1 = general causal agent			41.9		
	2 = specific causal agent			25.3		
Primary frame comp.	0 = secondary frame component	583	-	87.1	0	1
	1 = primary frame component			12.9		
Demonstration level						
# Respondents	# respondents for event	29	189.5	-	35	334
# Frame components	# frame components in pamphlet (excl. blames)	29	13.7	-	3	26
# Blame components	# blames in pamphlet	29	6.4	-	1	13
Issue	Democracy	29	-	17.2	-	-
	Austerity			55.2		
	Environment			13.8		
	Valence			13.8		
Country	Belgium	29	-	27.6	-	-
	The Netherlands			34.5		
	United Kingdom			37.9		

Furthermore, I control for the *number of frame elements* included in a protest pamphlet. When there are many mentioned in a mobilization campaign, the alignment with each separate frame element can expected to be lower. Additionally, I add dummies of the demonstration *issues* as control variables, distinguishing between anti-austerity, environmental, democracy,

and anti-discrimination events. Finally, because there are not enough countries to warrant a separate level in the multilevel regressions, three *country* dummies are added as variables at the demonstration level. See Table 5.2 for an overview of all variables.

RESULTS

As was shortly discussed in the theoretical section, SMOs cannot choose any framing they want. Some issues are easier to frame in an attractive way. Before testing the hypotheses, Table 5.3 shows the share of frame elements with particular qualities across issues. The pamphlets for anti-austerity demonstrations on average contain most daily-life frames. Almost two-third (61 percent) of the identified frame components appeal to people's everyday experiences. Environmental protest platforms contain substantially less of these (eighteen percent). This result makes sense. Austerity demonstrations deal with 'bread-and-butter issues'. They are mostly about basic needs, topics that often have a direct impact on people. Environmental issues tend to be more complex and address less familiar matters like nuclear energy and climate change.

Table 5.3: Average share (%) of frame components with a certain quality per issue

ISSUE (N DEMOS)	AUSTERITY (N=16)	ENVIRONMENT (N=4)	DISCRIMINATION (N=4)	DEMOCRACY (N=5)	TOTAL (N=29)
Daily-life frames					
Daily life	61	18	44	32	48
Abstract / technical	39	82	56	68	52
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Blame attribution					
Cause	21	37	42	11	26
General causal agent	37	23	30	55	38
Specific causal agent	42	40	28	34	36
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Furthermore, there are some interesting differences regarding who or what is held responsible in the protest campaigns. Abstract forces or causes are least blamed in democracy events (eleven percent), but most in anti-discrimination protests (42 percent). Social movements asking for political change often target the political elite. Politicians are deemed responsible for the current political situation and the ones expected to solve the problem. Actorless causes are more frequent for SMOs addressing discrimination—e.g. people's attitudes in general—, although the blame is also attributed to extreme-right parties. On average pamphlets of anti-

austerity demonstrations contain most specific targets (42 percent)—generally the current government—but environmental SMOs often put responsibility on specific organizations as well (forty percent).

Testing hypotheses 1 and 2

Of the 583 frame components that were identified in the demonstration platforms, fifteen percent were not referred to by any respondent. A considerate part of the protest pamphlets is not mentioned at all when activists are asked to talk about the reasons why they joined a demonstration. Some problems and solutions that were important enough for the protest organizers to include in their communication about the protest demonstration apparently were not that important to the people that joined the event. Of all the frame elements that were mentioned by no-one only eight percent were daily-life frames. Amongst the blame attributions that were never mentioned only twenty percent was a specific causal agent. Furthermore, a small portion of the frame components were ubiquitous: one percent were referred to by more than half of the respondents in a demonstration. These elements often assigned blame and particularly put responsibility on the government or a political party.

Table 5.4 shows two multilevel negative binomial regressions with the dependent variable frame resonance. Model 1 only includes the 397 diagnostic and prognostic frame components because the independent variable 'daily-life' frame was only coded for those elements. Similarly, Model 2 only contains the 186 elements that attribute responsibility, because the independent variable 'blame' was only coded for those frame elements. The model fit statistics in the bottom pane compare the intercept-only models (empty models) with the full models, and indicate that the full models fit the data better. The log likelihood, the BIC, and AIC are reduced by adding the predictors. Besides the regression coefficients, standard errors and significance levels, the table reports incidence-rate ratios (IRR) to make sense of the size of the effects. Marginal effects are reported throughout the text below. When calculating marginal effects, other variables are kept at their means or, in case of dichotomous variables, they are kept at 0 or 1 (whatever was most common).

H1 expected that daily-life frames foster more alignment than other frame components. Model 1 in Table 5.3 shows that this indeed is the case. On average, and controlling for other determinants, frame elements that have bearing on the lives of protest participants are mentioned more with a factor of 1.382 (IRR) compared to the ones that are more distant from everyday experiences. Marginal effects indicate that daily-life frames are on average mentioned

by thirteen percent of the respondents, while other frame components are only referred to by seven percent.

H2 only concerned the frame elements that attribute responsibility to something or someone. This hypothesis is tested in Model 2. I expected that frames that impute the problem to a concrete person or organization would resonate more than frames that assign the blame to something more general or less tangible. The results support this expectation as well. Activists are more than twice as often aligned with concrete people or organizations (IRR = 2.361) than with abstract or intangible forces. Marginal effects point out that a cause is on average mentioned by thirteen percent of the respondents. Blames that fall into the general causal agent category have a 22% chance of being written down. This chance increases to 35% when blame is put on something or someone specific.

Table 5.4: Two multilevel negative binomial regressions

	MODEL 1		MODEL 2	
N frame components	397		186	
	Coef. (Std. E.)	IRR	Coef. (Std.E.)	IRR
Independent variables				
Daily-life frame	**.324 (.103)****	**1.382**	-	-
Blame (ref. = cause)				
General causal agent	-	-	**.470 (.173)****	**1.600**
Specific causal agent	-	-	**.859 (.196)*****	**2.361**
Control variables				
Primary frame component	**1.168 (.115)*****	**3.214**	**.664 (.172)*****	**1.942**
# frame components	**-.047 (.008)*****	**.955**	-	
# blame components	-		.005 (.016)	1.005
Issue (ref. = Austerity)				
Democracy	-.065 (.146)	.937	-.089 (.185)	1.093
Environment	-.128 (.151)	.880	**-.568 (.212)****	**.567**
Discrimination	-.215 (.180)	.807	-.067 (.243)	.935
Country (ref. = Belgium)				
Netherlands	**-.285 (.130)****	**.752**	-.067 (.180)	1.069
United Kingdom	-.091 (.122)	.913	-.108 (.178)	.897
Constant	-5.118 (.212)***	.006	-5.856 (.247)***	.002
Wald chi2 (df)	203.45 (8)		65.26 (9)	
Prob > chi2	.000		.000	
Log likelihood	-1424.339 (-1491.001)		-718.101 (-745.926)	
Δ Log Likelihood	66.662		27.825	
BIC	2914.5 (2999.953)		1498.91 (1507.528)	
Δ BIC	85.453		8.618	
AIC	2870.677 (2988.002)		1460.201 (1497.851)	
Δ AIC	117.325		37.65	

Notes: Empty models in brackets in bottom pane. '# Respondents' is used as exposure variable.
*** p<.001; **p<.01; * p<.05. N demonstrations = 29

In addition, Model 1 shows that resonance is higher for the primary or central frame components of a demonstration. Primary elements are on average mentioned three times as often (IRR = 3.214) than the less elementary components of the demonstration pamphlet. Using marginal effects shows that a primary frame is written down by almost half of the respondents (49%) while secondary frame components are on average only referred to by thirteen percent of the participants. Furthermore, the number of frame elements in a platform text have a negative effect, which is quite evident (B=-.047). The more elaborate the pamphlet, the more dispersed the frame alignment. The country dummies in the analysis show that there is less frame resonance in the Netherlands compared to Belgium. Apparently Belgian activists are more on-message than their Dutch counterparts. The model shows no difference in frame resonance between demonstrations on different issues. Participants in democracy, environmental, and anti-discrimination protests are not more or less aligned than the activists in the austerity events.[4] Of course, note that this is the case while controlling for frame qualities. When only the issues are included as independent variables, democracy participants are more aligned and environmental protesters are less aligned than people joining austerity demonstrations. Hence, participants protesting against various issues have different alignment patterns, but these differences can be attributed to framing characteristics. Model 2, indicates that the blame attributions environmental organizers formulate are less referred to by respondents than the blames democracy organizations put forward. Activists in environmental demonstrations agree less with the protest organizers about who is responsible. This seems quite logical. There is a whole range of actors and causes that one might blame for environmental problems.

Comparing the two student demonstrations

The final hypothesis concerned the comparison of two demonstrations in the sample: the Amsterdam student protest in May 2010 on the one hand, and the student demonstration in The Hague eight months later on the other. The demonstrations and their frames were very similar. Still, it was expected that protest participants' were more aligned with the organizers' frames in The Hague because this campaign put more emphasis on daily-life experiences and because the blaming was more specific. The results confirm this hypothesis. On average, the organizers' frame components in The Hague resonated with thirteen percent of the protest participants while this share was nine percent in Amsterdam. A difference of four percent is not big, but because the framing of the protests was largely the same and only differed on a few aspects, this difference is rather substantial.

The economic frame elements in both student demonstrations—about education being the motor of economy—were on average mentioned by only three percent of the respondents, compared to an average of eleven percent for the other frame elements. Moreover, in The Hague, the daily-life frame that appealed to students' personal development was—except for the primary frame elements—most often mentioned, together with the claim that the austerities would damage the quality of education (by thirteen percent of the respondents). The blame attributions of the demonstration in The Hague also resonated more than the blames in Amsterdam. However, the difference is very small: in The Hague 24% of the respondents aligned with the organizers' blames while in Amsterdam this was 22%.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study tries to explain why some social movement frames resonate with protest participants while others do not. Frame resonance is about the connection between individual and social movement interpretations of a protest issue. Previous studies mostly omitted to examine the individual side of this linkage. Scholars studied the persuasiveness of frames without asking the receivers of those frames what their cognitive motives to join actually were. This study examines frame resonance by comparing the individual frames of protest participants with the frames communicated by the organizers of demonstrations. It tests whether the extent to which protest participants are aligned with social movement organizations can be explained by the characteristics of the frames that SMOs use. I go beyond previous studies by using a quantitative method, studying frame resonance in 29 street demonstrations on various issues, and by analyzing the effect of two frame features that—though often mentioned in framing literature—are rarely tested in a systematic manner. Additionally, while most framing scholars operationalize frames vaguely and broad—summarizing the movement's messages into two or three themes—I investigate the larger set of claims that make up the organizers' argumentation, studying framing at the frame component level (Johnston, 1995, 2002).

The results confirm that frames have more resonance when they appeal to people's everyday experiences. When joining a demonstration, people are more motivated by frame components that talk about familiar matters than by the ones that are more technical or distant from their daily lives. How blame is attributed makes a difference as well. When abstract causes are held responsible—a certain situation, particular circumstances, something intangible—frames are less convincing than when a concrete person, party or organization is identified as

the demonstration's culprit. When preparing protest frames, it would be useful for SMOs to formulate frames from the perspective of people's daily lives and attribute blame to particular organizations, people or institutions, instead of identifying abstract forces and causes. This is what people particularly refer to when asked about their reasons to join a demonstration. Of course, social movements cannot use any frame they want. Framing also depends on the socio-political context, and real world events limit the claims one can make. As Gamson (2006, p. 124) illustrates: "To take an example from the nuclear power issue, the accidents at Three Miles Island and Chernobyl have not made life easy for those who frame nuclear power development as technological progress". The organization's ideology also plays a role. I find that organizers of anti-austerity demonstrations more often (are able to) use daily-life frames and more specific blame attributions than SMOs staging events on other issues, like environmental protest events. Still, compared to other factors that influence protest participation—the political context for instance—the framing of the issue is something social movements can control, at least to some extent.

This study has some limitations. Firstly, the process of frame alignment is not examined, only the outcome is taken into account. As a consequence I cannot tell whether protesters have really adopted certain SMO frames, or whether the views of demonstrators and SMOs were already congruent before movements started their mobilization campaigns. In that case the frames of organizers and participants are aligned without a process of alignment taking place. Also, I am not able to disentangle who leads and who follows. Methodologically, I approach frame resonance as a top-down matter. I start with frames of social movement organizations and examine whether they resonate with protest participants. Vijay and Kulkarni (2012) show that frames can emerge at the grassroots level as well, and that frames might be directed from non-elites towards the elites instead of the other way around. Because I measure frame resonance at only one point in time, I cannot examine who influences whom. I only assess a degree of congruence, which is the outcome of an interactional and ongoing process between individuals and social movement organizers. Secondly, only relatively successful mobilization campaigns are studied. Protest events where we expected two thousand participants or more were covered in the project. Therefore the study does not include negative cases, and I am not able to show why certain framing efforts flop. Finally, since only protest participants are included, I cannot tell to what degree nonparticipants are aligned with the organizers' mobilizing messages and whether their alignment is dependent on the frame characteristics under scrutiny too. Are frames with certain qualities more resonant with people in general or are there

differences between individuals who attend demonstrations and the larger public? Similarly, it is not clear whether the examined frame characteristics can really convince people of a certain view or whether daily-life frames and specific blames are rather successful at mobilizing people who were already aligned.

The present study focuses on the congruence between protest organizers and protest participants, trying to explain when their framing overlaps. Future research might want to explore frame elements that individuals use to motivate their participation that do not align with the organizers' frames. Coding the respondents' answers reveals that about half of the quasi-sentences they write down cannot be traced back to the protest platforms (also see Chapter 6). Future studies could try to explain the other motives that people have to join a demonstration. Do they, for instance, pick up frame components that are apparent in the media coverage of the protest issue? Do their incongruent answers resonate with frames of other political actors?

This study shows which frames are picked up by people engaging in protest; which frames persist and stick. The results indicate that frame alignment of protest participants is not self-evident and that particular frame qualities are important for the generation of ideational and attitudinal support. It is not sure that the same types of frames resonate with nonparticipants, but probably they do. In a way, this study is a tough test. Only people who engaged in action, and who thus have a basic interest in the protest issue, were surveyed. Frames that do not resonate with these people, probably will not resonate with nonparticipants either.

NOTES

1. Please note that the Amsterdam event was held just before the national elections and that the The Hague event took place after the new government was formed. The demonstration in The Hague also had a larger turnout than the one in Amsterdam.
2. Via the commend *exp(varname)* in STATA. Note that using an exposure variable is usually better than running the regressions on a rate variable because it makes use of the correct probability distributions.
3. The command *xtnbreg* in STATA.
4. Taking another issue as the reference category does not make a difference for the results.

APPENDIX

Table 5.5: The primary frame components of each demonstration

#	DEMONSTRATION	C	PRIMARY FRAME COMPONENTS
1	Climate Change	BE	UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen must be a success Climate change has many negative consequences, needs to be stopped
2	No to Austerity	BE	Against the austerity policies/We need a recovery plan instead of austerities Economic crisis is a problem, has to be dealt with
3	We have alternatives	BE	Against the austerities/We need alternatives for austerities The economic crisis is a problem, has to be dealt with
4	Not in Our Name	BE	Political crisis drags on (200 days/too long)/crisis has to be solved There should be a government
5	Fukushima never again	BE	Nuclear energy is bad, should be banned
6	No Government, Great Country	BE	Political crisis drags on/Crisis has to be solved/Negotiations keep failing There should be a government
7	March for Work	BE	Unemployment is too high/We need more jobs Economic crisis is a problem, has to be dealt with
8	Non-Profit Demonstration	BE	There should be a social agreement Negotiations have to be started
9	Retirement demonstration	NL	The pension age shouldn't be raised to 67
10	Culture demo Amsterdam	NL	Against the austerities on culture, reconsider austerities
11	Culture demo Utrecht	NL	Against the austerities on culture, reconsider austerities
12	Stop budget cuts (care & welfare)	NL	Against the austerities on care and welfare The weakest people are hit by the austerities, austerities are unjust
13	Occupy Netherlands	NL	The 99% are forced to pay a crisis we did not cause Against the austerities The political system is unsustainable/undemocratic/unjust/unequal
14	Together strong for public work	NL	Public work gets to little respect, needs to get more respect The government wants to cut the public sector
15	Stop racism and exclusion	NL	Racism/discrimination/exclusion are commonplace, need to be stopped
16	Student demo Amsterdam	NL	Austerities on education are too much, need to be stopped
17	Student demo The Hague	NL	Austerities on education are too much, need to be stopped
18	Military demo	NL	Too little respect for defense personnel Against austerities on defense, austerities are disproportionate
19	National Climate March 2009	UK	UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen must be a success, put pressure on the summit
20	Unite Against Fascism	UK	There is a disturbing rise in racism/fascism/Islamophobia/anti-Semitism, turn back the tide
21	Fund Our Future: Stop Education Cuts	UK	Stop the planned cuts on education Our future should be funded
22	National Climate March 2010	UK	UN climate talks in Cancún, Mexico, put pressure on the summit
23	Second Student National Demo	UK	Against the increase of the tuition fees Stop the planned education cuts
24	Occupy London	UK	Current system is unsustainable/undemocratic/unjust/unequal The 99% are forced to pay a crisis we did not cause
25	May Day Labour March	UK	Maintain tradition, celebrate mayday Support trade union rights
26	Million Women Rise	UK	Women are continually being discriminated, discrimination should stop Women experience a lot of violence
27	Take Back Parliament	UK	The parliament is not representative A new (fair) voting system is needed
28	No to Hate Crime Vigil	UK	Hate crime has been rising the last few years, should be eradicated from society
29	'TUC's March for the Alternative	UK	Government budget cuts should not be stopped Alternatives should be considered

Notes: C = Country

VI

TRACING PROTEST MOTIVES

The Link Between Organizers' Pamphlets, Newspaper Coverage, and Frames of Demonstrators

ABSTRACT

Frames are essential to understand protest participation. However, only few studies analyze frames of individual activists and try to determine where they stem from. This chapter links frames of demonstrators with frames of protest organizers and frames of other political actors present in newspaper coverage about the protest issue. Data cover fourteen anti-austerity demonstrations in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Results show that social movement organizations depend a lot on other political actors to gain media visibility for their frames. Furthermore, the relationship between social movement frames and protest participant frames is mediated by newspaper coverage. Protest organizers are able to reach demonstrators via their own communication channels to some extent, but for many of their messages they have to rely on journalists' reporting about the protest issue. Finally, frames present in newspaper articles affect people the most when they are expressed by opposition parties or by the organizing social movements, but frames advocated by other political actors affect participants as well.

This chapter is based on a single-authored article.

TRACING PROTEST MOTIVES

The Link Between Organizers' Pamphlets, Newspaper Coverage, and Frames of Demonstrators

Before people join a protest demonstration they have to be motivated to take to the streets. For someone to engage in collective action it is important to believe that something has to be done about a certain issue (Klandermans, 1984). The framing of ideas is crucial in this process. Frames define a problem, hold something or someone accountable for it, and provide possible solutions. Through framing, situations that at first seem unfortunate but tolerable can be redefined as inexcusable. Frames can make the difference between accepting what cannot be changed and taking action (Gamson, 1992a). As such, frames are essential to understand participation in protest activities.

The aim of this study is to gain more insight into the frames that motivate people to protest and to examine how they relate to the broader communicative context in which protest occurs. The frame alignment perspective—one of the most important approaches within the social movement literature (Benford & Snow, 2000)—suggests that activists' frames can be traced back to the mobilizing messages of organizations staging protest events. Social movement organizations (SMOs) construct and reconstruct frames of injustice in order to *align* people with the SMO's version of reality and—subsequently—try to motivate people to join (Snow & Benford, 1988). However, because most movement scholars study framing from an organizational point of view, few have analyzed the frames of individual demonstrators (for exceptions see Alkon et al., 2013; Ernst, 2009; Hadler & McKay, 2013) and to what extent they can indeed be traced back to frames of SMOs. Recent research suggests that demonstrators do

not necessarily share the frames of social movements. Many activists are only partially aligned with protest organizers. They also express other grievances and formulate alternative solutions (see Chapter 3). The movements' framing thus only tells part of the story of what protest participants are thinking.

This study argues that, besides the influence of SMO messages, activists' frames are shaped by the way protest issues are represented in mass media. SMOs do not have a monopoly on framing protest issues (Koopmans, 2004a). Competing perspectives float around in the public sphere and can influence protester motives. In the media arena, political actors struggle over the representation of social matters (Gamson & Stuart, 1992). Social movement organizations staging protests are only one of those political actors, and—even more than others—they have to compete heavily to gain media coverage (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

This chapter aims to link the frames of individual protest participants with the mobilizing messages of the protest organizers, and with mass media frames about the protest issue. It departs from a two-step flow model (Brosius & Weimann, 1996; Katz, 1957) in which social movement organizations and other political actors try to affect the media agenda, which in turn influences protest participants. The paper has two main objectives. The first goal is to investigate to what extent the frames that protest organizers use to gather support are part of the debate in mass media. The second is to compare the frames of protest organizers and frames in mass media with the frames that motivate protest participants to join an event. To what extent are activists inspired by the movement's communication? And, to what extent do they pick up (alternative) frames from mass media?

The data cover fourteen anti-austerity demonstrations staged between 2009 and 2011 in three countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. Via the protest survey method 2,496 people are surveyed during their act of protesting. Participants' frames are identified via answers to three open survey questions. The SMO frames are deduced from the official demonstration platform texts. Mass media frames are identified via a random sample of newspaper articles on the protest issue in the four months before the demonstration took place. Frames are defined and operationalized based on the work of social movement scholar Hank Johnston.

A TWO-STEP FLOW MODEL OF FRAME ALIGNMENT

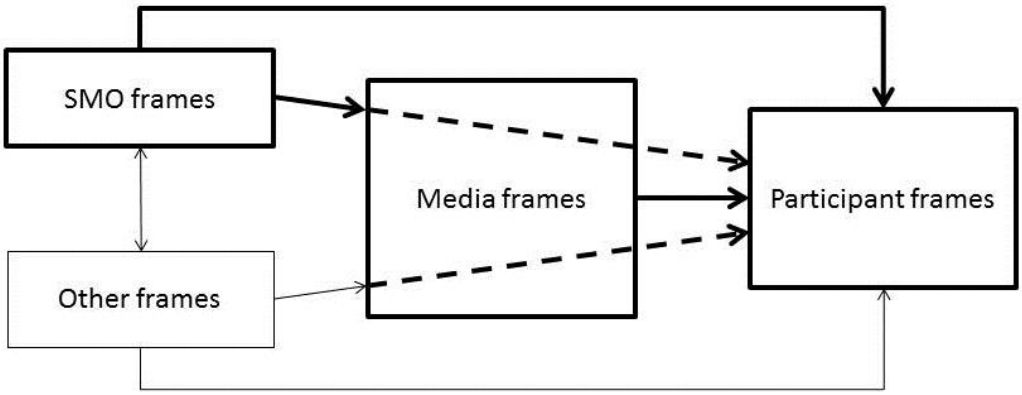
How can we explain the frames that motivate protest participants to engage in collective action? Movement scholars have mostly assumed that demonstrators are aligned with frames of social movement organizations (Snow et al., 1986). The organizers' framing, however, does not tell the whole story (Ketelaars, Walgrave, & Wouters, 2014). While some people fully share the frames of staging organizations, others protest because of different reasons and bring in alternative understandings about the social issue. In order to understand frames of activists it is crucial to look beyond the communication of protest organizers.

The mass media can be expected to play an important role in shaping protesters' perceptions. Up to now, this particular topic did not receive a lot of scholarly attention. As Koopmans (2004a, p. 369) notes: "We now know a lot about the factors that determine if and how the media cover protest, but we have hardly begun to address the more important question of how media coverage of protest, and the wider discourse surrounding it, affect movements". Studies tackling the effect of media on movements have shown that public discourse can provide opportunities for mobilization (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004), that visibility of movements in the media positively influences membership figures (Vliegenthart et al., 2005), that congruence between movement and media framing increases levels of protest (Cooper, 2002), and that media frames can influence people's attitudes and their willingness to become active (Terkildsen & Schnell, 1997; Callaghan & Schnell, 2005). The underlying assumption of this research is that media messages shape people's cognitive processes. Still, we know relatively little about this macro-micro link between mass media coverage and protest participants.

I propose a two-step flow model of frame alignment, incorporating the role of mass media in shaping protest participants' frames. Originally the two-step flow model starts with media, influencing so-called opinion leaders, who on their part pass on what they hear and read to 'the public' (Katz, 1957). Later on, other possible pathways were identified, with opinion leaders initiating the process (Brosius & Weimann, 1996). I depart from a model in which opinion leaders—in this case SMOs and other political actors—affect mass media, which in turn influence the public (protest participants). I argue that social movements to some extent will be able to reach people directly—via pamphlets, websites, meetings, ads, newsletters, etc.—but that they also depend on mass media to communicate their views to potential participants (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993). The first part of the study will therefore reflect on the link between social movement organizations and mass media, and to what extent SMOs are able to get coverage of 'their' issues. The second part focusses on protest participants, and how we can explain the

frames they align with by looking at the SMO frames underlying the demonstration and the frames expressed by SMOs and other political actors in the media coverage of the protest issue. See Figure 6.1 for the two-step flow model of frame alignment. The bold lines show the relationships that are tested in this study.

Figure 6.1: Two-step flow model of frame alignment



Mass media frames will be identified by examining newspaper coverage of the protest issue. Social media and other new media are not included in the analysis, although they have become important channels to spread protest frames. I am also aware of the fact that newspapers are not representative for mass media in general. Still, I think studying newspapers is appropriate and fit to meet the goals set out for this study. Firstly, the protests in the sample are all anti-austerity demonstrations, which are typical 'bread-and-butter' or 'old' social movement events. Most of these protests were organized by unions and they attracted a relatively old constituency—except for student demonstrations in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Online media played a limited role regarding the street demonstrations in the sample. Only eight percent of all respondents said that online social networks were their most important information channel about the protest, and two percent indicated that they had only heard about the demonstration via online media. Secondly, austerity measures were high on the political agenda during the research period. The topic of each demonstration received a lot of newspaper coverage. We can therefore expect that a broad spectrum of interpretations and views on the protest issues were present in the newspaper articles. That way, the frames present in the newspaper coverage can be seen as a proxy for the wider public debate about the matter at hand in each demonstration.

From protest organizers to mass media

The first step in this study links protest organizers to mass media. The relationship between SMOs and media is one of mutual dependency. Mass media need movements because they can provide journalists with newsworthy events containing drama and conflict (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Social movements on their part depend on media to gain visibility and support for their claims. Media coverage can put pressure on political elites and can activate third parties supporting the movement's cause (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993).

A fair amount of studies deal with this relationship (for overviews see McCurdy, 2012; Vliegenthart & Walgrave, 2010). Most scholars within this stream of literature focus on media reporting of protest activities (see e.g. Ketchum, 2004; McCluskey et al., 2009; Oliver & Maney, 2000; Sobieraj, 2010). They show that the dependency between movements and media is asymmetrical: movements rely far more on the media than vice versa. Although protest activities are a typical 'tool' for social movements to get into the news, demonstrations only rarely receive media attention (Wouters, 2013). Also, when demonstrations do pass the media gates, the coverage seldom serves the movement's interests (Rosie & Gorringe, 2009). News reports' framing of protest activities usually does not help SMOs to communicate their messages and might even undermine their agendas (Smith, McCarthy, McPhail, & Augustyn, 2001).

Fewer studies than the ones tackling media attention of protest activities look at coverage of SMOs as such (but see Amenta, Caren, Olasky, & Stobaugh, 2009) and their issues (Vliegenthart & Walgrave, 2010). Although the advent of new media and the internet has expanded movements' means to communicate with the public (see e.g. Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011; Milan, 2013), mass media are still key to reach a broad audience (Cottle, 2008). As a consequence, social movements attempt to control how 'their' issues are covered. The way journalists report on different topics sets the frames of reference for the public (Scheufele, 1999). Journalists do not merely transmit 'reality' but they transform it by choosing to write on certain matters (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) and by highlighting particular aspects rather than others (Entman, 1993). The mass media arena is therefore characterized by a constant competition over meaning with political actors struggling over how an issue is reported (Gamson & Stuart, 1992).

As we saw above, literature on media coverage of protest activities suggests that protest organizers have a hard time passing the media gates. However, when it comes to the coverage of social issues, movements can adopt various strategies in order to get media framing that is in line with the organization's view (Rucht, 2004). Ryan and colleagues (2005, p. 111), for instance,

describe how the Rhode Island Coalition against Domestic Violence became journalists' "foremost source for background information on domestic-violence murders" after deepening their relations with reporters and by developing a media response team. Furthermore, social movement organizations do not stand alone to frame a social issue in their direction. Other political actors who are on the same side can broadcast frames that are in line with the views of SMOs. So although the relationship between movements and media is asymmetrical, movement organizations do seem to have opportunities to let their frames be heard in mainstream media.

Protest participants' frame alignment

The second aim of this study is to look at the frames protest participants align with. What is the problem they are protesting for? Who or what is to blame for it? And, how do they think the problem should be solved? Firstly, I expect that activists' frames can be traced back to the frames of the SMOs staging the protest event. This might seem a trivial expectation. Of course people agree with the frames underlying the protests they join. However, frames predominantly speak to cognitive motives, and these are not necessarily most important for people to engage in action. Emotions, for instance—like venting anger or having positive feelings towards group members—might provide enough motivation to protest (Goodwin et al., 2009; Stürmer & Simon, 2009), even when the frames of the organizers are not shared. Or, as cultural-interactionists suggest, a protest's form may be an important determinant of protest participation (Eliasoph & Lichterman, 2003). Demonstrators may base their participation decision on whether they enjoy and understand the organization's 'style' rather than on the organization's ideas (Mische, 2008). Furthermore, there is more diversity within social movements than is often presumed (Snow, 2004). While demonstrations are usually portrayed as homogeneous crowds, they are rarely so coherent or unanimous as one might think (see Turner & Killian, 1987 on the "illusion of homogeneity"). Still, chances are small that people will join an event when they do not—to a certain extent—agree with the movement's frames (Snow & Benford, 1988; Snow et al., 1986). The first hypothesis of this study therefore is:

> *H1: Frames that are part of the protest organizers' mobilizing messages are more often used by protesters to frame their participation than frames that are not.*

Secondly, the mass media can be expected to influence the frames protesters align with. When it comes to political matters, at least on the national level, people often rely on media for information (Iyengar, 1987). Politics are hardly perceived directly by the public (McCombs,

2013). That way media affect individual political perceptions and—subsequently—political conversations and discussions with peers. In short, the media for an important part frame the context in which people decide to protest (McLeod et al., 1999). The relative prominence of issues in the news determines what issues are deemed important by the public (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). Because media attention is a zero-sum game, certain frames on the protest issue are more accessible than others. Priming theory holds that the supply of information primes people to give particular considerations more weight when making political evaluations. Although priming has mostly been used to explain voting decisions and evaluations of politicians (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007), it could also apply to people joining protest demonstrations. The more news about the protest issue focuses on certain frames and issues, the more likely it is that people deem these frames relevant as motives to protest. I thus expect that protesters are more aligned with frames that often appear in mass media than frames that are less visible. The second hypothesis is:

> *H2: The more certain frames appear in the media, the more protesters use those to frame their participation.*

Finally, I expect that protest participants do not align with all kinds of media frames to the same extent, but mostly with the media messages of the protest organizers. Previous research suggests that overlap between the framing of mass media and social movements can facilitate mobilization. Cooper (2002) found that a protest wave is larger when the social movements' framings are similar to the framings in the media. Furthermore, when processing mass media messages, not all content is equally relevant for people. Individuals filter out irrelevant information. Messages are more likely to prime when they are specifically linked to the particular evaluation or decision people are making (Althaus & Kim, 2006). For people engaging in collective action, we can expect that media messages of social movement organizers prime more than the media frames of other political actors. Moreover, in case of this study, we can expect the same for media messages of opposition parties regarding the protest issue. Although the groups that took part in the events analyzed here vary—students, union members, retirees, civil servants—and though these groups protested against different policies, all demonstrations were aimed against austerity measures. Therefore the protests in the sample all had a clear target: the government. When social movement organizations challenge the government, opposition parties are likely to be on the same side, and we can expect that especially their messages prime for people taking part in anti-austerity protests. The final hypotheses are:

H3a: Protest participant frames are more aligned with media frames of protest organizers than with media frames of other actors.

H3b: Protest participant frames are more aligned with media frames of opposition parties than with media frames of other actors.

DATA AND METHODS

Data are gathered via the project 'Caught in the act of protest: Contextualizing Contestation' (CCC) using the protest survey method (also see Klandermans, 2012). In this chapter I analyze fourteen anti-austerity demonstrations staged between 2009 and 2011 in three countries: three in Belgium, eight in the Netherlands, and three in the United Kingdom. Chapter 2 of this thesis gives an elaborate overview of the data selection process. It also describes how protester, SMO and media frames are coded. In the following paragraphs I briefly summarize the coding process.

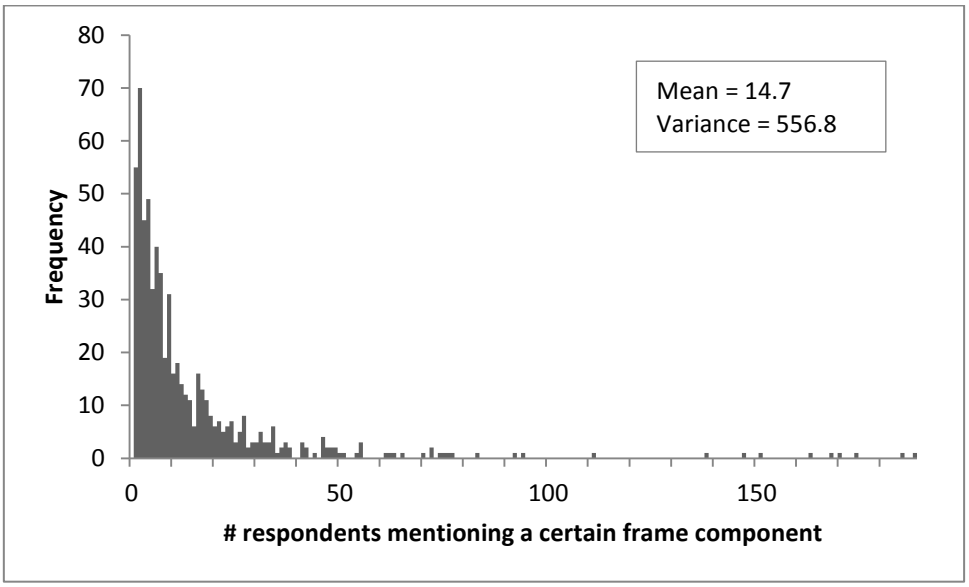
Frames are operationalized based on the work of Hank Johnston (see Johnston, 1995, 2002, 2005; Johnston & Alimi, 2013). An important aspect of his method is that frames are defined as schemes that consist of various frame elements. Accordingly, instead of analyzing frames as broad categories that cover a range of concepts, I identify frame components and I examine each element separately. The participants' frame components are derived from three open questions in the protest survey. Only people who responded to all three questions are included (in total 2,496 respondents). The participants' answers are broken down into statements containing one message, i.e. quasi-sentences. These are the units of analysis. In total the respondents wrote down 9,214 quasi-sentences.

All the 9,214 quasi-sentences participants wrote down have to be categorized into frame components. To do so, they are first compared with frame components of the protest organizers, deduced from the protest pamphlets that social movements spread to gather support. In total the fourteen organizers' anti-austerity demonstration platforms contain 275 frame components. Coders determine for each respondent quasi-sentence whether it is congruent or not with one of these organizers' frame components. Via this coding already half of the respondent quasi-sentences are categorized into frame elements—i.e. the ones that are congruent with one of the organizers' elements. Subsequently, the quasi-sentences that were not congruent with one of the organizers' frames are inductively labeled and grouped into frame components as well. In total the respondent quasi-sentences were categorized into 627 different

frame components.[1] Analyses will be done using a dataset with these as the units of analysis, hence consisting of 627 cases. On average there are 45 frame components per demonstration.

Next, coding is done to determine to what extent frames of the organizers and frames of protest participants can be found in the mass media. The media frames are identified via a content analysis of newspaper articles about the protest issue prior to the demonstration. The research period covers the four months before the protest up to the day the event took place. Two newspapers per country are selected, one popular and one quality newspaper.[2] Each article is read thoroughly and explored for passages that overlap with one of the organizers' and/or participant frame components. For each frame component the source is written down. The source can be any actor who directly or indirectly expresses one of the frames in a newspaper article. Besides quoted, a source can be paraphrased or described in a situation. The same frame component is only coded once per article per actor.

Figure 6.2: Distribution of the dependent variable (N=627)



Variables

The dependent variable is the number of respondents that mentioned a certain frame component when answering the open survey questions (*# mentioned by respondents*). Or, put differently, it measures the number of respondent quasi-sentences that were categorized as a certain frame element. Because the dependent variable is a count variable, negative binomial regressions will be used to test the study's hypotheses (see Figure 6.2 for the distribution). A normal Poisson model is not appropriate because of overdispersion. As is often the case with

count data the number of times that the observation could have happened (the 'exposure') has to be accounted for. The exposure variable here is the number of respondents in each demonstration, controlling for how often a certain frame component could have been mentioned.[3] Because the frame elements are nested in demonstrations, multilevel models are used.

The first independent variable is *platform frame.* This variable distinguishes between frame elements that were *not* found in the organizers' pamphlet (0), elements that *were* found in the organizers' pamphlet (1), and the most important frame elements in the organizers' pamphlets—i.e. the *primary* frame components (2). Within a frame scheme one can discern different levels and frame components can have a higher or lower degree of saliency within a mobilization campaign (Johnston, 2002). At the top of the hierarchy are the primary frame elements. They summarize the overarching reason why the demonstration is held and cover the main problem and solution. They contain the most visible and appealing messages. The secondary levels consist of subcategories in which more specific sub-diagnoses and –prognoses are defined (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). The primary frame elements are coded by looking at the titles and slogans of the protest platform text. They are easily identifiable because of the use of large and bold letters. In some pamphlets there is only one central slogan or heading while others have more (see Table 5.5 in the Appendix of Chapter 5 for an overview of the primary frames).

The second independent variable is *media frame* and measures the percentage of articles about the protest issue in which a certain frame component was mentioned. That way it estimates the relative weight of a certain frame element within the debate on the protest issue.[4] The third, fourth, and fifth independent variables are construed in the same way. *Media frame SMOs* measures the percentage of newspaper articles in which a certain frame component was mentioned by the social movement organizations staging the demonstration. *Media frame opposition* calculates the same for opposition parties, and *media frame others* measures this for actors other than the protest organizers and opposition parties.

Furthermore, there are two control variables. The first one is # *frame components demonstration*. It measures the total number of frame elements that were identified per demonstration. It is accounted for because it will affect the number of times a certain component is mentioned by respondents. Secondly, the countries in which the demonstrations took place are controlled for. Because there are not enough countries to warrant a separate

level in the multilevel regressions, the country dummies are added as variables at the demonstration level. Table 6.1 gives the descriptives of all variables used in this chapter.

Table 6.1: Variable descriptives

		MEAN	%	S.D.	N	MIN.	MAX.
Dependent variable							
Mentioned by respondents (#)		14.70	-	23.60	627	1	188
Independent variables							
Platform frame	Not in platform (0)	.43	63%	.59	627	0	2
	Secondary (1)		32%				
	Primary (2)		5%				
Media frame (%)		5.32	-	7.45	627	0	62
Media frame SMOs (%)		.95	-	2.19	627	0	29
Media frame opposition (%)		.52	-	1.35	627	0	11
Media frame others (%)		3.85		5.73	627	0	50
Control variables							
# respondents per demo (exposure variable)		180.07	-	67.49	14	90	309
# frame components demonstration		44.9	-	7.21	14	37	55
Countries:	Belgium	.21	21%	.43	14	0	1
	Netherlands	.57	57%	.51	14	0	1
	United Kingdom	.21	21%	.43	14	0	1

Notes: N frames=627; N demonstrations=14

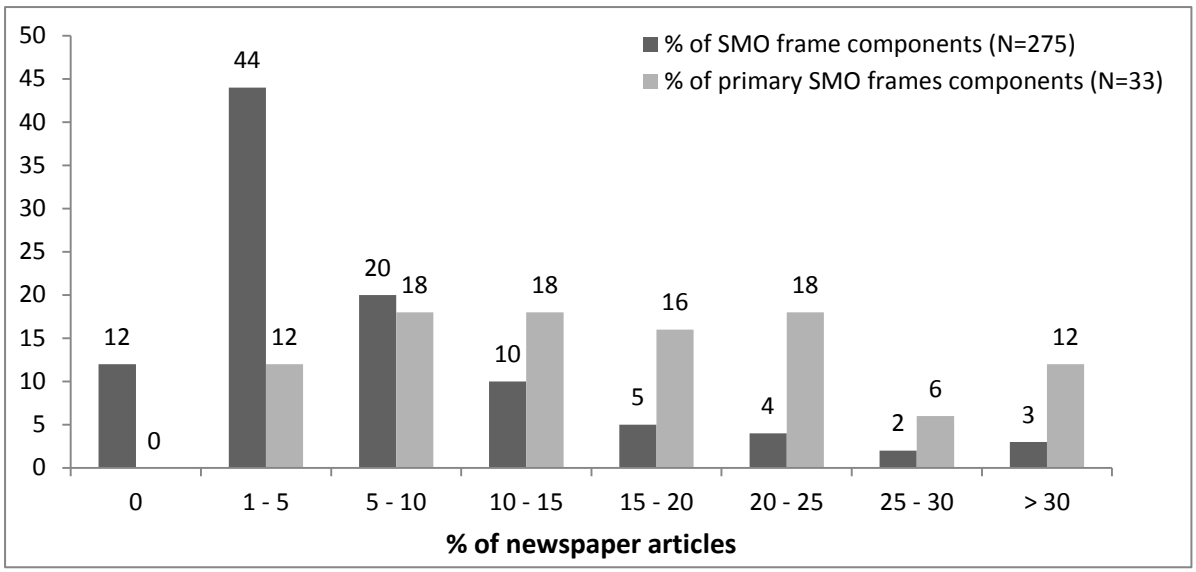
RESULTS

From protest organizers to mass media

The first aim is to investigate to what extent mobilizing messages of protest organizers are covered in mainstream media prior to a demonstration. On average, twenty frame components per demonstration were found in the staging organizations' protest platforms. The dark bars in Figure 6.3 indicate how often these appeared in newspaper articles about the protest issue. Twelve percent were never mentioned, which means that almost ninety percent of the platform frame components were at least covered once. More than half (56%—combining the first two dark columns) were only found in five percent or less of the articles. The top nine percent of the SMO frame elements (combining the three last dark columns) on the other hand, were covered in at least twenty percent of the articles about the protest issue. It seems that the frames of SMOs in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom played a relatively central role in the mass media debate about government cuts. At least some were rather visible—i.e. were present in no less than a fifth of the articles about the social issue.[5] The primary frame components of the protest organizers were more visible than the secondary elements. A third of these central demonstration messages (36%—the three last *light* columns) were referred to in twenty percent

or more of the articles on the protest issue. On average they were mentioned in twenty percent of the articles, while the secondary diagnoses and prognoses were on average covered in only six percent.

Figure 6.3: How often (%) do SMO frame components appear in newspaper articles (%)?



The frames underlying a protest demonstration are not necessarily advocated by SMOs staging the protest. Other actors can support the movement's cause in the news media as well. Table 6.2 gives an overview of who expressed platform frame components in the newspaper articles. In almost a fourth (23%) of the cases, the protest organizers themselves got stage in the media arena and referred to one of the platform frames. This means that 77% of the media attention was due to other actors who held the same opinions. Most often these actors were people affected by the protest issue (21%), journalists and editors (eleven percent), representatives of opposition parties (ten percent) and private citizens (ten percent).

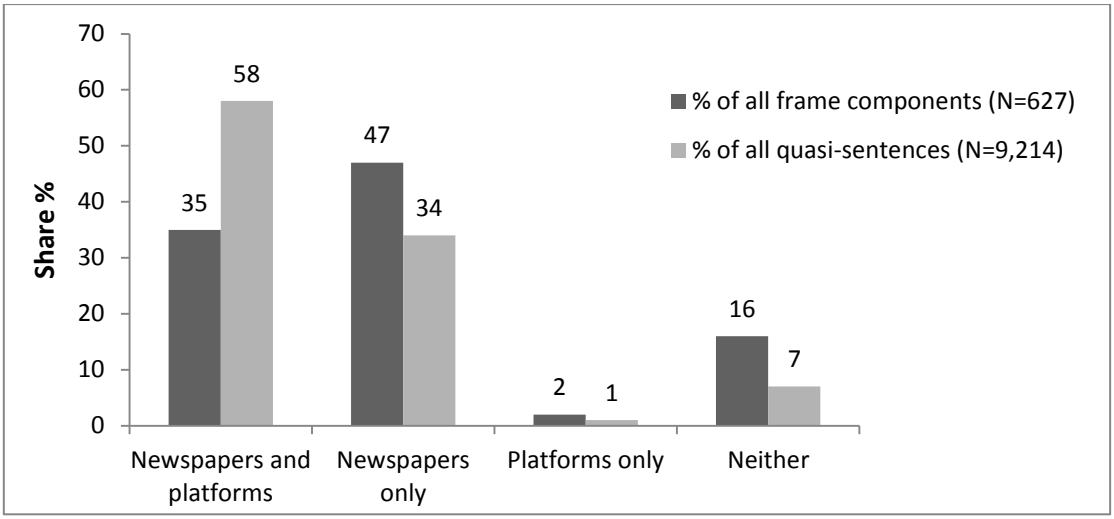
Table 6.2: Who expresses platform frames in mass media?

SOURCE	MENTIONS OF PLATFORM FRAME COMPONENTS IN MEDIA %
Staging SMOs	23
People affected	21
Journalists	11
Opposition parties	10
Private citizens	10
Experts	8
Government parties	7
Others	10
Total	100 (N=2,138)

Protest participants' frame alignment

The second goal was to investigate the extent to which frames of protest participants overlap with frames of protest organizers and frames that appeared in the media. Of the 627 frame components that were identified within all respondent answers, 35% can be traced back to both the media coverage and the organizer platforms (see Figure 6.4). Together these 'newspaper and platform frames' account for more than half (58%) of all the quasi-sentences that were written down by respondents. Hence, although only a third of the participant frame components appeared both in the media and in the organizers' pamphlets, these explain the majority of the reasons why people protested. The second set of columns in Figure 6.4 show that almost half (47%) of the respondent frame elements got 'media coverage only'. Many topics that are discussed in newspaper articles about the protest issue are part of people's rationale to join a protest demonstration, even though they are not part of the movements' official standpoints. Combining the first two sets of columns reveals that more than eighty percent of the respondents' frame components where present in the mass media prior to the demonstration and these account for more than ninety percent of all reasons (quasi-sentences) that were given by respondents to join the protest.

Figure 6.4: Distribution of protesters' frame components and quasi-sentences over newspaper articles and organizer platforms



A very small portion of the respondents' frame elements are 'platform only' (2%), i.e. messages that were officially communicated by social movements but not covered in the media. Finally, sixteen percent of the frames could not be traced back, neither to the pamphlets nor to newspaper coverage. Apparently, protesters have cognitive reasons to participate that are not

part of the wider public debate about the topic. Note that the 'issue-unrelated' reasons some gave—like "I'm here because my wife asked me to"—were left out of the analysis, so these are substantive motives to join the protest.

Table 6.3 presents three mixed-effects negative binomial regressions. The dependent variable is the number of respondents that mentioned a certain frame to motivate their protest participation. The model fit statistics in the bottom rows compare the regressions with the intercept-only models. The full models fit the data better. The BIC and the AIC, as well as the Log Likelihood substantially decrease. In order to make sense of the size of the correlations, marginal effects—while keeping the other variables at their means—are reported in the text.

Table 6.3: Mixed-effects negative binomial regressions

	MODEL 1			MODEL 2			MODEL 3		
	Coef.	Std.E.	P>|z|	Coef.	Std.E.	P>|z|	Coef.	Std.E.	P>|z|
Independent variables									
Platform frame: Secondary	**.234**	**.071**	**.001**	**.145**	**.071**	**.043**	.121	.072	.091
(ref=0) Primary	**1.579**	**.100**	**.000**	**1.103**	**.118**	**.000**	**1.064**	**.119**	**.000**
Media frame	-	-	-	**.029**	**.003**	**.000**	-	-	-
Media frame SMO	-	-	-	-	-	-	**.048**	**.008**	**.000**
Media frame opposition	-	-	-	-	-	-	**.043**	**.021**	**.038**
Media frame others	-	-	-	-	-	-	**.023**	**.004**	**.000**
Controls									
# frame components demo	**-.020**	**.005**	**.000**	**-.013**	**.004**	**.003**	**-.016**	**.005**	**.000**
Countries: Netherlands	-.058	.088	.509	**-174**	**.087**	**.045**	-.167	.088	.058
(ref.=Belgium) UK	**.282**	**.106**	**.007**	.179	.103	.081	.154	.104	.139
Constant	-4.330	.237	.000	-4.547	.221	.000	-4.383	.227	.000
Wald Chi² (df)	353.50 (5)			601.15 (6)			626.03 (8)		
Prob > chi2	.000			.000			.000		
Log Likelihood [a]	-2260.617 (-2353.965)			-2227.283 (-2353.965)			- 2223.582 (-2353.965)		
Δ Log Likelihood	93.348			126.682			130.383		
BIC [a]	4572.762 (4727.252)			4512.534 (4727.252)			4518.015 (4727.252)		
Δ BIC	154.49			214.718			209.237		
AIC [a]	4537.234 (4713.93)			4472.565 (4713.93)			4469.164 (4713.93)		
Δ AIC	176.696			241.365			244.766		

Notes: a. empty model in brackets. N demonstrations=14; N frames=627

'# respondents per demo' is used as exposure variable.

The first hypothesis stated that frames that are part of the protest organizers' mobilizing messages are more often referred to by protesters than frames that are not. Model 1 shows that this indeed is the case. Both the primary platform frames (B=1.579; p=.000) and the secondary platform frames (B=.234; p=.001) are referred to significantly more often than frames that were not part of the organizers' communication. Both variables are still significant when *media frame* is added Model 2. Marginal effects (using Model 2) show that the correlation with primary frame

components is substantial. These central elements underlying the demonstration are on average mentioned by 24% of the activists. The secondary frame elements play a more limited role. They are on average mentioned by eight percent of the protest participants. Also, in Model 3—when more specific media variables are added—the effect of the secondary frames disappears.

The second expectation was that the more certain frame components appear in mass media coverage prior to the demonstration, the more protesters refer to them when asked about the reasons for their participation. This hypothesis is supported by the results as well (Model 2). Frame components that are mentioned in a higher share of the newspaper articles about the protest issue have a higher chance of being written down by respondents (B=.029; p=.003). Marginal effects indicate that frames that are covered in twenty percent of the newspaper articles are mentioned twice as often by protesters as frames that only get five percent media attention. When a frame element appears in a quarter of the newspaper articles about the protest issue, on average fifteen percent of the protesters use this frame component to motivate their participation.

The two-step flow model suggests that SMOs influence mass media, and that media subsequently influence protest participants. By running Sobel-Goodman tests I calculate to what extent media frames mediate the relationship between social movement organizations and protest participants.[6] The tests show that the relationship between the *primary* SMO frames and protesters' motives is mediated by the media for 28% (Sobel coef.=8.728; p=.000). This mediation is substantial, but it also indicates that protest organizers are able to get their most important messages across to people via their own channels. Regarding the *secondary* SMO frames the tests show full mediation (Sobel coef.=2.094; p=.000). The less dominant organizers' messages only seem to reach protesters when they are covered by journalists.

Model 3 runs a regression with three other media variables, measuring how often a certain frame element was expressed in the newspapers by the protest organizers, opposition parties, and other actors. H3a expected that media frames expressed by staging SMOs would be mentioned more by respondents than frames voiced by other actors. The data again support this hypothesis. The coefficient of SMO media frames (B=.048; p=.000) is higher than the coefficient of other actors' media frames (B=.023; p=.000).[7] When a frame is voiced in ten percent of the newspaper articles by the staging organizations, fourteen percent of the protest participants align with it. Frames expressed in ten percent of the articles by other political actors, are mentioned by only eight percent. Media frames uttered in ten percent of the articles by opposition parties are on average written down by eleven percent of the protesters (B=.043;

p=.038). H3b can therefore be confirmed as well. Still, it is important to note that participants not only align with SMOs and opposition parties, but also include frame components of other political actors in their rationale to join a demonstration.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

People's ideas and cognitions matter for protest participation. Circumstances do not automatically mobilize people to take part in collective action (Gamson, 1992b). Events and situations are subject to interpretation and the way people frame them is critical to whether they will leave their house and engage in protest. However, we know relatively little about how we can explain the frames that protest participants align with when engaging in collective action.

This study followed a two-step flow model of frame alignment in which social movement organizations and other political actors try to affect the media agenda, which in turn influences protest participants. The results show that the majority of the frames of protest organizers—at least to some extent—get media attention prior to the demonstration. The five percent most prominent frames underlying this study's protests were covered in a fourth of the articles about the protest issue. However, most of the media visibility for SMOs' frames is due to other actors who express beliefs similar to the protest organizers' views. In more than three-quarters of the cases the media framings that overlapped with the demonstration pamphlets were traced back to other political actors. These findings underline that social movements are often dependent on other actors and that it is important for them to activate third parties to support their claims.

Additionally, I tried to trace back the frames of individual protest participants to the frames of protest organizers and frames about the protest issue in newspaper coverage. Less than ten percent of the reasons people gave when asked about their participation were not found in one of these two sources. SMOs can directly reach protest participants via their own communication channels. The most central diagnoses and prognoses in the organizers' mobilizing campaign relate to protester motives even when controlling for media attention. Media only partly mediate this relationship between SMOs and demonstrators. The less dominant organizer frames, however, seem to fully depend on media visibility in order to reach activists. Furthermore, a third of the reasons why respondents protested were not part of the staging organizations' frames but did get media coverage. The more media attention frames receive, the more these are picked up by activists and become part of their rationale to attend the demonstration. Looking at the media frames more closely shows that especially the frames

that opposition parties and protest organizers voice in mass media are referred to by protest participants. Still, a substantial part of activists' motives correlate with media frames of other political actors.

An important limitation of this study is that only actual protest participants were surveyed. It is not clear to what extent nonparticipants' frames about the protest issue were affected by frames in the media and whether this might have stopped them from joining the demonstration. Also, only relatively successful mobilization campaigns were examined. Only protests where two thousand participants or more were expected were covered. Media attention for the protest issue was high and a variety of actors gave their opinion in the media. The role of newspaper coverage might be different for protests on issues with less reporting. In those cases protesters are probably more aligned with the movement's frames because there are less other views floating around in the public sphere. In addition, only a particular kind of street demonstrations were investigated: anti-austerity demonstrations. Media framing is probably more important for movements that focus on policy issues than for ones that focus on values or identity. The fact that a large part of the social movements' frames were covered in mass media might be instigated by the discursive opportunities the social movements under scrutiny had. During the research period (2009-2011), at time of economic crisis, journalists probably were more responsive to SMO's views on austerities and government cuts. However, it is telling that even in these circumstances SMOs partly depend on mass media to reach their constituency and, within the media arena, mostly have to count on other political actors to gather attention for 'their' protest frames. Moreover, the mechanisms that were found here can be expected to be the same for protests on other issues in other contexts. The study showed that people who engage in collective action do not necessarily agree with the protest messages of the organizers staging the demonstration and that their alternative frames are shaped by frames in media reports of the protest issue. The strength of this relationship might differ from context to context, but when trying to understand participants' frames it appears to be essential to account for mass media coverage of the protest issue prior to the demonstration.

Because this study focuses on frames that motivate protest participants—and not on differences between participants and nonparticipants—one might wonder whether it matters to SMOs what kind of motives demonstrators have. In the end, they maybe just hope to drum up as many people as they can, and might not care about the specific motives that people have to join the demonstration. I would, however, argue differently. It is important that participants at a demonstration have a shared understanding about the issue they are protesting for. Organizers

want to broadcast homogeneity and show that participants are a solid group because unity is an important factor for the potential impact of protest (Tilly, 2004). Protest organizers not only want to align people with their frames in order to convince them to join the protest. Successful alignment of protest participants also enables organizers to show that their claims are shared by a coherent crowd. The more participants agree about the problem, who is responsible for it, and the possible solutions, the more unified the crowd and the clearer the signal that is spread to elites, allies, bystanders and opponents.

NOTES

1. Of these 627 respondent frame components there are 234 components that were part of the SMO protest platforms. In the fourteen demonstration platforms I identified 275 SMO frame components in total, but 41 of those were not mentioned by any of the respondents.

2. Belgium: *Het Laatste Nieuws* and *De Morgen*. The Netherlands: *De Telegraaf* and *de Volkskrant*. The United Kingdom: *The Daily Mail* and *The Guardian*.

3. Using an exposure variable is in most cases better than 'directly' analyzing a rate variable because it makes use of the correct probability distributions. In STATA the commands *xtnbreg* combined with *exp(varname)* are used.

4. Note that this variable does not take into account that the amount of media attention that protest issues get differs. The rationale behind this is that the relative visibility of a certain frame component within an issue debate matters for people participating in protest, rather than the visibility of a frame component within the whole media agenda.

5. Note that, while some of the SMO frame components were rather visible within the media coverage of the protest issue, this analysis does not tell us anything about how prominent the protest issue was compared to the rest of the media agenda.

6. Via the command *sgmediation* in STATA.

7. These regression coefficients are not standardized. When comparing the standardized coefficients, the effect for *media frame SMO* (β = .109) is smaller than for *media frame others* (β=.118)—i.e. when frame referrals by other political actors increase with one standard deviation, the number of respondents that mention this frame increases with .118 standard deviation units. However, in this case we can compare unstandardized coefficients, as both variables measure media attention. And, in the end, these show that a one unit increase of *media frame SMO* (a one percent increase of newspaper articles in which the frame component was mentioned by the SMOs) results in a larger increase of respondents who mention the frame element than a 1% increase of articles in which other political actors mention the frame.

VII

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This dissertation set out to study the frames that motivate people to take part in street demonstrations. Which cognitions inspire protesters' participation? What are their rationales to engage in action? The purpose of the research was threefold. First, the goal was to determine to what extent demonstrators' frames are aligned with the frames of social movement organizations who stage protest events. Can we equate what protesters are thinking to what organizers publicly state about the protest issue? Or do rank-and-file participants have alternative understandings of the matter at hand? Second, the aim was to explain different degrees of frame alignment. Why are some participants in some demonstrations more aligned with the frames of social movements than other participants in other events? And how can we explain that certain organizers' frames resonate more with protesters than other frames? Finally, the third purpose was to find out to what extent mass media play a role in shaping demonstrators' motives. Can social movement organizations directly influence protest participants' frames or do they reach them primarily via mass media? And to what degree do other political actors, whose frames appear in the media arena, affect protest motives?

In order to answer these questions, I analyzed the motives of participants in multiple street demonstrations. I examined information about more than 6,000 protest survey respondents in 29 events on various issues in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Via a clear-cut quantitative method I coded the frames that motivate protesters to join demonstrations. Frames were studied as aggregations of various cognitive elements. They were scrutinized at the lowest level using frame components as units of analysis. This method allowed identifying the elements that form a person's rationale to protest, and to carefully determine the congruence between frames of demonstrators, social movement organizations, and mass media.

In this final chapter I will first give an overview of the key results of the dissertation. Next, I integrate the main findings into an overarching conclusion, followed by a discussion of the limitations of this thesis. Throughout the chapter I will point to avenues for future research.

MAIN FINDINGS PER CHAPTER

Chapter 1 introduces this dissertation's topic and Chapter 2 discusses the data and methods that are used. Next, Chapter 3 explores frame alignment between protest participants and social movement organizations. The results show that there is great variation in the extent to which demonstrators are aligned with the frames of protest organizers. About ten percent of the people who join a demonstration do not have anything in common with the staging organizations. When they are asked to explain why they protest, who they blame for the issue, and what the possible solutions for the protest problem are, these people mention not a single element that is also part of the movements' mobilizing messages. Another ten percent of the demonstrators are on the opposite side of the spectrum. Every answer they give on those three questions relates back to the organizers' protest platforms. This means that the large majority—about eighty percent—falls somewhere in between. They share frames with the protest organizers, but alternative motives are also part of their reasons to demonstrate. The rationale they have to engage in action partly overlaps with what the demonstration is officially about, but it also consists of other aspects. In view of that, there are few people who provide a 'full argument' that is in line with the SMOs. Only about a quarter align with both an organizational diagnosis and prognosis; three-quarters of the participants thus have another idea about either what the protest problem is or what the solutions are. Furthermore, Chapter 3 demonstrates that, if people agree with the staging organizations, they are mostly aligned with the problems that SMOs diagnose. They agree less with the solutions that movements put forward and with the actors or institutions that SMOs deem responsible for the protest problem. This does not hold across issues, however. Environmental protesters—rallying against nuclear energy and climate change—are more aligned with the prognoses than with the diagnoses. Regarding differences between countries, alignment levels seem to be a bit higher in Belgium than in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Chapter 4 and 5 try to explain the variations in demonstrators' degrees of alignment that are found in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 focuses on characteristics of individual protesters and on features of the events they participate in. The results show that people's frame alignment is a

matter of exposure to organizational information on the one hand and alternative information on the other. Participants who are recruited by co-members of an organization or who find out about the demonstration via SMO magazines, meetings, websites or mailing lists, are more aligned with the organizers' frames than people who are mobilized via other channels. Also, demonstrators and organizers are more connected when events are staged by strong, formal, professional organizations than when protests are initiated by organizations with a more loose and informal structure, characterized by less internal cohesion and more flexible forms of coordination. There is *less* alignment amongst participants with high political interest. They are likely to be more exposed to alternative frames than people with little interest in politics. Also, the political context is related to levels of frame alignment. When the issue of the protest event receives a lot of political attention—when it is the object of political debate leading to the presence of pros and cons in the public domain—demonstrators' frames are generally less congruent with the messages of the movements staging the protest.

Chapter 5 zooms in on differences between types of frames to account for variation in frame alignment. It digs deeper into the extent to which SMO frames with various characteristics resonate with protest participants. Firstly, when joining a demonstration, people are more motivated by frame components that talk about familiar matters than by ones that are more technical or distant from daily life. In the case of Dutch student demonstrations against government cuts in education, respondents aligned less with macroeconomic framings—that referred to education as the motor of economy and education as the most important export product of the Netherlands—than with frame components that focused on the austerities' consequences for students' personal development. The latter frame elements are more connected to students' everyday experiences. Secondly, the framing of the blame attribution of the protest problem is important. When abstract causes are held responsible—a certain situation, particular circumstances, or something intangible—frames are less resonant than when a concrete person, party or organization is identified as the demonstration's culprit.

Finally, Chapter 6 links the frames of protest participants and protest organizers with newspaper articles about the protest issue. This study indicates that many of the SMO frames get newspaper coverage in the months before the demonstration, at least in case of the 2009-2011 anti-austerity demonstrations—the events under scrutiny in Chapter 6. However, few of those frames are really *visible* in the media. More than half of what protest organizers state in their protest platforms is only covered in five percent or less of the newspaper articles about the protest issue. Moreover, protest organizers depend a lot on other actors—such as opposition

parties—to gain prominence of their frames in newspapers. More than three quarters of the media attention for the frames underlying the demonstrations is due to other political actors whose frames are covered by journalists. As regards individual demonstrators, their frames relate both to newspaper coverage and to the staging organizations' protest platforms. The relationship between SMO frames and protester frames is mediated by media coverage on the protest issue. The more a frame component appears in newspapers, the more it is used by people to justify their protest behavior. For the demonstration's primary frames—the SMO's one or two core messages—organizers partly depend on journalists to get their message across. These frames also directly reach demonstrators via social movement channels. Other—less dominant—movement frames only seem to become part of protesters' rationales to join a demonstration when they receive media attention. Finally, especially when social movement organizations and opposition parties are covered by journalists, media frames shape protesters' motives to engage in protest. Still, other political actors have an effect on demonstrators' frames as well.

OVERARCHING CONCLUSION

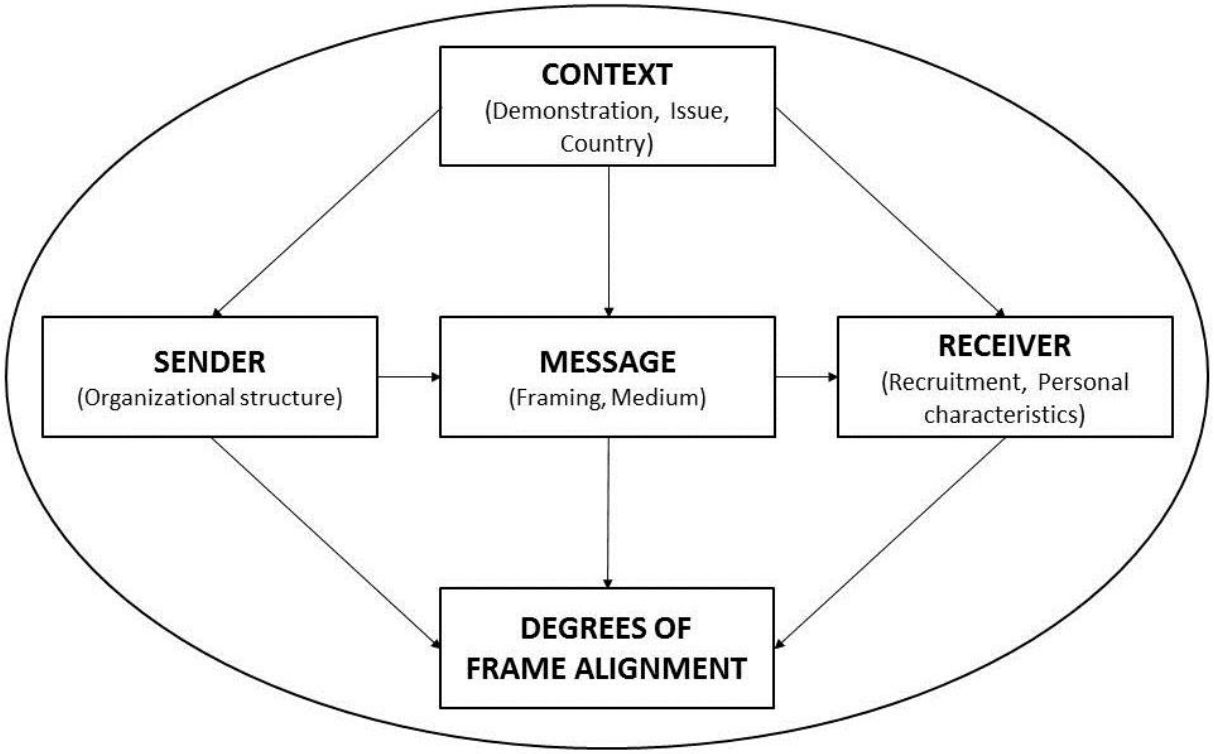
The previous part discussed the results of each chapter separately. In this section I try to integrate those findings and give a more encompassing assessment of what this dissertation has taught us. First of all, this thesis demonstrates empirically that social movements and protest crowds are not homogeneous or uniform. The problems people want to address, the demands demonstrators have, the way they interpret social issues: these vary widely within demonstrations. While protest crowds are often treated like "monolithic entities" by journalists, politicians, and researchers (Benford, 1993a, p. 698), the core chapters of this dissertation show that the frames that officially underlie demonstrations are not always shared by the activists who are marching in the streets. Frame alignment between activists and protest organizers is *variable*.

Secondly, the presented studies grasp *to what extent* frame alignment varies. The degree to which protesters are aligned with SMOs is quantified and made tangible in this thesis. It turns out that frame alignment comes in all kinds of shapes and sizes. Variability is high and protesters are dispersed over the full spectrum, going from 'having nothing in common with the organizers at all' to 'being fully aligned with the organizers'. Frame alignment is not a necessary condition for protest participation, but most demonstrators do at least share some views with the staging

SMOs. We also know that, on average, half of the reasons that people have to take part in street demonstrations do not overlap with the motives that social movements put forward. Instead of having a vague idea about the ideational linkage between protesters and organizers, we now know what frame alignment looks like and how we can measure it.

Thirdly, besides measuring frame alignment and demonstrating that it varies, I have pointed out that it is *not randomly distributed*. Various mechanisms explain the extent to which protesters' frames are connected to the organizers' mobilizing messages. Figure 7.1 depicts a general overview of the determinants of frame alignment using a classic sender-message-receiver model. The paragraphs below discuss the different factors in the figure. Variables that were tested in this study are between brackets.

Figure 7.1: Modeling determinants of degrees of frame alignment



The message

Let's start with the center of the model: the message. Evidently, the *framing* of the message is essential for frame alignment. When social movements choose their frames well—for instance by using daily-life frames and specific blame attributions (Chapter 5)—people are more aligned. This part of the model is connected to the vast literature on strategic framing and frame resonance—the core of the extant literature. Many qualities or characteristics have been

suggested by social movement scholars to contribute to the successfulness of frames. A few examples are the cultural resonance of frames (Cadena-Roa, 2002; McCammon, 2001), their articulateness and coherence (Cress & Snow, 2000), their empirical credibility (Dowell, Swaminathan, & Wade, 2000), the argumentative structure of the frame scheme (McCammon, 2009), the severity of the diagnosis (Benford, 1993b), and the internal consistency between frame elements (Ellingson, 1995). Social movement organizations are generally aware of the fact that framing can affect people's opinions and—as a consequence—their behavior. It causes "virtually every movement" to spend a lot of time thinking and discussing about how best to frame its goals and demands (Snow et al., 2014, p. 30). The figure, nevertheless, quite strikingly shows that *frame alignment is about more than framing*. The connection between what social movements convey and what protest participants think is not only a function of strategic decisions that SMOs make about how to package their messages, but it is associated with a number of other variables as well.

Still looking at message characteristics, the *medium* via which messages are diffused is important. I show in Chapter 6 that people are more aligned when SMO frames are covered in newspaper reports. For an important part newspaper coverage mediates the alignment between demonstrators and protest organizers. Whether and how the media mediate the alignment between SMOs and protest participants is likely to depend on the type of medium under scrutiny.[1] Previous studies have found that the coverage of protest issues significantly differs between media outlets. Harlow and Johnson (2011) for instance show that the Egyptian Revolution was framed differently in *The New York Times* than on the twitter feed of a New York Times reporter and the citizen media website *Global Voices*. Similarly—and regarding the same uprisings—Hamdy and Gomaa (2012) find framing differences between Egyptian state-run media, independent newspapers, and social media. What kind of media cover the protest issue and the type of channels that potential demonstrators are using, is likely to affect to what extent people are connected to the organizers' frames.

The sender

At the left side of the model are the senders of frames. Several variables related to the organizations that do the framing can influence degrees of alignment. Scholars have argued that the credibility of frame articulators is important for frame resonance (Benford & Snow, 2000; or see Druckman, 2001 within political communication research). For instance, Coy and Woehrle (1996) show that American peace movement organizations during the Persian Gulf War

promoted their views by underlining their expertise and other organizational strengths. When scrutinizing U.S. women movements in the early twentieth century, however, McCammon (2009) did not find any evidence that the credibility of a speaker enhances the effectiveness of frames. Furthermore, in this thesis I show that *organizational structure* matters. When protest events are sponsored by strong hierarchical organizations there is a more solid ideational congruence between organizations and participants. For more loosely organized events, staged by weaker networks or temporary campaigns, the association is much weaker. Also, the number of organizers trying to mobilize for the demonstration is important: more organizers correlate with higher degrees of frame alignment.

Sender variables are likely to be related to message factors, such as the medium via which the protest frames are diffused. When organizers are strong (and with many), for example, they are better able to pass the mass media gates. These organizations usually have longstanding relationships with journalists and they have more resources, like media response teams (Rohlinger, 2015). Organizational structure also determines the extent to which social movements use the internet to diffuse their protest frames. How the web is used as a communication channel depends on factors like organizational resources, strategies, and goals (Castells, 2012; Stein, 2009).

The receiver

In Chapter 4 I found three receiver features related to frame alignment. People who hear about the demonstration via organizational channels or who are recruited by fellow members of an organization are more aligned with the protest organizers. Also, degrees of alignment are higher for individuals with less political interest and for women. Many other individual characteristics correlate with frame alignment—like someone's determination to participate, the timing of the decision to join, emotions, and identification with the organizers. These results are not highlighted in the chapters because the direction of causality between these attitudinal variables and degrees of frame alignment could go both ways. For instance, as regards the timing of the decision to join: it is not clear whether people decide early that they will participate because they are strongly aligned with the protest organizers, or whether people who quickly decide to protest become more aligned because they have more time to inform themselves about the event. This illustrates, however, that it can be interesting as well to study frame alignment as an independent variable—not just as a dependent variable as I do here. What are the consequences of high degrees of frame alignment, for instance? Are people who are strongly aligned with the

protest organizers also more loyal participants? Another possibility for future research is to dig deeper into interactions between senders, messages, receivers, and context, as the effects of the variables in Figure 7.1 are not necessarily cumulative. Men and women could, for instance, be receptive for frames with different characteristics. It might also be the case that strong organizations reach high alignment levels only regarding some issues, and that looser organizers are better at generating alignment for other topics.

Nonetheless, the receiver box in Figure 7.1 stresses that it is essential for framing studies to somehow capture people's cognitions and to account for individual characteristics that might influence how different people process the frames they receive. Framing bridges the meso level of actors like social movements and mass media on the one hand and individual cognitions on the other. Analyzing both levels is key to understand processes of frame alignment: "Whether framing activities are done by the media or by a social movement organization, they count only insofar as they penetrate the 'black box' of mental life to serve as determinants of how a situation is defined, and therefore acted upon" (Johnston, 1995, p. 234).

The context

Finally, contextual features of a street demonstration—or other types of protest activities—can affect degrees of frame alignment. Surprisingly, demonstration size is not related to the extent to which protesters in a certain event are aligned. While one might expect less alignment in larger events, this was not supported by the data. Large crowds can be very homogeneous while small crowds can be very heterogenic. More people does not simply mean more variety. I do find that the political context of a demonstration matters: a lot of political attention for the protest issue diminishes frame alignment. People then on average get more exposed to alternative frames, and as a consequence they are less connected with the organizers.

Throughout the core chapters, however, only little attention is given to the broader context of demonstrations. I formulate no expectations about differences between protests held in different countries or on different issues. I use this variation in the data mostly as a kind of robustness check. Still, the results make clear that context plays a role. Demonstrators in democracy events, protesting for changes in the political system, are on average more aligned than people protesting in anti-austerity, environmental, or anti-discrimination events. A possible explanation is that there is less leeway or need for democracy demonstrators to express 'their own' or alternative beliefs or goals. Political demands, like a reform of the voting system, are less

inclined to be personal—in the sense that people have a particular individual interpretation of the problem—than cuts in health care or discrimination against women.

Furthermore, Belgian protesters seem to be more aligned with SMOs than their colleagues in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. An explanation might be that people in Belgium are strongly embedded in organizations. The distance between organizations and constituencies is relatively small, and membership levels are high (Elchardus et al., 2001; Hooghe & Quintelier, 2007). Also, in Arend Lijphart's (2012) interest group pluralism index, Belgium scores relatively low: it is a rather corporatist nation. This means that there are few but large interest groups, which are mostly coordinated in national peak organizations. The leaders of these organizations are often consulted by decision-makers and the meetings regularly lead to binding agreements. The United Kingdom, on the other hand, is near the pluralist end of this spectrum. There are many small interest groups, with few or no peak organizations, which are rarely consulted by decision-makers. Organizations in Belgium thus have more formal power and might therefore be better able to influence their adherents and citizens in general.[2] Moreover, in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands levels of individualization are somewhat higher. People favor independence and autonomy, and compared to Belgians, the choices the Dutch and British make are less guided by the choices of others (Hofstede, 2001; Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau, 2004). As a consequence, protesters in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom might depend less on organizations to provide them with cues and meaning. They make sense of their protest motives more autonomously. Because they are more individualized they probably seek more personal ways to express themselves than Belgians. The Power Distance Index of Geert Hofstede (2001)—measuring the extent to which people accept that power is distributed unequally—points in the same direction. It is much lower for the Dutch and the British, which means that hierarchy is more accepted and cherished in Belgium.

Finally, we could speculate about other contextual processes that might influence degrees of frame alignment. We might hypothesize that levels of alignment have decreased over time as the context in which people participate in protest has changed. The diffusion of protest ideas and tactics has changed with new communication technologies. Networks rather than formal organizations have become the prime mode of organizing in our society (Castells, 1996), while new technologies such as the internet, e-mail, and cell phones have altered our means of communication (Bennett, 2003). This has improved the capacity of single events to attract people who are more loosely connected to the protest organizers (Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010). Less organized and more spontaneous types of protest seem to become more frequent. Also, people are generally more

individualized and act more autonomously from organizations. Nowadays they are probably more active 'constructors of meaning' themselves than in the 1980s when frame alignment theory was formulated.

In sum, frame alignment depends on characteristics of social movement organizations, the way their messages are framed and diffused, the people who receive and process the frames, and the context of the demonstration. In some cases, individual motives largely overlap with organizer's frames, but in other cases their frames are very disconnected. Put differently—turning the line of thought around—depending on certain conditions, frame alignment might be an important or a rather marginal factor in the mobilization process. In some events high degrees of frame alignment are needed to drum up support, but for other events frame alignment seems not so important to motivate people. These insights broaden and refine the frame alignment approach. Instead of a universal process, characterizing all kinds of demonstrations to the same extent, it is a process that matters more for some events in certain contexts than for others. That way, measuring degrees of frame alignment can be a way to compare different types of collective action. Future studies can use it as an independent variable to explain different outcomes, and to scrutinize the consequences of high or low degrees of alignment between protesters and social movement organizations.

LIMITATIONS

In this section I discuss the limitations of the presented studies. Doing research is making choices and every choice comes with certain consequences. Inevitably, some matters get little attention and the focus on particular issues unavoidably obscures others. Four topics are discussed: (1) not addressing processes of frame alignment, (2) disregarding nonparticipants, (3) studying frame alignment from a top-down logic, and (4) the way frame alignment is measured in this thesis.

Frame alignment as a dynamic process

Frame alignment is a dynamic process in which the frames of individuals are brought in line with the frames of social movement organizations—or other political actors. Through framing social movements can convince people of a certain version of reality, but it is possible as well that movements adapt their frames to align better with their constituency. The first limitation of this dissertation is that the process of frame alignment, the *change* of individuals' or organizers'

frames, has been neglected. Frames were studied as 'things', framing as a 'verb' was not addressed. Although it is important to study the outcome of frame alignment processes—as was done here—we have to be aware of their interactional and ongoing character.

Because I studied the congruence between organizations and participants at one point in time—the moment that a demonstration took place—I cannot say anything about how or when people became aligned. It is, for instance, possible that the views of demonstrators and SMOs were already congruent before movements started their mobilization campaigns. In that case the frames of organizers and participants were aligned without a process of align*ment* taking place. Also, because the respondents of the protest surveys filled in the questionnaires after their participation—the booklets were distributed at the event but were filled in later at home—we cannot be sure that they already held those views when they decided to go to the demonstration. As Gamson (1995, p. 89) notes: "People sometimes act first and only through participating develop the political consciousness that supports the action." In sum, I know whether or not participants' frames were congruent with the protest staging organizations, but I do not know whether or when a process of alignment took place. Like frames of individuals, the frames of social movement organizations are temporally variable. Within organizations, communicated messages are continually negotiated and reformulated. By taking one snapshot of social movements' framing—studying their pamphlets underlying a particular event—I cannot tell whether SMOs strategically modified their frames in comparison to previous campaigns, or even during one process of mobilization.

Regarding future research, the methodology used in this dissertation is well suited to study changes in SMOs' and protest participants' frames. After all, Hank Johnston specifically developed the method to compare frames across time. Instead of taking one snapshot at a certain moment, these studies require taking multiple snapshots. Subsequently, it is possible to compare them and to determine the differences. In this case as well, it is important to disaggregate and discern the frame components that make up the frame content. That way it is possible to detect changes in framing in detail and step by step: do certain frame elements disappear or do new ones arise, and do components move up or down in the frame scheme hierarchy? Identifying frames by giving them broad labels or descriptions, does not allow for this kind of analysis. Note, however, that asking people about their motives in a survey might unintendedly influence respondents. Posing the question could make a person's frames less changeable because you ask people to write them down. Asking people the same question again a while later, might incline them to try and answer in the same way. Scholars could test for this

kind of bias by only asking half of the respondents about their frames beforehand, and using the other half as a control group.

Taking multiple snapshots of protesters' frames can provide answers on interesting questions. How do people's motives for taking part in a demonstration develop? What are the mechanisms that make a person change his or her protest frames? Is it by reading about the issue in movement newsletters and newspaper articles? Or is it mostly via interpersonal communication with others? Snow and colleagues have argued that framing is often a collective process: "We have been repeatedly struck by the fact that the various movement participants we have observed spend a good deal of time together accounting and recounting for their participation; they jointly develop rationales for what they are or are not doing" (1986, p. 467). In order to study changes in frame alignment, we have to correlate frame shifts amongst protest participants with SMO ideational changes—within one campaign or within a protest cycle for instance. Do constituents adopt new frame elements that are introduced into a SMO framing scheme? If certain frame components become more important in a movement's frame content, do they also become more important to adherents? Under which circumstances do organizations follow constituents, rather than the other way around? Panel studies could try to investigate the *consequences* of changing degrees of frame alignment. When and how, for instance, do organizational framing changes cause individuals to become less involved or to leave a movement? It will be a challenge to link changes in movements' framing to changes in protest participants' frames. But I think the approach used in this dissertation could provide a good starting point.[3]

Studying participants only

The second lacuna of this dissertation is the fact that the protest survey data only allow comparisons amongst protest participants. They do not provide information about the people who do not show up at a demonstration. As a consequence, I am not able to assess differences between protesters and nonprotesters.

Upcoming studies could examine whether alignment levels are higher amongst demonstrators than amongst people who stay at home. To what extent are decisions not to participate related to someone's connection with the SMOs staging the demonstration? By studying degrees of frame alignment amongst participants and nonparticipants, we could really investigate the difference between (physical) support and frame resonance. Not everybody who joins does so because of resonant SMO frames, and not everybody who stays at home is lowly

aligned. Examining alignment amongst nonparticipants could also increase our knowledge about the formation of the mobilization potential (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987). At what point are people receptive for mobilization attempts? To what extent do they need to be aligned with the protest organizers in order to even *consider* participation? Furthermore, we might expect that the willingness or intention to engage in social movement activities is mostly a function of agreeing with the diagnoses that underlie an event—since higher degrees of alignment are found for diagnostic framing in Chapter 3. We could also expect that highly aligned people more easily pass participation barriers than people who are only aligned to a small extent.

Within political science, scholars mostly compare participants and nonparticipants by using population surveys. These enable researchers to draw generalizable conclusions about differences between the two groups. Studying people's frames, however, asks for a different method. Population surveys do not capture information about specific protest activities, let alone about the rationale people have to join a certain event or movement. A way to go about this, yet still going beyond single cases, is by identifying particular groups that are experiencing grievances or discontents—such as firemen, students, or people living in a certain city—and to survey representative samples of these groups before and after a protest event. By using a panel design, one would be able to distinguish between people who participate and people who do not. The question then is, to what extent degrees of frame alignment with the protest organizers can explain protest participation.[4]

Studying various kinds of collective action via this method might provide some interesting new insights. We could for instance expect that the required levels of frame alignment for participation are associated with the costs of action, which differs across types of protest, countries and issues. When asked to support a movement by signing an online petition, one's ideological connection with the organization probably does not have to be very strong. When asked to occupy a building or a square for several days or even weeks, required levels of alignment with the organizations' frames are likely to be higher. Similarly, the cost of participation in some political regimes—such as repressive states—is higher than in others, because demonstrators for instance run the risk to be arrested or harassed. Also, alignment levels can be expected to be higher in more radical movements: "Because leftist, fascist, and fundamentalist organizations seek deep structural changes, they tend to require a high level of commitment from their members and adherence to strict, well-developed political or religious beliefs" (Reese & Newcombe, 2003, p. 314).

Applying a top-down logic

The third limitation of this thesis is that it departs from a top-down logic in which social movements and other political actors influence individual protesters. I assume that organizations and mass media set the frames and that individuals either adopt those or not. Yet, it is also possible that a bottom-up process is happening, through which emerging interests and interpretations amongst movement constituents (or the public in general) flow to SMOs and mass media.

Applying a top-down logic has consequences for Chapter 4, for instance, where I try to explain degrees of frame alignment by measuring protesters' *exposure* to organizational and alternative frames. If alignment is more a bottom-up process—more about SMOs being able to 'read' their constituency rather than about people adopting certain frames—it would be more appropriate to measure to what extent organizations are in touch with adherents. Most likely, however, it is an interactional process in which movement leaders, protest participants, and the broader society mutually influence each other.

Furthermore, the top-down approach presumes that there are both 'senders' and 'receivers'. I am aware of the fact that the use of those concepts in Figure 7.1 can be misleading. What about actions without organizers or senders? Some movements are leaderless, or have a segmented, polycentric structure (Gerlach & Hine, 1970). Also, demonstrations are not always planned (see Snow & Moss, 2014 on the role of spontaneity in protest). So sometimes there are no preexisting organizational frames that individuals may align with. Especially in nondemocratic countries and in nonhierarchical movements frames might develop amongst participants in the streets. Also, at the beginning of a movement, framing is less conscious and strategic (McAdam et al., 1996). For these kinds of movements and types of action, one might wonder whether we can actually talk about 'alignment' as there is no official or formal frame that participants can be aligned with. In order to refer to (or measure) alignment, one has to compare certain 'leader frames' with 'follower frames'. Still, even in extremely decentralized movements there is a certain notion of the 'leading' movement frames. Rane and Salem (2012) write that in the 2011 Arab uprisings, while officially leaderless, various social groups shared grievances and framed their demands similarly. If one would be able to capture those, one could compare them with frames of participants and measure to what extent these overlap. Another option in these cases is to assess the alignment of activists *with each other*. But for such a horizontal endeavor it would be better to employ another concept such as frame 'homogeneity' or frame 'unity'.

How frame alignment is measured

Finally, there are some important points to be raised about the way frame alignment is measured. In order to catch a person's frame elements, the CCC survey asks respondents three open questions: Q1 "Please tell us why you participated in this protest event?", Q2 "In your opinion, who or what is to blame for [demonstration issue]?", and Q3 "What should be done to address this issue?". It would be better to change the phrasing of the first question in future studies. While most respondents interpret the question 'right'—i.e. how it was intended by the survey developers—the answers of some people are not about the issue of the demonstration. They for instance say that they participated because their friends went as well or because their wife asked them to come along. Although these kind of answers are interesting, they do not inform us about respondents' degrees of frame alignment. It would be better to ask: "Could you please describe the problem or situation that you want to address in this protest event?". Scholars might also consider asking a fourth open question, digging into particular organizations, people or institutions whom participants hold responsible for *solving* the protest problem. Furthermore, besides trying to measure protesters' objective frame alignment—to what extent *are* people aligned with the protest organizers—it would be interesting to measure people's subjective alignment. To what extent do protest participants *think* they are aligned with the organizers? Are there people who take part in street demonstrations, even though they consider their overlap with the movement's views to be low? Or is subjective alignment high amongst all participants?

Next, it is important to note that there are downsides of using open questions to investigate people's motives to protest. Open-ended questions do not always yield the information we—as researchers—want. The fact that an individual does not write down certain frame elements that are part of an SMO's frame scheme, does not mean that he or she disagrees with these views. It only means that the frames are not top-of-mind when a person is asked about the reasons to participate. Were the ten percent respondents, who did not write down anything in common with the protest organizers, really not aligned? Or was I unable to gauge their alignment by using open questions? Another clear disadvantage of open-ended questions is the cost: open questions are very time consuming because the answers have to be coded before they can be used in statistical analyses. Furthermore, for less articulate respondents it can be difficult to answer open-ended questions, which can result in short or less usable answers. Scholars might therefore consider measuring alignment via closed-ended questions, asking people whether they agree with certain statements. Yet, closed questions have

many disadvantages as well. Firstly, they limit the range of responses. Researchers have to come up with a list of possible answers and chances are small that the list would be comprehensive. Also, respondents do not get the opportunity to give answers that did not even occur to the researcher. Moreover, the longer the list with statements, the more time it will take for respondents to read it and answer the question. Finally, people might change their answer based on what they read in the closed question. Suggesting answers may lead respondents to give socially desirable responses: they might think that they *should* agree with some of the statements provided (Lefevere, 2011).

FINAL WORDS

The tremendous success of the frame alignment approach testifies of its usefulness and strength. How individuals frame experiences and situations is key to understand whether or not they join collective action. People who are unhappy with a certain situation do not automatically take up arms. The interpretation of the dissatisfaction is essential. Frame alignment theory reminds us that there is no simple relationship between grievances and participation in protest activities. At the same time, there is no simple relationship between how circumstances are framed by political actors and how individuals perceive the world. As Gamson and colleagues point out: “We are active processors and however encoded our received reality, we may decode it in different ways” (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992, p. 384). Accordingly, we cannot parallel what social movement organizations are saying to what protesters are thinking.

A way to put this observation into perspective is to equate SMOs with the actors they so often try to influence: political parties. From electoral research and political congruence studies we know that it can be misleading to draw conclusions about voters based on election results. For instance, the fact that 33% of the Flemish people in the 2014 Belgian federal elections voted for the N-VA, the Flemish nationalist party, does not mean that a third of the Flemings want Flanders to be independent—actually only about six percent want a breakup of Belgium (Swyngedouw, Abts, Baute, Galle, & Meuleman, 2015). Support for social movement organizations—via membership or participation in protest activities—can be evaluated in the same way. As such, the results of this dissertation call for researchers, journalists and politicians to be cautious when drawing conclusions about protest crowds based on information about the organizing SMOs—and, at the same time, they are a plea for social movement scholars to do research at the individual level.

The political perspective also raises questions about the representative function of social movements. To what extent do they represent the people who participate in their activities? Can they speak on behalf of 'their' participants if many of them have alternative understandings of the issue at hand? Continuing the comparison with institutional politics, however, one can argue that social movement organizations—like political parties—receive a mandate from the people who provide support by showing up at street demonstrations. They *can* speak on behalf of them because, in a way, SMOs 'own' their adherents like parties own their voters. The turnout at the protest event functions as a kind of election result. The more people showing up to support the action, the stronger the mandate—no matter the extent to which demonstrators are aligned with the particular organizers' views. From this perspective degrees of frame alignment, as they are measured in this thesis, do not seem to matter that much. Following this line of thought, the essence of frame alignment processes is convincing people that a certain situation is *wrong* and *possible to change*, no matter the specific content of the diagnoses or prognoses that SMOs put forward. In that case frame alignment is not about bringing people in line with a particular problem or solution, but foremost about convincing them that there *is* a problem, and that there *are* solutions.

But social movement organizations are more than political actors who challenge political institutions. They are sociocultural actors, trying to change the way people understand and talk about the world, aiming to influence the concepts, ideas, and arguments that people use to motivate their behavior. Their aim is persuasion as well as mobilization, competing with politicians, corporations, media and countermovements for the hearts and minds of the public.

NOTES

1. Note, however, that I find no differences in Chapter 6 between quality newspapers and popular newspapers in Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

2. The Netherlands, however, is on the corporatist side of the spectrum as well, so Lijphart's interest group pluralism index cannot explain why Dutch demonstrators are more disconnected from their organizers than Belgian protesters.

3. As Johnston acknowledges, by taking snapshots the cognitive-structural approach has a "strong empirical and positivistic social-science focus" that in a way still obscures the "changeful and conflictual character of discourse". However, as he remarks: "To move beyond descriptive reports, as Benford calls us to do, including reports portraying the conflictual nature of discourse, a methodological artifice is

needed, namely, freezing the discursive process at a point in time to construct a representation of what is presumed to be the substance of mental life" (Johnston, 2005, pp. 253–254).

4. This research design will be used in the MECPRO project (Mechanisms of Protest. The Micro-Level Foundations of Individual Protest Participation) of Stefaan Walgrave.

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