

On the Right Side

Conservative Parties and Ideologies in Canada

Marie Harbo Dahle



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Abstract

Has the Conservative Party of Canada, created in a merger of two parties in 2003, shifted Canadian conservatism to the right? If so, what does such an ideological shift imply, and how can it be investigated? These three questions have guided my research in this thesis. First I created an analytical tool capable of performing detailed ideational analysis of the ideological profiles of political parties on the right in Canada. Drawing on a historical review of ideological currents on the right in Canada, I constructed a tool that includes four types of Canadian conservatism: toryism, neoliberalism, populism and social conservatism, and that allowed me to define policy along four dimensions: economics, welfare, institutions, and moral issues. To enable a careful and specified analysis, I distinguished between Jal Mehta's three levels of policy ideas: ideas as public philosophies, as problem definitions, and as policy solutions. I used this tool to analyze party platforms from the four parties that have been a force on the right since 1968: the Progressive Conservative Party, the Reform Party, the Canadian Alliance, and the current Conservative Party of Canada. The analytical tool served its purpose by allowing me to identify the four types of conservatism in varying forms and mixtures over time. I found that the Conservative Party of Canada has a neoliberal profile, and has lost some of the populist and social conservative ideas that once defined one of its predecessors, the Reform Party, while also committing to tory welfare policies, preserving the legacy from its other predecessor on the right, the Progressive Conservative Party.

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To my family and friends both in Sandnes and Oslo, and to my fiancée, thank you for believing in and being proud of me.

Now, to infinity and beyond!

List of Abbreviations

BQ	Bloc Quebecois
CPC	Conservative Party of Canada
NDP	New Democratic Party
PC	Progressive Conservative Party of Canada

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1 Introduction and Backdrop

Conservative parties have existed in Canada since the days of Confederation, when the British colony transformed into a Commonwealth country. For a century, the conservative party was a strong and stable fixture of the Canadian party system. The *Progressive Conservative Party (PC)* and the *Liberal Party* were for most of the 20th century the two main contenders of Canadian politics, alternating government power. The last few decades, however, have been turbulent for the conservative side of party politics in Canada. In 1993, the Progressive Conservatives were reduced from a majority government position to merely two representatives remaining in parliament. In the same election, a populist party with roots in Western Canada, the *Reform party*, emerged as a new contender on the right. Throughout the 1990s, these two parties struggled for the conservative vote. In 2003 the parties finally merged into the new *Conservative Party of Canada (CPC)*. This "uniting of the right" led to a decade of electoral success for conservatives in Canada, who under the powerful leadership of Stephen Harper have been governing Canada since 2006. With each subsequent election, in 2008 and 2011, the party has increased its support.¹ It is currently governing with a majority, and steering towards the upcoming federal election in October 2015.

But what sort of conservative party is it that will be competing for the Canadian vote in the election? Conservative ideology may be notoriously difficult to grasp, but what are the ideological strands tied together in the Conservative Party of Canada? How similar is Canadian conservatism to the American brand? How much remains of the ideology of the Progressive Conservatives after the merger, and how much of the populism of the Reformists? Is the Conservative Party of Canada a socially conservative party? What are the party's policies, ideas and principles – in short, what is their ideology?

¹ Parliament of Canada:
<http://www.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/Compilations/ElectionsAndRidings/ResultsParty.aspx> (accessed May 15, 2015)

1.1 Research puzzle

These questions have been a hot topic in the Canadian public as well as academic debate, and form the basis of my research puzzle. There seems to be a general consensus that party leader Stephen Harper has moved the party to the right (Farney & Rayside, 2013a; Farney & Rayside, 2013b; Patten, 2013). In order to discuss what this really means it is necessary to briefly introduce a few terms that will be further elaborated upon later in the thesis. Canadian conservatism, as conservatism in most countries, consists of many different “currents” whose prominence varies across regions and over time (Farney & Rayside, 2013b, p. 7). In this thesis, I will approach Canadian conservatism through four currents: toryism, neoliberalism, populism and social conservatism. These will be further specified in Chapter 3, but for now they will serve as a preliminary tool for understanding the claims that have been made about Canadian conservatism. In their comprehensive volume *Conservatism in Canada* (2013), James Farney and David Rayside claim that Canadian conservatism has changed perceptibly in just a few decades. They argue that after the merger of Reform (from 2000 named the *Canadian Alliance*) and the Progressive Conservatives in 2003, the conservative policy agenda was dominated by Reformist ideas and policies (Farney & Rayside, 2013b, p. 12). Consequently, the new conservative party has moved towards a neoliberal and social conservative approach many Canadian associate with American conservatism (Farney & Rayside, 2013a, p. 344). Steve Patten submits the CPC’s record of “refusal to shift its position on state action in response to climate change, its aggressive drive to be a partner in trans-Pacific free trade, its continued commitment to corporate tax cuts, and its repeated use of targeted tax breaks rather than government programs or spending to address social needs,” as evidence of neoliberal ideological dominance (Patten, 2013, p. 72). He also claims that social conservative influences in the party have been present, but contained. In their work on ideology in party politics in Canada, Colin Campbell and William Christian argue that traditionalist and centrist toryism lost its importance as early as the 1980s, overcome by what they call “business liberalism”, or neoliberalism, in the PC party (Campbell & Christian, 1996, pp. 26, 40).

In this thesis, I would like to investigate empirically and systematically whether there has been such a shift in conservative ideology in Canada. As mentioned above, our

understanding of conservatism needs to be more finely grained if we are to analyze such a development. Furthermore, ideological change must be analyzed within a framework capable of assessing it in light of different traditions existing on the right in Canada. Accordingly, the first step of the analysis will be to create a typology of conservative ideological currents, and develop a more specific analytical table based on this. The second step will be to use this scheme to analyze election platforms from the former Progressive Conservative Party, the Reform/Alliance party and from the current Conservative Party of Canada.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, no qualitative ideational analysis of election platforms has been performed to further investigate the abovementioned claims about CPC party policy. This thesis will thus contribute to reducing a research gap in this field. Another discussion this thesis will contribute to, concerns the brokerage politics approach that is widely used when analyzing Canadian party politics. This approach is based on assumptions that Canadian political parties operate as brokers competing for the same voters, uninhibited by ideas and ideologies to guide their policy-making. This thesis will take a very different approach, and put ideas and ideology right at the center of the analysis.

1.1.1 Research questions

To investigate the aforementioned questions, I will focus my analysis first and foremost on the current Conservative Party of Canada. However, in order to recognize policies as tory or neoliberal, populist or social conservative, we need a backdrop against which we can consider the current state of ideas. I will develop this backdrop by investigating ideology in the two parties preceding the CPC, namely the PC and Reform/Alliance. My main research question will consequently be:

What ideological currents of conservatism prevail in the Conservative Party of Canada today, and how can its ideological profile best be conceptualized?

To answer this question, two supplying questions will guide my analysis:

- *Which ideological currents of conservatism have been present in the conservative political parties in Canada since the 1960s?*
- *How has their presence evolved over time?*

The plan for the thesis in order to provide answers to these questions will be the following: In this introduction, I will give a short overview of the Canadian political system and party system to serve as a backdrop for the analysis. In Chapter 2, theories and approaches to Canadian party politics will be introduced and discussed. I will also examine the concepts of ideas and ideology in party politics, and how to investigate these empirically. Chapter 3 presents four currents of conservatism in Canadian party politics. In Chapter 4, these currents are organized in an analytical table, which is then used to empirically and systematically analyze election platforms. Chapter 5 concludes and discusses the implications of the findings I have made on a theoretical, conceptual and empirical level.

1.2 Canada's political system

I start by giving an outline of Canada and its political system, as many of these characteristics play an important role in Canadian party politics. When it comes to size, Canada is the second-largest country in the world, but has a population of only 33 million (Dyck, 2011, pp. 53, 57). Compared to the U.S., which has almost 300 million more people, Canada is sparsely populated.² Canada's road to statehood started with Confederation in 1867, when the colonies came together to create a union and divided powers between a new central government and the provinces. Separation from Britain was a gradual process, and complete independence from Britain was established in 1931, although some constitutional matters were remained unresolved until 1982 (ibid., pp. 38, 41). Canada has since Confederation operated as a British style parliamentary system, with an elected House of Commons, a Senate with senators appointed by the Prime Minister, and the monarch as the head of state – represented in Canada by the Governor General. The electoral system is a first-past-the-post system (ibid., pp. 33, 322).

² United States Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov> (accessed May 14, 2015)

Canada is a federation of ten provinces and three territories, with powers separated between the provinces and the central government (ibid., p. 36). Regionalism is a key word to understanding Canadian politics, and the country is often divided into the following regions: the Prairies, or the West (consisting of the provinces Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba), the Atlantic Region or the Maritimes (Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, and New Brunswick), and the North (the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut). Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia are the only provinces that are normally also seen as regions in themselves. Ontario and Quebec account for around 62 percent of the population, and is considered the political and economic core of the country (ibid., pp. 56-57), although with the development of petroleum industries in the Prairies, the economic gravitas has shifted somewhat westward (ibid., p. 61). As a vast and geographically and socially diverse country, there are important regional economic differences in Canada, and as a result, “the national government regularly faces demands to assist a single industry or the economy of a single province or region,” (ibid., p. 62). These needs are met from the central government with various financial support mechanisms. Equalization payments are yearly government grants to provinces to spend on service provision, and have “pitt(ed) petroleum-producing provinces against the federal government,” as some provinces are claimed to be net beneficiaries of federal dollars (ibid., p. 69). The federal government also runs regional economic development programs that provide grants to businesses in the regions. These regional identities as well as economic transfers are a central part of understanding Canadian government and economy.

1.2.1 Party system development

What follows is a short introduction to the federal party system of Canada, and its development since Confederation in the mid 1800s. The focus is on the federal level, as provincial parties are often “quite distinct from their federal cousins,” (Farney & Rayside, 2013b, p. 11). The introduction will focus on the actors of the political system, as ideas and ideologies will be further introduced and discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

Early party system

Party dynamics in the Canadian Parliament started to emerge during the 1860s (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 27). The first conservative party’s main opponent was

the Liberal Party, and these two parties formed a two party system for the remainder of the century. For the most part of the 20th century these two parties continued to dominate politics, while “the social democratic *New Democratic Party* and its predecessors represented the most consistent third-party presence in Ottawa,” (Farney & Rayside, 2013b, p. 11). In the 1980s regionalism started to play a greater role in party politics. There was a strong sense of discontent in Western Canada, mainly the Prairies, based in a century-long conflict between the periphery and the core of the country. Federal government in Ottawa controlled Western economies through tariffs, as well as resource, transportation and banking policies that favored the east over the west (Dyck, 2011, p. 64). This led to “deep feelings of Western alienation, and was largely responsible for the formation of the Reform Party, whose initial slogan was “The West Wants In,” (ibid., p. 70). *The Reform Party* was created in 1987. Regional tension was high at the time, as the Conservative government had chosen a Quebec location as the construction site for fighter planes over a better suited Western alternative, as well as widespread discontent with the new goods and services tax (GST) initiative (Laycock, 2002, p. 11). Other national policies that caused dissatisfaction in the west were the federal National Energy Program and an allegedly disproportionate focus on voters in Quebec (Farney, 2012, p. 98). Reform became an outlet for this discontent, and presented voters with a populist alternative at the ballot box.

After 1993

The earthquake election in 1993, in which the governing PC party was reduced to two remaining MPs, saw the rise of another regionally based party, the *Bloc Quebecois* (BQ), as well as Reform (Patten, 2013, p. 67). Both parties “made significant inroads in the 1993 election, due in large part to regional grievances,” (Bélanger & Godbout, 2010, p. 43). Reform climbed from no representatives in Parliament, to 52. At the same time, the social democratic NDP was in decline. Following this election the Liberal party stayed in government for four consecutive periods, in part because Reform had split the conservative vote (Walchuk, 2012, p. 422). This party system was very regionalized: Reform had its following in the West, the Bloc in Quebec, the Liberals in Ontario, and PC in Atlantic Canada (ibid.). Reform failed to expand its following beyond the Western provinces however, and in 1998 launched a “United Alternative’ campaign, which was aimed at promoting the idea of a new national conservative party that would attract

support from groups other than the Reform Party's original Western constituency," (Bélanger & Godbout, 2010, p. 45). The party became the Canadian Alliance in 2000 as a result of this process, but came off to a rocky start with leadership issues and an unsuccessful bid in the 2000 election (Farney, 2012, p. 114).

Uniting the right

In 2003, after ten years of fighting over the Conservative vote, Reform/Alliance and PC merged to become a united Conservative Party of Canada. The new party participated in the 2004 elections, capturing 30 percent of the vote, and won the subsequent elections to form government in 2006 (Bélanger & Godbout, 2010, p. 42). Éric Bélanger and Jean-Francois Godbout argue that the parties merged because the election system made them both under-represented in parliament, and each party could offer the other "access to different regional voters (Eastern voters for the PC and Western voters for the Reform/Alliance)," (ibid., p. 60). They also claim that Reform/Alliance was seen as "too extreme" for the voters: "Even with a new leader and a new platform, the former Reform Party was incapable of changing its reputation of being a Western, social-conservative and anti-Quebec party when it was renamed as the Canadian Alliance," (ibid., p. 58). The CPC, on the other hand, has been an electoral success, and the conservatives are now in their third consecutive term in government. Changes have also been happening on the left and center of Canadian politics since 1993. In the 2011 election, the NDP displaced the Liberals as the official opposition, and the Green party won their first seat in parliament.³ The BQ, a middle-sized party in federal politics since the election in 1993, were reduced to four seats.

Explained in Sartorian terms, the change the Canadian party system has undergone can be said to have gone from a two-party system to a pre-dominant party system, and possibly back to a two-party system again. For the period until 1993 it was a two-party system, where the PC and the Liberals alternated in government, while the NDP as a third party was an important presence, but never prevented any of the other two parties of governing alone (Sartori, 1990, p. 340-341). After 1993 the Liberals governed with a majority for three consecutive periods while the PC, Reform/Alliance and the BQ

³ <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/harper-finally-wins-majority-as-ndp-surges-into-opposition/article597814/> (accessed April 23, 2015)

were unable to challenge this position. In 2004 the Liberals remained in government, but this time as a minority government. Since 2006, the CPC has governed and won three consecutive elections, though only as a majority since 2011. The NDP, the Bloc and the Liberals have vied for the position as leading opposition party. For all the instability and change the Canadian party system has experienced in the past two decades, the upcoming election in October 2015 seems to return to a competition between the Conservatives and the Liberals, with the NDP close on their heels. Although this is all important background information, I reiterate that my focus in this thesis is not on the actors of the party system or the competition between them, but rather the ideas and ideologies of the conservative parties.

1.3 Summing up

The Canadian party system has undergone some major changes in the past few decades, including on the conservative side of politics. After a turbulent decade, the conservative side of politics has since 2003 gathered in the Conservative Party of Canada. I ask what their ideological profile is today, and how the profiles of previous parties can help us understand this. This thesis will contribute to understanding conservative party politics in Canada, both today and in the last few decades.

2 Theory and Method

This chapter will provide the theoretical underpinnings for the typology to be developed in Chapter 3, and the analysis of election platforms in Chapter 4. I discuss theoretical approaches to Canadian political study, how we can define ideology, and how ideas and ideology can be studied in politics. Finally, I will discuss the methodological choices I have made, and possible tools for the analysis.

2.1 Ideology in political parties

First, we need a framework for understanding the role that ideas and ideology play in party politics. The cleavage-based approach is perhaps the most common model for explaining the origins and character of political parties and current party systems. Initially developed by Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan (1967), the cleavage model aims to “throw light on origins and freezing of types of party systems” as well as “current alignments of voters” (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967, p. 3). The cleavages represent conflicts between different social groups in society, and political parties are formed to represent the diverging interests of these groups. The political ideas of parties can be traced back to the underlying cleavages and the interests that are based upon these. In recent decades, the cleavage concept has been broadened to allow for political positions reflecting attitudes and ideas rather than social position as such (Aardal, 1999, p. 51-52). Interestingly, the broadening of the analytical lens to focus on what voters believe in (rather than what their social identity may be) corresponds with a broader turn towards ideas in other spheres of political science. The philosophical position inhabited by this growing literature is constructivism, where political attitudes are seen as socially constructed rather than structurally defined. Colin Hay, for example, suggests that interests are “not a contextually given fact – a reflection of material or even social circumstances – but are irredeemably ideational, reflecting a normative (indeed moral, ethical, and political) orientation toward the context in which they will have to be realized,” (Hay, 2011, p. 67). Constructivism applies to actors at all levels, ranging from the individual voter via party to government. Interests are shaped by ideas, thus the way actors think is where explanation for their behavior should be looked for. Parties embody political ideas, and so as we study political parties the analytical focus should

be on these ideas rather than “the rights and interests of particular groups of citizens,” (Mair & Mudde, 1998, p. 226). Ideas and ideology are indeed the very basis for political parties, the “belief system that goes right to the heart of a party’s identity,” (ibid., p. 220). In this thesis I intend to build on a similar focus on ideas. However, in order to study ideas and ideologies in Canadian parties, we need to take into account some of the frames of interpretation that are often applied to Canadian political studies.

2.2 Interpretations of Canadian politics

Cleavage theory à la Rokkan and Lipset is not very common when discussing the origins of ideology and party politics in Canada. It does reminisce the discussions that include regionalism as a determinant of political ideas, with regionalism defined as “a political movement based on a defined geographic area that, on the basis of some sense of shared identity and/or shared political interests, regularly generates political demands,” (Eagles, 2002, p. 11). As outlined in Chapter 1, Canada can be seen as made up of regions that are an important part of the political debate. Nevertheless, a more classic approach is the thesis set forth by Louis Hartz in the 1950s and 60s about “fragment societies” (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 5). The Hartzian thesis claims that new societies settled by European immigrants, such as Canada, were only ideological fragments of their origin countries (Horowitz, 1966, p. 143). According to Hartz, liberalism was the fragment embraced as the main ideology in both Canada and the United States (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 5). In a seminal article on ideologies in Canada, Gad Horowitz interprets the political ideologies in the countries through the Hartzian thesis, but points out that there are considerable differences that a pan-North American approach fails to notice. The most notable difference in the political systems of the two countries is the relative strength of a socialist alternative, the NDP, in Canada, compared with the United States. Horowitz relates this to the presence of tory conservatism in Canada (Horowitz, 1966, p. 144). These tory influences are attributed to American Loyalists who fled the American Revolution and settled in Canada (ibid., p. 151). Of importance was also the large amount of British immigrants who came to Ontario in the 1800s, and brought with them political ideas from the mother country. Given their numbers, it is hard to argue that they were simply assimilated into a liberal political culture, rather than keeping some of their tory ideas (ibid., p. 153). The idea of

a strong tory influence has been important for understanding and explaining both the particular characteristics of Canadian conservatism and Canadian politics in general. Similarly, Lipset (1988 and 1990) argues that Canada, unlike the United States, is born of a counter-revolution, and that toryism follows naturally from this tradition (cited in Farney & Rayside 2013b, p. 6). In these approaches, the ideologies of classical liberalism and classical toryism have shaped and determined Canadian political culture. Although these models have been criticized and accused of being outdated, they continue to have influence on interpretations of Canadian politics (Dyck, 2011, p. 251).

James McHugh, one of these critics, presents a model of Canadian political thought as competing traditions of liberal and communitarian interpretations of democratic values, where liberalism emphasizes individual rights and communitarianism emphasizes group rights (McHugh, 2013, pp. 125, 132). This model accounts for both Canadian liberalism and conservatism. Another criticism has concerned the regional differences in Canada, especially with regards to the francophone province of Quebec. Many interpretations of Canadian politics exclude Quebec from analysis because it is seen as a case of its own. Hartz, for example, interpreted Quebec as its own fragment society separate from English Canada, with origins in feudal France (Dyck, 2011, p. 250). McHugh argues that a model including both liberal and communitarian perspectives account for this variation within Canada, and enables an analysis to encompass the whole country (McHugh, 2013, p. 134). As my focus is on Canadian conservatism as opposed to Canadian politics in general, I will develop a model for interpretation that is slightly more fine-grained than the Hartzian thesis or McHugh's model. This also enables me to include Quebec in the analysis of conservatism without it being a decisive factor in the model or analysis.

2.2.1 Brokerage politics

Whether ideology has a place in the analysis of party politics is an especially salient debate in Canada, where the theory of "brokerage politics" has long been the dominant approach to studying party politics (Dyck, 2011, p. 351). Brokerage theory casts the two traditionally dominating parties of the Canadian party system, the PC and the Liberals, as broker parties who compete for the same policy space and the same voters in every election. Party leadership determines the party's positions and policies from election to

election, to create the largest possible electorate on whose support they can draw (Clarke, Jenson, LeDuc, & Pammett, 1984, p. 10). Canadian political parties have a few organizational characteristics that enable them to act as brokers. Firstly, Canadian parties are weak membership parties and weak extra-parliamentary parties (Dyck, 2011, p. 356). Secondly, they have strong leaders who dominate policymaking and enforce tight discipline within the party (Farney, 2013, pp. 45-46), making them “highly centralized” (ibid., p. 91). Finally, these leaders depend heavily on their advisers and leave little room for influence from the rest of the party (Dyck, 2011, p. 361).

The brokerage model thus “leaves little room for ideology,” (Cochrane, 2010, p. 583); a point which is also made by Clarke et al. (1984, p. 15): “A prime characteristic of brokerage parties is that they do not operate on the basis of deep ideological principles, and do not encourage such characterizations of themselves.” Broker parties act and create policy based on interests, “brokering agreements with its fractious constituencies on an issue-by-issue basis rather than on the basis of a general ideology,” (Gerring, 1998, p. 27). In the literature there is a sociological and an organizational understanding of the brokerage model (Ahorro, 2006, pp. 1-2). In the organizational model, the parties aim to maximize the number of voters they can attract in order to win elections. Strong party leaders navigate the political landscape to attract the largest possible following (ibid., pp. 9, 12). R. Kenneth Carty and William Cross (2010, p. 2) explain: “The principal functions of the country's major parties are not those of mobilizing distinctive communities and articulating conflicting claims rooted in their interests,” as one might expect from parties that originated from a political cleavage structure. Canadian parties operate in a different way: “Rather than having well-defined support from one election to another based upon the long-term loyalties of social groups, brokerage parties must re-create coalitions at each election,” (Clarke et al., 1984, p. 10). In the sociological interpretation of brokerage politics, Canada is seen as a diverse federation, divided into different social groups (cleavages) that need to be balanced and reconciled within the parties by the elites (Ahorro, 2006, p. 13). Canadian broker parties work to diffuse political differences in a highly federalized country where internal cohesion is weak (Carty & Cross, 2010, p. 2), and thus have never wanted to represent one social group – instead they aim to represent all Canadians.

Whether one applies the organizational or the sociological approach, brokerage theory explains party politics as a pragmatic, not an ideological exercise. Some understandings of brokerage theory also include both the sociological and the organizational interpretations. This two-sided reasoning for brokerage politics is well summed up by Farney and Rayside: “Canadian parties were drawn to brokerage in part because of fear among some party leaders of what sectional divisions would do for this fragile federation, and in part because of the pragmatic requirements of building electoral majorities,” (Farney & Rayside, 2013a, p. 341). A European parallel to broker parties are catch-all parties, that can be claimed to have operated along the same lines as Canadian brokerage parties (ibid.). The difference is that Canadian brokerage parties could be seen as always having been somewhat detached from the ideological heritage that would otherwise place constraints on their program and image. Thus, Canadian parties were not drifting from a committing mass-party image towards catch-all; they were catch-all-oriented from their birth. For both catch-all and brokerage parties, election platforms are geared towards attracting the votes of the current electorate, and non-committed to continuity in ideas or, indeed, any ideational foundation at all.

However, the brokerage approach is contested, and may no longer be the best way to explain Canadian politics. It can be argued that brokerage politics were *once* relevant, but that the new party system that emerged in the early 1990s made for a different political dynamic. For example, Christopher Cochrane finds through a content analysis based on data from the *Manifesto Project Database*⁴ that “Until the late 1970s, the Liberals and Conservatives oscillate in left/right space like two pragmatic brokerage parties chasing through time the fleeting concerns of non-ideological voters. Their left/right positions are essentially interchangeable,” (Cochrane, 2010, p. 591). As Reform and the BQ came onto the stage in the 1990s, however, the political space between left and right in Canada increased – a lot: “In short, Canada’s major political parties were divided ideologically in the latter decades of the twentieth century to an extent that they had not been divided previously. And the new ideological divide is wide by cross-national standards,” (ibid.). William Cross & Lisa Young (2002, p. 861) also acknowledge that the emergence of new parties on the federal stage suggests that “a more ideological politics may be emerging.” Reform and the BQ, are seen as “more

⁴ <https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/> (accessed January 15, 2015)

ideologically coherent than their traditional counterparts,” (ibid., p. 862). They propose an investigation of election manifestoes, speeches, and debates to look for evidence of an ideological turn (ibid., p. 878). Other contributions take ideology in Canadian party politics as a given, and seek instead to identify the ideological currents of the political system (see for example Campbell and Christian 1996). Farney and Rayside also find that ideology plays a larger role now, and actually argue that this concerns conservative politics in particular:

“There is a clear ideological commitment behind (the politics). For some within the conservative fold, that ideological commitment is to faith-based views about family and schooling in addition to freemarket individualism. For most, though, it is a commitment primarily to a fundamental altering of the role of the state in Canadian society, and to convincing Canadians that the marketplace should be left as unencumbered as possible in shaping the success or failure of individuals and their families,” (Farney & Rayside, 2013a, p. 350).

The objective of this thesis is not to prove or disprove brokerage theory. A theory is just a representation of reality, and by its very nature it is never a perfectly accurate depiction of actual conditions (Clarke & Primo, 2007, p. 742). Furthermore, my focus on the current CPC is set in a time when the dominance of brokerage politics was by many accounts (see above) already starting to subside. Nevertheless, brokerage theory is undoubtedly an important part for the basic understanding of Canadian politics before as well as today. If brokerage politics were indeed the supreme and uncontested analytical framework for understanding Canadian politics, then the attempt of this thesis to trace ideology in parties would be somewhat farfetched. I maintain that part of my challenge as I analyze the election platforms of these parties, is to show that they are not just a collection of popular ideas assembled ahead of each election, but that there is some underlying logic which ties them all together; an ideology.

2.3 Ideas and ideologies

Despite being a widely used concept, there is no clear and settled definition of what ideology actually is (Gerring, 1997, p. 957; Heywood, 2012, p. 4). Several attempts have been made to gather all the loose threads of ideological research. John Gerring (1997, p. 980) identifies coherence of a set of ideas as the one characteristic on which all

definitions seem to agree. Coherence means that the ideas, to a certain degree, are in agreement with each other and are not directly opposed to one another. Heywood (2012, p. 11) also understands ideology as a “more or less coherent set of ideas”. Gerring continues: “One might add, as corollaries, contrast and stability - the one implying coherence vis-à-vis competing ideologies and the other implying coherence through time,” (Gerring, 1997, p. 980). Ideology in this understanding is a set of ideas that are relatively coherent, that are different from other sets of ideas, and that do not readily change. Kathleen Knight (2006, p. 623) claims that there is a growing consensus about this definition of party ideology, conceptualized in different “-isms”. As I will discuss below, this makes it possible to see a specific ideology as an ideal type, and also to investigate how the ideological make-up of a political party can consist of several ideological currents simultaneously, sometimes embodied in different factions within the party. Canadian parties and political ideologies do not evolve in complete sync, and as Christian and Campbell (1996, p. 233) points out, an ideological current’s position in the Canadian society may be unchanged if one party abandons it, but it is picked up by another.

What is ideology *not* to be understood as in this thesis? For many, the term holds negative connotations, and it has been associated with dogmatism, insincerity, and empty rhetoric (Gerring, 1997, pp. 977-978). In politics, ideology can be “a device with which to condemn or criticize rival sets of ideas or belief systems,” (Heywood, 2012, p. 5). To accuse someone of arguing or conducting politics based on ideology is often to accuse them of proposing policy that is not based on facts, but rather on lofty principles. For this reason, some conservatives have also resisted the notion that conservatism is an ideology, and would rather describe their beliefs as common sense (Freedman, 1996, pp. 320, 324; Heywood, 2012, p. 68), especially as opposed to the “rationalism of political radicals” (Aughey, 2005, p. 14). The definition of ideology used in this thesis, however, does not make a value judgment about the content of ideologies, nor does the analysis aim to disclose any factual errors in the ideology. Conservatism, as other political ideologies, is seen as a “set of political beliefs about human beings, the societies they live in, and the importance of a distinctive set of political values,” (Heywood, 2012, p. 68). These beliefs may be more or less specific, more or less ambitious when it comes to collective action, and differ in what they put emphasis on, but they are all ideological.

Ideologies are also different from political philosophies, as they are part of everyday political struggle, “expressed in sloganizing, political rhetoric, party manifestos and government policies,” (Heywood, 2012, p. 13). Moreover, unlike ideologies, philosophies are not allowed to be “more or less” coherent, but are always internally consistent (ibid.). Gerring also addresses this question, and brings in an action-oriented argument: “For many writers, a set of values becomes ideological only insofar as it specifies a concrete program, a set of issue-positions. It is this, arguably, that differentiates ideologies from belief- systems, philosophical systems, and cultural systems,” (Gerring, 1997, p. 973).

2.3.1 Ideas

If ideologies are systems of ideas, we also need to address what an idea is. Göran Bergström and Kristina Boréus define an idea as “a thought construction, which, unlike the more fleeting impressions or attitudes, is of a certain continuity,” (Bergström & Boréus, 2005, p. 149).⁵ Ideas can be causal beliefs about the world around us, about how things are connected, and about how they affect each other (Béland & Cox, 2011, p. 3). This type of descriptive idea can be contrasted with normative ideas about how the world *should* be, which are the type of ideas normally associated with political discord (Bratberg, 2014, p. 59). Descriptive ideas can also be considered part of the ideas systems that make up ideologies, because political actors often share beliefs about what is right (the normative idea), while the causal belief (the descriptive idea) is what sets them apart. An example is whether democratic development is best achieved through free markets or through substantial aid programs. We will bring this logic with us as we explore different levels of policy ideas. To see how ideas influence politics and policy making in particular, Peter A. Hall argues that “policymakers customarily work within a framework of ideas and standards that specifies not only the goals of policy and the kind of instruments that can be used to attain them, but also the very nature of the problems they are meant to be addressing,” (Hall, 1993, p. 279). In other words, to analyze ideas in politics, we can make a distinction between different levels of ideas. This classification helps us understand how ideas work in politics, and in explaining

⁵ Author’s translation. Original version reads: “en tankekonstruktion som till skillnad från de flyktigare intrycken eller attityderna utmärks av en viss kontinuitet.”

choices of policy that a political party makes. Jal Mehta (2011, p. 25) divides ideas into three types: ideas as policy solutions, ideas as problem definitions, and ideas as public philosophies. He makes this distinction in order to theorize about how some policy ideas are chosen over others, but the classification also serves to provide a clearer image of how different ideas make up an ideology. Firstly, public philosophies determine what the appropriate role and measures of government are with regard to policy-making, “in light of a set of certain set of assumptions about the society and the market,” (ibid., p. 27). Problem definitions are ideas that dictate which solutions are actually viable choices: “the way a problem is framed has significant implications for the types of policy solutions that will seem desirable,” (ibid.). For example, terrorism seen as a product of exclusion and poverty requires different policies than terrorism seen as a product of foreign religious extremism. The policy solution ideas are the concrete measures for solving these problems. Mehta discusses how these levels affect and influence each other in more than one direction. In this context, however, I will be more concerned with how sets of ideas at different levels make up a coherent approach to political issues. Some of the overarching public philosophy ideas in a set can act as the basis for coherence, while the problem definitions and policy solutions constitute the aims and policies in the various ideologies.

2.3.2 Ideology and causality

Ideas in ideologies “provide guides for action. Ideas help us to think about ways to address problems and challenges that we face and therefore are the cause of our actions,” (Béland & Cox, 2011, pp. 3-4). They describe what sort of society we live in today, what kind of society is desirable, and what kind of policy is necessary for making changes towards it. Ideology also dictates how we interpret information: “(it) narrows the range of relevant social and political information,” (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 3), and tells us how to act on the basis of this information. The argument that ideas are essential drivers for action, both individual and collective, and that we construct a vision of the world through ideas, is grounded in a constructivist approach to social science (Béland & Cox, 2011, p. 13). There is an important distinction to make, however: “That ideology is action-oriented should not (...) be confused with the idea that ideologies are acted upon all the time, or that political action is primarily the product of ideologies,” (Gerring 1997, p. 972). Willard A. Mullins summarizes this idea well when

he claims that “the significance of ideology (...) is not that it “causes one to do” but that it “gives one cause for doing,” (1972, p. 509). Ideologies provide the basis for policy and political action, but political actors are free to interpret this ideological basis given the circumstances, and to suggest different political solutions. Horowitz similarly addresses this issue by arguing that “the attribution of causal force to an ideological factor such as toryism does not necessarily claim for its independence of other factors, environmental or economic,” (Horowitz, 1978, p. 385).

2.4 Analytical framework

In this section, I intend to set out the analytical framework for the coming analysis, and discuss the approaches and tools that are best suited for my research task, which is to explore the CPC’s ideological profile. Jonathan Leader Maynard (2013, p. 301) identifies three main methodological approaches to the study of ideology in text: a conceptual approach, a discursive approach and a quantitative approach. With a conceptual approach, the ideology’s content is the object of study. The quantitative approach, on the other hand, aims to statistically identify causal relationships between ideology and behavior (for example voting), or between ideology and personality traits (ibid., pp. 310-311). Discursive approaches, both in the traditions of critical discourse analysis and of post-structuralism, are also less interested in the ideology’s content. Discourse analysts focus instead on “the communicative practices through which ideology is constituted, transmitted and made visible,” (ibid., p. 304). This entails that the “text means what it does as part of a larger context where actors are not primary,” (Bergström & Boréus, 2005, p. 28).⁶ The difference between discourse and conceptual analysis lies in this actor/structure divide. With a conceptual approach, we assume that actors are actually expressing their opinion when they voice their support for an idea (Bratberg, 2014, p. 76), and make a conscious choice to adhere to one type of ideology, rather than (more or less) unknowingly being a part of a common discourse (ibid., p. 81).

As I am interested in what the political parties themselves present as their ideas and politics, and not ideology as part of a larger discourse or as determining behavior, the

⁶ Author’s translation. Original version reads: “betyder texten det den gör som en del i et större sammanhang där aktörer inte är det primära.”

conceptual approach seems to be a fruitful framework for analysis. A quantitative content analysis, in which ideology can be conceptualized as a one-dimensional liberal-conservative spectrum, is also a possible way to approach this (Maynard, 2013, p. 310). This type of approach, also known as the spatial model of left-right politics, is common in American research in particular (Knight, 2006, pp. 619, 623). Content analysis allows for large quantitative analysis of coded text – notable examples include the abovementioned Manifesto Project and the surrounding scholarship, such as Budge (2001a) and Klingemann (2006). In Canada, the Poltext project⁷ at the Université Laval in Québec also focuses on quantitative textual analysis of Canadian political documents. Most of the textual data used in this thesis was collected from this database. I could have continued my investigation in this vein, coding and analyzing platforms statistically. However, for my research, placing the parties in question on a one-dimensional left-right scale or counting the occurrences of words or statements would have left much wanting in terms of replying to my research questions. I am not as much interested in whether the parties are on the left or right, as to what the term “the right” actually contains.

Furthermore, the situation and circumstances in which the particular text was produced is important to consider because “issues are embedded in specific political and historical contexts and gain meaning only when properly contextualized,” (Gerring, 1997, pp. 297-298). Bergström and Boréus provide an interesting example of how context plays an important role. They present an excerpt from a Swedish party’s political platform about workers’ influence in the workplace, which would be considered radical by today’s standards. If read into its actual context in the 1970s, it is an attempt to hold back and provide an alternative to far more radical platforms put forth by other parties (Bergström & Boréus, 2005, p. 30). In a content analysis such contextual factors are hard to include in the model. When a computer counts words, it is also hard to allow for concepts whose meanings have changed over the time period that is being analyzed. It would be difficult to identify different ideological traditions, as the content analysis would only turn up the frequency of certain concepts and give little insight as to their connection with other concepts in the text. Quantitative approaches

⁷ www.poltext.org (accessed May 14, 2015). Poltext project. Centre for the Analysis of Public Policy (CAPP). Université Laval. The Poltext project is funded by a grant from the Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture.

“possess a comparatively minimalist portrayal of ideologies’ structure at the level of ideas,” (Maynard, 2013, p. 310). For these reasons, I have chosen a qualitative ideational analysis to trace conservative ideologies in texts for this thesis work.

2.4.1 Ideational analysis

An ideational or ideology analysis is a “qualitative analysis of the presence of ideas in texts, where interpretation is an important part of the analysis,” (Bratberg, 2014, p. 57).⁸ Maynard calls ideational analysis “an intrinsically valuable investigation of political thinking” (2013, p. 302). To map an idea in ideational analysis is not merely to point out its presence, but rather the analytical exercise it is to understand that it is there and consider it against a pre-conceived framework. I will conduct a two-step ideational analysis – first I will develop a typology of conservative ideologies in Canada based on secondary literature (Chapter 3). Then I use this analytical tool to map ideas in the election platforms (Chapter 4).

Ideal types

An ideational analysis needs analytical tools that are suited to the research questions, and suitably specified. Ideal types are tools that help the researcher sort the different text units into different categories (Bergström & Boréus, 2005, p. 160). On the one hand, using ideal types in the analysis presents a possible danger of reading meaning into the text that was not intended by the author, if she wishes to fit everything into the preconceived model. On the other hand, one also runs the risk of discarding a lot of content as irrelevant information when there might have been some other ideal type that would have sorted the information in a comprehensible way. An example is to analyze conservative political speeches with exclusively conservative ideal types, instead of including for instance a liberal ideal type (ibid., pp. 160, 173-174).

In an analysis such as mine, where several ideal types are set up against each other, the ideal types should be “contrasted on the same variables” (Bratberg, 2014, p. 68). For the sake of both reliability and validity, the analytical tool needs to be clear on how to identify the idea in the text, meaning how it is operationalized (ibid., p. 69). In this

⁸ Author’s translation. Original version reads: “kvalitativ analyse av ideers tilstedeværelse i tekst, der fortolkning er en vesentlig side ved analysen.”

regard, it is important to emphasize the two different phases this analysis will take. Normally one either employs the analytical tool and work deductively, or create it by working inductively (ibid., p. 73). I will do both, but certainly not at the same time: the tool comes first, and then the analysis. Furthermore, I create the analytical tool on the basis of other sources than the ones I intend to analyze. This means that I will not use any of the data material that I analyze in this thesis as a basis for the ideal types. A possible threat to validity is that the secondary material that serves as a basis for developing the analytical tool has probably based its analyses and observations on the same election platforms that are being analyzed with the ideal types. I would argue that because these contributions also used many other elements as a basis for analysis including political speeches, parliamentary debates, opinion pieces, and so on, the threat is not a decisive one. To avoid this challenge, the alternative could be to base the ideal types on secondary sources that did not have a Canadian connection. The objection is that most literature on conservatism is written explicitly or implicitly in a political context. General texts about conservatism from for example Britain or the U.S. might not capture some of the unique Canadian dimensions of conservatism. In order to analyze text with ideal types of conservatism, these must be grounded in Canadian politics.

2.4.2 Analytical recipe

With all of the above in mind, I will now outline the specific steps I will take in the analysis. For the sake of reliability, I aim to be as explicit and specific as I can about the choices I have made, and the procedures I will follow in the ideational analysis itself. The first leg of the analysis is performed in Chapter 3, where I will introduce and discuss four currents of Canadian conservatism, treated in this thesis as ideal types. In Chapter 4, the analytical table based on these ideal types is presented. In this table the typology is further specified and operationalized. This is then used to analyze election programs in order to identify the different currents within the different parties at different times. My task as I analyze the platforms is to “interpret a statement as an expression of a specific idea” (Bratberg, 2014, p. 79), while making the logic behind my interpretations clear.

Both in developing the analytical tools and performing the empirical analysis, there needs to be a certain logic to how to classify some ideas as representations of one ideology, and some as parts of another. Within the conceptual approach, various analytical methods are on hand. Michael Freeden suggests morphological analysis, in which ideologies are analyzed as sets of concepts to which are added significance and interpretation within each ideology: "(...) rival ideologies rarely disregard each other's core concepts *entirely*, so it is the differently decontested *meanings* of concepts, and the varying degrees of significance attached to them, which constitute many of the most important ideological differences," (Maynard, 2013, p. 302). The pattern of these concepts is the ideology's make-up, and should be studied as well as the concepts (or ideas) themselves (ibid.). The concepts can be logically linked, but culture, understood as "temporally and spatially bounded social practices, institutional patterns, ethical systems, technologies, influential theories, discourses, and beliefs", also plays a part (ibid., p. 303). The insight from this is that concepts do not necessarily mean the same thing within one ideological current as in the next. "Freedom" or "the family" may not mean the same thing or carry the same policy implication in two different currents of conservatism. Furthermore, different currents will emphasize different issues and their different aspects. How these ideas are linked, touches upon the same logic as that of coherence – what is the underlying logic that ties these ideas and concepts together in exactly this way, and makes them appear (more or less) coherent to their adherents? My attempt to solve this conceptual challenge is to use Mehta's three idea levels (explained above) to help us sort out ideas that set the terms for what policies are acceptable within a current, and allow the various currents to focus on different issues and aspects. I return to this discussion in Chapter 4.

2.4.3 Data

I have chosen election platforms as the empirical data for analysis to answer my research question. Although election platforms are commonly used to analyze party politics in many Western democracies, in a Canadian context this choice is not as straightforward as it might seem. The role of election platforms and other policy documents in Canadian politics varies across political parties, and across time. During the 1990s, the Reform party operated according to the *Blue Book*, a carefully crafted policy document adopted at party assemblies, which bound party members to its word.

This also meant that the Reform leader had less maneuvering space than the leaders of the traditional brokerage parties (Flanagan, 2013, p. 82). For PC and the Liberals, by contrast, policy documents mattered less than the choices made and broker strategies pursued by the party leadership, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. The new CPC also votes on and amends a *Policy Declaration* during national party conventions. However, the CPC party leader is free to suggest policy that for political and strategic purposes diverges from this document, and “items from the Policy Declaration often appear in one way or another in campaign platforms, but no one expects perfect correspondence,” (ibid., p. 88). The campaign platform, on the other hand, is not voted on at conventions, but is written by CPC leader Stephen Harper’s policy advisers (ibid., p. 90).

What this means for data selection is that the election platforms will have a slightly different status within the three (or four, if Alliance is to be counted as separate from Reform) parties. The documents were created in different ways (for example by delegate voting for Reform and by policy advisers for CPC), but the outcome is the same – a coherent document that presents party policy and principles to the electorate. Policy documents’ status in the PC party is a little complicated, as it evolves from a major brokerage party at the beginning of the period for analysis (the late 1960s), and ends as a minor party with no opportunity for brokerage towards the end (early 2000s). I will argue though, that despite the label of brokerage party and claims of non-ideological politics, there is a very clear sense in the literature of an actual ideological profile for the PC party. If this had not been the case, Reform and eventually CPC would clearly not have been seen as such a break with the supposedly reigning ideological tory tradition in Canadian conservatism. I will elaborate on the three parties’ ideological profiles in Chapter 3, but for now it suffices to make the argument that PC policy documents throughout the period are interesting and credible sources of conservative political ideas.

Alternatives to campaign platforms as data

There are of course alternative text sources that I have considered to use as data for this thesis: leader speeches at party conventions, the Speech from the Throne made by the governing party, excerpts from debates in the House of Commons, the content of private member’s bills or government legislation items. One scholar even suggested in a

conversation that television commercials would be an interesting object of study, as they highlight the issues the party would like to focus on. A few factors have affected my choice of election platforms. Firstly, there is the matter of the sheer amount of material that comes with each type of text source. An argument in favor of election platforms is that they are fairly regular, as they appear with every election. Until 2007, it was the Prime Minister's prerogative to call for elections within five years of the previous election, which made elections in Canada erratic incidents (Dyck, 2011, p. 317)⁹. Still, the infrequency of elections as opposed to, for instance, a debate in the House is a natural limit to the material. It would be an incredibly demanding task to make a representative data selection from proceedings in the House for the period I am investigating. The same goes for government legislation and private member's bills. These might have been more viable options for a shorter period, but the intent of this thesis is to follow the development and compare across decades. Alternatively, convention speeches or speeches made in Parliament by party leaders could have been chosen as data. In general, party leaders in Canada are very strong within their parties, and "retain the right to determine official party policy," (ibid., p. 359). However, in such a case my opinion is that rhetorical elements should also have had to be included in the analysis, and would call for different tools and analytical approaches. The focus would have shifted too much from the party as a whole, to its leading front figure. Although I am interested in the different currents and their status within the party, I am more interested in the party as it appears to the public than which factions are fighting over which issues. This focus is summarized by Budge (2001b, p. 211): "If one wants to study party policy, and not the policies advocated by internal factions or individuals inside the party, one has to study the manifesto, platform or election programme." Also, I would argue that platforms are aimed directly at voters, giving more room for expressing ideas in ideological terms. In contrast, a parliamentary debate would arguably be more focused on practical policy development and interaction with other parties.

⁹ A change in the *Canada Elections Act* introduced fixed election dates (the third Monday of October) and a four-year rule in 2007. The change was initiated by The Prime Minister can still ask the Governor General to dissolve parliament before this fixed date, if there is a vote of non-confidence in the House.

Data selection

The thesis focuses on the period since the late 1960s. Below is a table to give an overview of which conservative parties competed in which election in this period. The platforms examined are in grey boxes.

Party	68	72	74	79	80	84	88	93	97	00	04	06	08	11
PC	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Reform							X	X	X					
Alliance										X				
CPC											X	X	X	X

Table 1: Federal elections¹⁰

The selection is made to ensure that a longer time period is covered – a period during which it is commonly claimed (see above) that Canadian conservatism has changed. There are also a few practical considerations in the selection of data. For the PC, I have chosen four platforms, from 1968, 1974, 1997 and 2000, and for this particular party, the data have been somewhat challenging with regards to access. The document from 1968 is a polite 30 pages, but for the 1974 election the document is close to 180 pages. For the 1979 documents there are only badly scanned versions available, and for 1980 there is only a pamphlet on the economy. In 1984, the election document that was available was a collection of quotes by party leader Brian Mulroney, collected from various speeches and debates. The issue of bilingual programs has also come up. For the 1988 election I have only been able to obtain the French version of the PC's platform. Since this would pose some challenges to validity, as the nuances in my interpretation would undoubtedly be affected by translations from two different languages, I have chosen not to analyze this year. The jump from 1974 to 1997 is undeniably a long one, yet this selection enables me to capture change over time in the platforms.

¹⁰ Parliament of Canada:
<http://www.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/Compilations/ElectionsAndRidings/ResultsParty.aspx> (accessed May 15, 2015)

For the remaining parties, data was more readily available and comparable in terms of format. For Reform/Alliance and the CPC, I will examine three platforms from each party. Reform first participated in a federal election in 1988, but was electorally unsuccessful. As their grand breakthrough came in 1993, they only managed a to participate in one more election in 1997 before turning into the Canadian Alliance. The Alliance only participated in one election, in 2000. I will analyze the platforms from 1993, 1997 and 2000. Then followed four elections featuring the CPC in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2011. For all of these elections, party platforms of about 20-30 pages are available in English. As there have only been issued three party platforms for Reform/Alliance and four for the CPC, I will analyze the 2004, 2006 and 2011 platforms. The 2008 platform, “The True North Strong and Free: Stephen Harper’s Plan for Canadians”, is shorter than the other three CPC platforms, and much less detailed. There is much less to go on here in terms of analysis, and so I have chosen to focus on the three other platforms.

2.5 Summing up

A pragmatic brokerage model and an ideological approach have both been applied to Canadian party politics, but it can be argued that brokerage politics are no longer as relevant. I maintain that political parties create policy with a basis in ideology. Ideologies are understood as more or less coherent sets of ideas about society. Political actors act on the basis of these ideologies, but not always and not automatically. These ideologies can be uncovered by an ideational analysis of election platforms, which is what I set out to do in this thesis.

3 Canadian Conservatism

In this chapter I first discuss attempts to define conservatism as an ideology. I will then present the four currents of Canadian conservatism that I focus on in this thesis, outlining their ideas, policies and proponents. As Canadian political history has unfolded, conservative parties and conservative ideology have evolved together, but not always in sync.

3.1 Conservative ideology

Attempting to define what conservative ideology is can be a challenge, especially once one tries to include the various types of it into the same broad “conservative” category. In this thesis I have already made the assumption that there is such a thing as a broader category of conservative parties, to which the Canadian versions belong. What makes these parties – the Progressive Conservatives, Reform, Alliance and finally the Conservative Party of Canada, conservative? The party families concept is a well-known approach to this type of question (Mair & Mudde, 1998, p. 211). If the Canadian parties were to be classified according to their name, as one method suggests (*ibid.*, p. 221), two of them – Reform and Alliance – would be excluded from the category. The Progressive Conservatives are also a challenge in this type of approach, as it is not immediately apparent what this “progressiveness” means. Some might also claim that progressive conservatism is an oxymoron, since the gist of conservatism may be seen as countering or limiting the scale of social change. I will follow Mair and Mudde’s suggestion to look either at party origins, meaning from which movements they developed, or at their ideological profile, to determine which parties belong to the same family (*ibid.*, pp. 223-224).

The ideological mapping I perform in this thesis will show that all of these parties do share enough of a common ideology to all merit the “conservative” label. The case of the Reform party deserves a short discussion, however. Was it really a conservative party, or was its populism detached from the left-right scale? Farney (2012, p. 99) claims Reform followers were conservative while leadership attempted to maintain a non-ideological populist profile. Furthermore, Reform did compete with PC during the 1990s

for the same conservative vote, and it was from PC it stole voters (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 207). The analysis in Chapter 4 will show that Reform does indeed include various conservative statements from different currents in the policy platforms.

Many presentations of conservative ideology start with the thoughts and principles of Edmund Burke, who reacted to the French revolution with calls of caution against radical changes to society (Freedon, 1996, p. 331; Heywood, 2012, p. 66). Andrew Heywood (ibid.) claims that Burke's "pragmatic principles" have been the source of conservatism in the United Kingdom, as well as several other Commonwealth countries including Canada. Heywood sets out tradition, human imperfection, organic society, hierarchy and authority, and property as core beliefs in conservatism. The emphasis on tradition can be a reflection of religious beliefs about society, or of a respect for the accumulated experience that builds over time in a society (ibid., pp. 68-69). Conservatives believe that humans are "both imperfect and unperfectible", which creates the need for a society that takes this into account (ibid., p. 70). This view also explains the "tough-on-crime" stance that is associated with conservative policy. Crime is not "a product of inequality or social disadvantage", and the only way to avoid crime is to deter people from committing them through strict laws and tough enforcement (ibid., p. 72). Societies are perceived as organic in the sense that society is "not simply a collection of individual parts that can be arranged or rearranged at will," (ibid., p. 73). Furthermore, society is naturally hierarchical, with natural authorities that merit respect (Heywood, ibid., p. 76). This includes respect for the law, but also respect for authority figures in the family or in the school. In Heywood's analysis, property is also a core value of conservatism, because property ownership promotes social order, and is a way of expressing oneself (ibid., p. 78). However, he emphasizes the divide that has emerged within conservative ideology between the traditional conception of the ideology, and new ideas that draw inspiration from liberal economic ideas. This new right rejects the idea that society is organic, and sees it instead as "a product of the actions of self-seeking and largely self-reliant individuals," (ibid., p. 75). Heywood argues that this new type of conservatism does remain within the conservative family, as opposed to being classified as another type of ideology, because it still retains principles of order and authority. He also claims the new right is simply trying to shift the balance within the conservative movement rather than break out of it (ibid., p. 67).

This schism between the new right and the old illustrates the difficulty in defining conservatism in a way that encompasses all the different variations of the ideology. Another such divide is what the role of the state should be in upholding certain values in society. Isaksen and Syse (2011, pp. 11-12) claim that in conservatism the “soul of society” is not found in a political party, in the state, or in a certain policy, but rather in the culture, history and the people’s traditions. They posit this as an argument for why there should be boundaries for what politics should concern itself with, as might be the opinion of a traditional Tory. On the other hand, one could just as easily find this to be an argument for the preservation of this culture through state action, which a social conservative might argue. Some have also made the observation that newer currents of conservatism have “drawn heavily on American thoughts and models”, while the old conservative party was inspired by and valued the British connection highly (Wiseman, 2013a, p. 58).

Michael Freedon has attempted to reconcile this kind of diversity by approaching the question of how to define conservatism from a rather different starting point. To Freedon, a list of conservative beliefs and principles, for instance one based on Burke’s writings, does not serve any purpose: “It is a simple task to demonstrate that for the past two centuries conservatives have compiled some very different lists,” (Freedon, 1996, p. 332). Instead he introduces only two core concepts he thinks can encompass the multiple variations of conservatism that exist. The first core concept is that a resistance to change, unless it is “conducted within proven frameworks, because its pace does not exceed the ability of people to adjust to it, because it is not destructive of the past or of existing institutions and practices, and because it does not appear to be instituted by human design,” (ibid., p. 333). The second core concept is that social order has “extra-human origins”: religion, nature, family bonds or “‘scientific’ economic laws”. Freedon goes on to say that “to flout those rules would be to put the stability and survival of their societies in extreme jeopardy,” (ibid., p. 334). Freedon also acknowledges a schism within conservatism, exemplified by two different conservative views on the role of government - one which “emphasizes the harmony among the parts of the political order under the guidance of a wise and authoritative government, rather than the procedural protection of individuals against possible encroachments *by* governments,” (ibid., p. 340). The other takes the position that “non-interference with

individual liberty is the main prerequisite to a just constitutional order,” (ibid.). However, to Freedman neither of these ideas are part of the conservative core components, and so this schism is not as problematic as some would claim. Farney and Rayside maintain that resistance to change isn’t the unifying characteristic that it used to be for conservatives, as neoliberals embrace the change that results from a free market (2013b, p. 7). With Michael Freedman’s logic, this can be accounted for by the core components, in the sense that free markets induce a change that is natural and organic. The state intervention on behalf of human ideals is what is artificial and unnatural about the change. To his two core components, Michael Freedman adds a “mirror-image” characteristic. Conservatives shape their policy by reacting to opposing progressive ideologies to counter their ideas and policies (Freedman, 1996, p. 336). It can be whichever ideology poses the greatest threat at that moment (ibid., p. 342). This is tied to the notion that conservatives are likely to perceive their political opinions as common sense rather than ideological, as mentioned in Chapter 2. Furthermore, this mirror-image characteristic could help explain the schism between the priorities of the old and new right. In a book about British conservatism, Norman Barry writes: “in the nineteenth century (British) Conservatives did not have to theorise much about economics because socialism was not an immediate threat. Also, they did not have to think too much about the unintended consequences of state intervention, a favourite New Right concern, since the interventions were usually too small to threaten the viability of capitalism,” (Barry, 2005, p. 34). We can conclude from this that it is possible to talk about “conservatism” as encompassing multiple variations without losing its core, and with this established we can move on to the four currents of Canadian conservatism.

3.2 Currents of Canadian conservatism

In this section, I present four types of conservative ideology: toryism, neoliberalism, conservative populism and social conservatism. There are of course several options for expanding this list to include other currents or to narrow it down to fewer. Some approaches exclude populism from this list, such as Farney (2012, p. 12) who only includes traditionalist conservatism (here: toryism), laissez-faire conservatism (here: neoliberalism), and social conservatism. He interprets these three types of conservatism

as reactions to different types of change, in line with Freedden's analysis. Tories were concerned with "the breakdown of the organic community", neoliberals with "government intervention in the economy", and social conservatives with "changes in gender roles and sexual mores," (ibid.). As argued above, the populist current has been an important part of a party that is considered conservative, namely the Reform party, and this justifies its inclusion. These four currents also represent very distinct traditions, and pick up on different conservative themes that I expect to find in the data. Patten (2013, p. 59) has a similar classification to mine, with four currents that he calls marked-oriented liberalism, progressive red toryism, social conservatism and conservative populism.

I will present the four currents chronologically as they appeared in Canadian politics, starting with toryism, continuing onto neoliberalism, then conservative populism, and finally social conservatism. I will focus on the different currents' ideas and policies, as well as a short history of their role and proponents for background and illustration purposes. This chapter is based solely on secondary sources, and can be read as a literature review. It is not a result of the upcoming analysis in Chapter 4, but rather the basis for it. My aim with this chapter is not to characterize the conservative parties or their blends of political ideologies, as this is a task for the upcoming ideational analysis, but to distill the ideological currents from which the different actors have drawn inspiration for policy.

A note on terminology

There are of course many ways to denote the different currents of conservatism. I have tried to stick to terms that are both instinctively recognizable as well as fairly representative of their ideational content. In day-to-day speech, "conservative", "right", and "right wing" are used to describe a variety of policies and politicians. In the academic literature, there is no settled way of referring to these categories either, as the above examples from Patten (2013) and Farney (2012) illustrate. First of all, a *tory* is the colloquial name for a conservative politician in Canada. Traditionally associated with the PC party, the label has now been adopted by the CPC, but used in this thesis the term will represent the outlined ideal type. Many writers also use the term *red tory* to describe the type of conservatism I here label as toryism (Patten, 2013, p. 59), but I find

the distinction unnecessary as a lot of the characteristics that makes one “red” also serve to make one “tory”. *Neoliberalism* is understood in this thesis as “free market values and a preference for low taxes and circumscribed state authority,” (Farney & Rayside, 2013b, p. 4), but the terms *laissez-faire conservative* or *business liberal* are also common labels for this type of conservative ideology. The term *neoconservative* can also represent these free market values, or it can be expanded to include social conservative values (ibid.). The expression *new right* can also denote the combination of neoliberal and social conservative ideas, or just one of them (Heywood, 2012, p. 67). To avoid confusion, I will be consistent in my use of *tory*, *neoliberal*, *conservative populist* and *social conservative*. What follows is a detailed presentation of each of these currents of conservatism.

3.2.1 Toryism

Ideas and principles

In 1966, Gad Horowitz wrote:

“Canadian Conservatives have something British about them that American Republicans do not. It is not simply their emphasis on loyalty to the crown and to the British connection, but a touch of the authentic tory aura-traditionalism, elitism, the strong state, and so on. The Canadian Conservatives lack the American aura of rugged individualism,” (Horowitz, 1966, p. 157).

This “touch of toryism” was a common way to express the uniqueness of Canadian conservatism as opposed to its American neighbor. Toryism is summarized by Farney and Rayside as “a belief in or acquiescence to social stratification and hierarchy, a prioritization of order and stability, and an emphasis on continuity, and at the same time an openness to expanding the power of the state,” (Farney & Rayside, 2013b, p. 6). In toryism, society is seen as something that evolves naturally – organically – over time. It is a “hierarchically ordered and organically interdependent whole, governed or shaped by norms that are imputed with truthfulness from scripture, natural law, or the test of time,” (ibid., p. 4). This echoes Freedman and his core concept of the extra-human origins of social order. As a consequence of this understanding of the organic society as shaped by forces beyond human control, politicians and political thinkers one can not and should not strive to invent and reinvent society as other ideologies, mainly

liberalism and socialism, will advocate (Heywood, 2012, p. 75). A tory also believes in preserving institutions that uphold this social order, such as the Armed Forces, the Crown, the law, and the family (Heffer, 2005, p. 200; Wiseman, 2013a, p. 60). These institutions are valuable simply because they exist, as their continued existence proves their functionality and importance in society. The tory view that “for a country to function properly and without harmful divisions, there must be some semi-permanent non-democratic element within the constitutional framework,” (Heffer, 2005, p. 200) justifies Canada remaining within the Commonwealth, having the Queen as monarch, or keeping an appointed Senate as opposed to an elected one.

A tory accepts the hierarchical society, and unlike a socialist does not think that this is something that can or should be permanently altered. Despite this, there is an element of paternalist compassion towards the less fortunate in toryism (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 36). The same tradition is found in British One Nation conservatism, where “the elevation of the condition of the people” was a goal which secured the conservatives an ambition as a party for all layers of society (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 40; Seawright, 2005, p. 70). Furthermore, social order is more important than the individual in toryism, and so a tory can condone state activity in economy and society (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 33). This paternalist compassion combined with an acceptance of state action makes a tory willing to “support socially active government and (be) willing to tame the free market by allowing social concerns and politics to trump economic logic,” (Patten, 2013, p. 59). Consequently, Canadian tories have been supportive of a welfare state and accepted the “provision of collective goods by the state” (2013b, pp. 6-7). Toryism has thus been described as having a communitarian or collectivist outlook (Wiseman, 2013a, p. 60). However, with regards to social and religious values, tories have been more restrictive with state involvement. According to Farney (2012, p. 26), they believed family issues to be “defined naturally and by civil society institutions like churches.” These churches were separate from the state, and their role was mainly “to serve as a prop to social stability generally,” (ibid., p. 15). The result was that the relationship between the family and the state was not politically discussed.

Proponents, leadership and parties

Toryism was the earliest conservative party in Canada's main ideology (Campbell & Christian, 1996, pp. 27-28). For the most part of the 20th century, the PC party was closely associated with tory values and ideas. During the Great Depression, it was a PC Prime Minister that initiated a Canadian version of the New Deal reforms (Horowitz, 1966, p. 157). John Diefenbaker, PC party leader from 1956-67, and Robert Stanfield, leader between 1967-76 were committed to "a blend of red tory ideological commitments and market liberalism," (Patten, 2013, pp. 59, 62). During this time, "The Progressive Conservative Party stood apart from parties on the ideological left but did not pose a fundamental challenge to the policies of welfare capitalism," (ibid., p. 63). This was a defining characteristic of toryism, and draws a sharp contrast to the neoliberal economic thinking that started to emerge around the same time. The next PC party leader Joe Clark (1976-1983) "was largely consistent with Stanfield" (Patten, 2013, p. 63). The subsequent tory Prime Minister Brian Mulroney likened Medicare to a "sacred trust", and called universal social programs a "cornerstone" in the PC party philosophy," (Mulroney, 1984, p. 33). He did, however, become one of the first PC leaders to be truly associated with neoliberalism.

3.2.2 Neoliberalism

Ideas and principles

Neoliberalism is based on new insights from economic theory that led to questioning of the Keynesian welfare state model in the 1960s and 70s. According to this ideology, the best way to achieve economic growth was through "lowering input costs of production by cutting taxes on businesses and the wealthy investor class," and allowing the market to operate freely (Patten, 2013, p. 60). Neoliberals also support "globalized free markets", including free trade agreements with other countries (Wiseman, 2013b, p. 210). Economic policy should involve deregulation and privatization, governments should avoid budget deficits, and taxation should be cut (Larner, 2000, p. 5; Patten, 2013, p. 60). In short, neoliberalism's focus is on "what private enterprise can do to boost the economy, not on what the state can do to manage it," (Wiseman, 2013a, p. 58).

Unlike the tory understanding, to a neoliberal society is "no more or less than the sum of its atomistic individuals," (ibid.). Individual liberty and self-reliance is thus given a

high value in neoliberalism (Patten, 2013, p. 61). Neoliberals “place less faith in government’s wisdom and planning abilities and more faith in the individual’s capacities,” (Wiseman, 2013a, p. 59). Consequently, the state’s involvement is seen as contrary to individual interests: “Government should stay uninvolved in society, just as it ought to avoid involvement in the economy, because individuals making their own decisions will result in the optimal outcomes in both areas,” (Farney, 2012, p. 21). Government spending should be cut, in order to decrease the size of expensive government programs that interfere both in the economy (Farney & Rayside, 2013b, p. 8) and in the private sphere (Patten, 2013, p. 61). Neoliberals also leave resolving some social issues to the individual’s private sphere, as this is another arena where state involvement should be as little as possible (Farney, 2012, p. 26). We see that neoliberalism has an overwhelming focus on economic considerations, based on the view that free markets and little government involvement is seen as not only the recipe for a healthy economy, but also for a good life. Economic freedom means personal freedom to a neoliberal. Very few values are seen as important enough to break with the principle of low government involvement, and government policy should be “assessed, first and foremost, according to its consequences for the state’s fiscal position,” (Patten, 2013, p. 61).

Proponents, leadership, parties

Neoliberalism entered Canadian conservatism as it did in many other Western countries in the early 1980s, and the change came from within the party itself, as activists worked to replace toryism with neoliberal policies (Patten, 2013, p. 59). PC leader Brian Mulroney (1983-1993) was originally seen as a Stanfield tory, but during the leadership race in 1983 he adopted some of the neoliberalism rhetoric so as to be in line with the sentiment in the party (ibid., p. 64). He did not, however, follow through with drastic neoliberal measures (ibid., p. 65) and “by American or British standards (the) social programs cutback and tax reductions were modest,” (Laycock, 2002, p. 7). Although inspired by Thatcherism and Reaganism, Canadian conservatives were slower to catch on, and did not follow the neoliberal principles as ardently. In the second period of Mulroney’s premiership, more neoliberal policies came through: cuts to social policies, and negotiating the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. Patten claims Jean Charest’s leadership (1993-1998) marked an even clearer shift to towards neoliberalism in the

policy platform for the 1997 election (Patten, 2013, p. 68). As the Reform party emerged towards the end of the 1980s, it also embraced neoliberal economic policies (ibid., p. 66).

3.2.3 Conservative populism

Ideas and principles

Populism has long traditions in Canada, and started out as regionally based opposition to Ottawa-centric policies. In populism the common people are assumed to be the representatives of common sense in the political system (Betz & Johnson, 2004, p. 315). They are “the hard-working members of the middle class who are set upon by special interest groups that have captured the welfare state,” (Farney, 2013, p. 43). North-American populism, which emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s, has kept this focus on criticizing the welfare state, while the major focus for European brands of populism has been multiculturalism and immigration (ibid., p. 44). According to the populist critique of the welfare state, all citizens should have equal rights and benefits, and organized special interests that obtain special rights from the state break with this principle (Laycock, 2002, pp. 10-11). The welfare state does not provide equality, as the left will argue, but rather the opposite as it gives certain groups special treatment. This includes opposition to special status for Quebec and for aboriginal rights (ibid., pp. 18-20). Campbell and Christian describe how the enemies of “the people” were “groups seeking privileges based on collectivist claims such as francophones or native peoples, or groups perceived as “foreign” to Canada such as immigrants or native peoples, or “foreign” to the independent and self-determining ideals of the populists – the poor, those on welfare, the unemployed or the otherwise disadvantaged,” (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 206).

Populism constructs the elites versus the common people, where the elites “are perceived as a threat to the social or economic interests of ordinary Canadians,” (Patten, 2013, p. 59). This political and cultural elite has no regard for the common people’s interest (Betz & Johnson, 2004, p. 313). Populists also believe that it is the political elite that has enabled the special interest groups to have a disproportionate amount of power in the system. As a result of this opposition to elites and distrust of their political projects, populism in Canada has also been very focused on reforming the political

system so as to give power back to the ordinary Canadians (Campbell & Christian, 1996, p. 206). Some populist measures that give the people the option to rein in politicians, for instance with recall referendums on elected officials and obligations to balance budgets. Other measures focus on the influence of ordinary Canadians in politics, to remedy a “democratic deficit”. Populists call for the use of “instruments of direct democracy: the citizen’s initiative, the referendum, and the recall,” (Laycock, 2002, p. 27). In Canada, there has also been a focus on reform of the Canadian Senate, to which the Prime Minister appoints senators and where they can stay until the age of 75 (earlier it was an appointment for life)¹¹ (Farney, 2013, p. 44). In Canada, populism also has a distinct regional tinge. Suggestions of reform of the Senate is often based in the wish to have regional interests better represented, and the focus on equality (and opposition to special treatment of one provinces, usually Quebec), as well as decentralization and enlarged regional rights, also stems from the Western discontent discussed in Chapter 1 (Dyck, 2011, p. 71). There is also discontent with political decisions made by the courts instead of the elected Parliament, such as when the court systems decides in cases that involves politically sensitive issues like same-sex marriage. This, it is argued, removes power further from elected officials, and by extension, from the people (Farney, 2012, p. 110).

Proponents, leadership, parties

Populism as a political ideology in Canada started to emerge in the West, as a response to federal governments’ allegedly eastern-centric policies, and was first embraced by the Social Credit party, a regional party based in Alberta (Laycock, 2002, p. 9). The Reform Party was created in 1986, and became populism’s ideological home for the duration of its existence (ibid., p. 11). Former Toronto mayor, the controversial Rob Ford, has also been brought forth as a classic conservative populist, with “an opposition to public sector service provision, the promotion of the “little person’s” interest (...), a celebration of anti-intellectualism, budget proposals focused mostly on eliminating “waste” (vaguely defined), and his distrust of expert advice,” (Farney, 2013, p. 54).

¹¹ Parliament of Canada: <http://sen.parl.gc.ca/portal/canada-senators-e.htm> (accessed March 5 2015)

3.2.4 Social conservatism

Ideas and principles

The main concern for a social conservative is “the protection of traditional sexual morality and family structure,” (Farney, 2012, p. 22). The family is the most basic unit in society (Wiseman, 2013a, p. 67). Family values have as their point of departure “the natural definition of the family: a husband, a wife, their children, and the right to life of those children,” (Farney, 2012, p. 27). These values can take the form of opposition to reproductive rights (abortion), to sexual diversity (gay rights), or to the teaching of these in school (Rayside, 2013, pp. 275-276). Social conservatives will also argue for the “direct application of religious teachings to politics,” (Farney, 2012, p. 22), and many of the ideas about family values stem from these religious beliefs. Although the religion most commonly associated with social conservatism in North America is evangelical Christianity, there is also “a political common ground with other religious groups (most notable conservative Roman Catholics, but also some Jews, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus),” (Malloy, 2013, p. 188). These types of ideas fit with Freeden’s core concept of extra-human origins for social order in society.

Unlike neoliberals, Tories and populists, social conservatives think the state should work actively to “maintain traditional family roles or the definition of those roles through religious authority,” (Farney, 2012, p. 100). This idea comes from understanding the welfare state as an institutionalized challenge to these family values, because government programs promote values that social conservatives cannot identify with. As personal issues have been made political by promoting abortion and gay rights through the state and courts, social conservatives accept that this is where the fight over these issues has to occur (Malloy, 2013, p. 186).

Proponents, leadership, parties

Social conservatives in Canada had no ideological home in any political party until well into the 1990s. Unlike social conservatives in the United States, embraced by Ronald Reagan in the early 1980s, “social conservatism had been a marginal ideological influence in the PC Party,” (Patten, 2013, p. 66). In the mid 1990s, “moral issues were gaining visibility at the federal level, propelled in part by the growth of a Reform Party much shaped by religious conservatives,” (Rayside, 2013, p. 279). At first, Reform’s

populism overpowered the party's social conservative elements, but it became more and more socially conservative during the 1990s, especially when Stockwell Day was elected Alliance leader, replacing Reform leader Preston Manning (Farney, 2012, p. 128). Outside the party system, evangelical groups and catholic groups have been associated with social conservative values, however both the numbers and fundraising capacity of Canadian evangelicals are modest compared to their American counterparts (Rayside, 2013, p. 276). Whether Stephen Harper and the CPC have embraced social conservatism is a debated issue, but many claim Stephen Harper has shown a willingness to fight some social conservative battles, while holding off on important issues such as abortion (Malloy, 2013, p. 200). David Rayside claims that since 2010 family value issues have been emphasized by the CPC to attract voters among new Canadians (Rayside, 2013, p. 282), especially in "areas in the Greater Toronto Area with substantial populations of new immigrants or visible minority communities with strong currents of religious or social conservatism," (ibid., p. 283).

3.3 Summing up

Conservatism is difficult to define as an ideology, because it encompasses very many different views about society, the role of government, of religion, and of morality. I identify four major currents of conservatism in Canada: toryism, neoliberalism, conservative populism, and social conservatism. In the next chapter, I will summarize their characteristics in an analytical table, and map these ideologies in the party platforms of the four conservative parties that have operated at the federal level in Canada over the past few decades.

4 Analysis

In this chapter, I will analyze federal election platforms from the Progressive Conservative Party, the Reform Party of Canada, the Canadian Alliance, and the Conservative Party of Canada. The ideational analysis will be guided by the research questions outlined above: what conservative ideological currents have been present in conservative parties in Canada in the past 50 years, how has their influence evolved over time, and what sort of ideological profile does the current Conservative Party of Canada have? As my tool of analysis I use an analytical table based on the literature review in Chapter 3. The results of the analysis are summarized in tables for each party in this chapter, whereas the final discussions and conclusions will follow in Chapter 5.

4.1 Analytical table

Below I have summed up the four ideal types of conservative ideology presented in Chapter 3 in an analytical table. Table 2 shows a simplified table, while Table 3 includes all elements. In order to show where and how the ideologies differ, they are compared on the same four policy dimensions. Not all ideological currents have core ideas that can be tied to all four dimensions, and when this is the case I have indicated this in the table with a gray square.

		Ideological current			
		<i>Toryism</i>	<i>Neoliberalism</i>	<i>Conservative populism</i>	<i>Social conservatism</i>
Policy dimension	<i>Economic</i>				
	<i>Welfare</i>				
	<i>Institutions</i>				
	<i>Moral</i>				

Table 2: Simplified analytical table

The first policy dimension is an *economic* one, concerning the ideas that parties have about the government's role in the economy. The second is a *welfare* dimension, with ideas about the government's role in providing welfare services. Third is an *institutions* dimension, with ideas about whether state institutions should be reformed or

preserved. Finally there is a *moral* dimension, with ideas concerning whether the state should involve itself in moral and religious issues. These four dimensions capture a lot of the ideational content of the four ideological currents, and are suitable for showing where they differ. They provide a balance between abstraction and specification – which makes them an effective tool for analysis.

To be of any value as an analytical tool, the scheme cannot encompass every single aspect of conservatism, nor of the various currents of conservatism. For the purposes of this thesis, this is not a major problem because the goal is to distinguish between these four types of conservative ideology, not to identify conservative ideas in general as opposed to liberal or socialist ideas. Ideas that are explicitly or implicitly shared by all four currents of conservatism are not suitable for distinguishing between the four ideologies. One such idea is the belief in imperfect humans, which requires authoritative government in the justice area and a strong military (Heywood, 2012, p. 72; Wiseman, 2013b, pp. 209-210). Consequently, although policy areas such as justice, defense and foreign policy are important issues in Canadian politics, they are better suited to separate conservatism from other ideologies than to perform a finely grained analysis of conservatism.

I will now expand the simplified analytical table presented above, by including the concept of idea levels. Following the definition reached in Chapter 2, ideologies are assumed to be a set of coherent ideas. In the analytical table I have divided ideas into the three levels that were presented in Chapter 2; policy solutions, problem definitions, and public philosophies. Public philosophies are ideas about society and the market that determine the government's appropriate role and purpose. Problem definitions are ways of framing a policy problem to determine what is identified as causes of this problem and who is responsible for solving it. Policy solutions are concrete policies that solve these problems (Mehta, 2011, p. 27). In an argument over policy, proponents of the various ideological currents can disagree not only on the policy solution, but also on how to even define the political problem. The table illustrates that political differences are not necessarily always about opposing views on a particular matter, but also that ideological currents place importance on different aspects and interpret problems in different ways.

For each ideological current, policy dimension and idea level, ideas are operationalized as statements I expect to find in the political platforms. This operationalization is based on the elaboration on ideological strands in Chapter 3 and was established prior to the empirical analysis, thus avoiding the problems that come with basing the analytical tool on the same data that will be analyzed.

		Ideological current			
Policy dimension	Idea level	<i>Toryism</i>	<i>Neoliberalism</i>	<i>Conservative populism</i>	<i>Social conservatism</i>
<i>The role of government in the economy (Economy)</i>	1. Public philosophy	Communitarian/collectivist outlook. Government should contribute to society's need for social order and stability.	Individualist outlook. Government should defer to markets and individual economic freedom, as they are more important than collective societal needs.		
	2. Problem definition	The problem of unrestricted markets: If left to itself, the market and individuals in society are not guaranteed to create the optimal outcome for social order. Government has a responsibility to intervene on behalf of society.	The problem of government intervention: Economic growth is ensured through unrestricted markets, free trade, and individual economic freedom. Government should keep balanced books.		
	3. Policy solutions	Keep Crown corporations state-owned, support subsidies to businesses and regional development transfers.	Cut taxes, reduce the debt, privatize Crown corporations, remove state subsidies, negotiate free trade agreements, deregulate.		

<i>The size of the welfare state and public services (Welfare)</i>	1. Public philosophy	Collective responsibility. State paternalism. The elite in society, acting through government, has a duty to preserve social order by aiding the less fortunate.	Individual responsibility. Market needs and individual economic freedom is the primary concern, of politics and is more important than the social needs of groups.	Individual responsibility. All Canadians should have equal rights, duties and benefits.	
	2. Problem definition	The problem of poverty and disenfranchised groups: Poverty is a social problem and can be alleviated by state action, but not completely eradicated.	The problem of economic responsibility. The welfare state is not fiscally responsible. The problem of an intrusive state. The state should not intervene in social matters as this interferes with individual freedom as well as economic growth.	The problem of special interest groups. Welfare and government programs provide collective rights to organized special interests that do not represent ordinary Canadians.	
	3. Policy solutions	Support universal welfare programs and affordable education.	Reduce public spending by cutting, shrinking or reforming welfare programs.	Cut, shrink or reform welfare programs, especially those that are based on special interest groups' needs.	
<i>Reform or preserve state institutions (Institutions)</i>	1. Public philosophy	Society evolves organically. Traditions should be preserved.	Market needs and individual economic freedom is the primary concern of politics.	Political power and influence belongs to ordinary Canadians.	
	2. Problem definition	The problem of unorganic change. Reforming institutions in society is an artificial move in the organic society.	The problem of inefficient and fiscally irresponsible state institutions. These institutions prove their right to exist by being fiscally responsible.	The problem of democratic deficit. Democratic institutions and representatives are concerned only with special organized groups or with their own personal gain. The federal government is too strong vis-à-vis provinces and individuals.	
	3. Policy solutions	Avoid major political reforms, maintain the connection to Britain, uphold the Senate.	Reduce public spending by reforming or scaling back government.	Reform Senate and political parties, introduce direct democracy measures, recall, initiative, free votes in for representatives, decentralize power to the provinces.	

<i>State regulation of religion and moral issues (Moral)</i>	1. Public philosophy	Society evolves organically .	Market needs and individual economic freedom is the primary concern.	Political power and influence belongs to ordinary Canadians.	The family is the most important unity in society. Religion should influence politics.
	2. Problem definition	The problem of state interference with existing institutions. This is a realm best left to civil society institutions like churches, and the state should not involve itself in these issues.	The problem of state interference with the individual. State involvement in any part of the personal life should be limited, including in the cases of morals and religion.	The problem of elite dominance. Ordinary people should be able to determine what the role of morals and religion and the adjoining policy should be.	The problem of organized special interests. Progressive organizations and elites have made religion and moral issues a political battle, so the state can legitimately involve itself to defend these values.
	3. Policy solutions	No state action should be taken to prevent or protect any kind of moral or religious values.	No state action to prevent or protect any kind of moral or religious values.	Referendums or open votes on issues like abortion and gay marriage in Parliament, public statements by elected officials so the voters know what they are voting for.	Ban or restrict gay marriage and abortion, promote family and religious values through the education system, restrict pornography.

Table 3: Analytical table

A remark on my separation of the economic dimension into tory and neoliberal type ideas should be made. Social conservatives and populists can also be argued to have ideas about the economy as part of their ideological current, for example that populists too assert a minimalist state approach, opposing budget deficits and defending tax cuts. However, the research from Chapter 3 shows that these ideas originated in the neoliberal tradition. Although there might be a high correlation between populist views on society and neoliberal views on the economy, I see it as fruitful for the analysis to treat them as analytically separate categories. Another point that merits a comment is the problem definitions on the welfare and institutions dimension in the neoliberal ideological current. These are essentially the same, saying that state institutions should be evaluated according to fiscal principles. The welfare dimension is just slightly more specified in its focus on the welfare system, while the institutions dimension looks at all of public administration. This means that some ideas that propose cuts to welfare could

just as well have been seen as part of the institutions dimension. This is not a crucial difference, however, as they both very clearly represent a neoliberal understanding of the issue, as opposed to a tory or populist approach.

4.2 Analyzing the party platforms

For the initial readings of the platforms I coded statements, registering what dimension, party and idea level they belonged to. This was highly useful as I went back for further reading and analysis, as it helped me to pick out patterns in huge amounts of text. I started out with a rough counting of ideas after the initial reading of the platforms. Because of the varying length and format of the documents this counting was not meant to serve as a basis for comparison between platforms (for instance, whether the number of populist ideas had gone up since the last election), but rather to look at the relationship between ideas within each document. In practical terms, this entailed a simple system of coding statements with letters and numbers. If an idea concerned economic policies, it was marked with an E. Then I identified the ideological strain that it represented, for example with a P for populism. Finally, the level of the idea was coded. Was it an expression of public philosophy (level 1), a problem definition (level 2), or a policy solution (level 3)? On some occasions I have made a “reverse interpretation”, if the program described the politics of an opposing party and pointed to the perceived problems with this policy. If an idea was not immediately identified as a level 1, 2 or 3, it could still in most cases be easily classified as tory, neoliberal, populist or social conservative according to the analytical table’s operationalizations. I would argue that this speaks for the quality of the analytical tool, and ensures some degree of reliability and validity.

The insights from Chapter 2 and 3 informed my expectations for this ideational analysis’ findings. On a theoretical level, I expected to be able to say something about the place of ideology in party politics in Canada. Ideology is defined as a coherent system of ideas – coherent in the sense that the ideas that they encompass correspond to the same logic or principles. If parties present all sorts of ideas in their programs, with little coherence across time or platforms, it would undermine the assumption that ideology does play a role in Canadian politics, as opposed to it purely being a game of brokerage politics.

Dividing the policy dimensions into three different policy levels is useful in this regard. If a platform contains certain public philosophy ideas on a dimension, this should constrain the rest of the content because it dictates which problem definitions and policy solutions are actually viable choices on that policy dimension. For example, if a platform professes a neoliberal public philosophy on the economic dimension then tory policy of subsidies to businesses will be an inconsistency.

The secondary literature presented in Chapter 3 provided a few indications as to what to expect in terms of empirical findings of ideology in the various party platforms. The PC party is reported to be an overwhelmingly tory party for the most part of the 20th century, but neoliberal ideas increasingly take hold throughout the 1980s and 90s. It is also indicated that the Reform/Alliance party is associated closely with populist ideas, and neoliberal rather than tory economic ideas. Social conservative values start to matter in the Reform/Alliance party towards the end of the 1990s. As seen in Chapter 1, the common assumption about the CPC is that the party has shifted to the right in Canadian conservatism– it is expected to be neoliberal and populist, and some also claim social conservative, in its ideas. Reformers and not red tories were seen to dominate both the leadership and the policy agenda during and after the merger. All of these claims will be investigated systematically through ideational analysis, starting with PC party platforms. Every platform is analyzed on the four policy dimensions, always starting with the *economic* dimension, followed by the *welfare, institutions* and *moral* dimensions.

4.2.1 Progressive Conservative platforms

The first two PC election platforms to be analyzed are from a period when tory ideas were reportedly still strong in the party (in 1968 and 1974). I then analyze the two most recent platforms of the party before the merger, a time period when the party was said to have far more neoliberal policy (in 1997 and 2000). In this way I hope to capture the ideological journey the party has made.

1968 Progressive Conservative platform

The 1968 “Policy Handbook” is an 11-page document divided into three sections on quality of life, government, and growth. It has virtually no references to neoliberal

economic ideas like free markets, tax cuts or privatizations. In fact, in one section where a tax cut *is* called for, the platform goes on to state: “If it is necessary to replace the revenue lost in whole or in part, this will be done with taxation in other areas that are less damaging to our social progress,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 1968, p. 7). The tory strain of conservatism is alive and well in this election platform. There is a very distinct focus on the role of government as an active player in the economy who plans and coordinates, as expressed in this tory public philosophy on the economy:

“What we need is an informed look at the whole of the Canadian economy and cooperation on the part of all governments in programs to reduce inflation and unemployment and plan for the future education, health and needs of our people. Only if governments are proceeding in a logical fashion to correct the sources of inflation and unemployment can we succeed in restoring confidence in our economy,” (ibid., p. 11).

Government should, for example, involve itself in resource development in all the various regions of Canada (ibid., p. 2). In the section on economic growth, the emphasis is on using tory policy solutions like government subsidies and governmental boards to assist primary industries in production and planning, with statements such as: “A Progressive Conservative Government will introduce a major, co-ordinated plan for development of eastern agriculture,” (ibid., p. 6). There is, however, a neoliberal problem definition concerning the federal deficit. The platform states that part of the reason for a troubled economy is “the fact that the Federal Government has been increasing its expenditures at an alarming rate,” (ibid., p. 10), though the solutions offered and the remaining problem definitions and philosophies are resoundingly tory.

Tory ideas are also predominant when it comes to *welfare* policy. There is a tory public philosophy expressed in the commitment to the state taking care of citizens when “disability, sickness, age or economic conditions”, conditions beyond the citizens’ control, prohibits them from taking care of themselves (ibid., p. 1). The platform suggests tory policy solutions like establishing a “Guaranteed Annual Income for all those Canadians who cannot earn for themselves and who live today below the poverty line,” (ibid.), or supporting public housing projects for low-income citizens (ibid., p. 7). No statements that could be characterized as neoliberal or populist were identified in the platform.

On the *institutions dimension*, there are a small number of statements that represent neoliberal skepticism to large, inefficient and wasteful government institutions. A neoliberal problem definition states that government expenditures are too high, caused in part by a “multiplication of government departments and bureaus,” followed by a neoliberal policy solution of “consolidation of those (departments) that are redundant and reallocating divisions within departments so as to increase the efficiency of government services (ibid., p. 3). The party supports the conclusions of a federally appointed commission that claimed: “a great deal of money could be saved by more efficient methods and the elimination of duplication,” (ibid.), and it was necessary to “tighten the administration of the government as a whole,” (ibid., p. 11). A few statements also represent a populist problem definition of institutions, saying the party would “accept the responsibility of stimulating popular confidence in the national parliament,” (ibid., p. 2), but concrete populist policy solutions are scarce.

Any ideas that would have been connected with *moral* dimensions, such as religion or family issues, are not mentioned at all. This probably indicates either a tory view that these matters are best left to evolve organically in society, or a neoliberal view that these issues are best left to the individual to decide. Given the rest of the platform’s tory profile, the tory interpretation is the most obvious choice, but there is no good way of verifying this.

1974 Progressive Conservative Party

In terms of length, the 1974 platform was in a different league from all the other election platforms in this analysis. At almost 180 pages, “Policies and Commitments: The Progressive Conservative Program” is divided into 32 shorter “papers” with different policy topics, and provides extremely detailed explanations of PC party politics. This was both a curse and a blessing – it was easy to find statements that belonged to all four of the policy dimensions and at all idea levels, but hard to sort out relevant information from a massive amount of text.

On the *economic* dimension, statements point in both a tory and a neoliberal direction. There is a sense of an attempt to balance these two currents. This public philosophy

statement can be read as a neoliberal public philosophy concerning individual initiative, but also mentions society as a benefactor of economic growth: “The function of government in promoting Canada’s economic growth is to encourage a climate in which initiative and incentives can operate for the good of the individual and society,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 1974, p. 1, Paper 19). Here is another attempt to balance individual (neoliberal) and collective (tory) needs in society on a public philosophy level:

“This system does not reject the need for government control or participation in specific areas, but it requires that the state not stifle the ability of Canadians to make their own decisions within a framework of social order and economic justice,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 1974, p. 1, Paper 19).

The tory tradition is unmistakable, however, in this statement about the purpose of economic policy of Canada: it should “ensure that the Canadian economy is serving the common good of all the country,” (ibid.). Tory problem definitions and policy solutions are visible in the discussion about regional development, where measures such as establishing regional Bank of Canada branches and focusing government investment in regions will “reduce existing economic and social disparities and insure optimum development of Canada’s immense resources,” (ibid., p. 3, Paper 13). Tory policy solutions suggest a strategy of Canadian “ownership and control of at least one major multinational in each industry of major significance to the pursuit of our industrial strategy,” (ibid., p. 3, Paper 1). A few other examples of tory policy solution are subsidies to primary industries (ibid., p. 5-6, Paper 6) and the creation of new Crown corporations for ferry services and air transport (ibid., p. 1, Paper 17). In a tory tradition, government has a central role in managing the economy for the good of society, exemplified in this problem definition:

“A true partnership of government with private enterprise will reverse the trend of the last two decades and guarantee the degree of Canadian economic interdependence necessary to protect the interests of future Canadians,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 1974, p. 2, Paper 2).

The party also presents some neoliberal ideas about the economy. It asserts a neoliberal problem definition that “free price systems operating in competitive markets leads to the most efficient allocation of resources and determination of prices,” (ibid., p. 3, Paper 30). It also encourages free trade policy solutions: “in general, freer trade should be encouraged at every opportunity,” (ibid., p. 8, Paper 6). There are suggestions to cut in the sales tax, but this is not a prominent suggestion (ibid., p. 2, Paper 19). When compared with the focus on tax cuts in later election platforms from all parties, the contrast is striking. Tax cuts are mentioned, but are still just part of a much larger, complex message.

On the *welfare* dimension there is a clear tory commitment to public social services:

“We are determined to provide concern, care and compassion for those Canadians who most need care – the aged, the ill, the disabled, the disadvantaged and we believe it is of vital importance to provide meaningful activity for all members of society,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 1974, p. 4, Paper 29).

An accompanying tory policy solution is the ambition for full-employment programs (ibid., p. 1, Paper 15). Still, we also find neoliberal problem definitions on this dimension, such as a dedication to “better management and administration in the field of social affairs in order to contain the costs of transfer payments,” (ibid., p. 1, Paper 29). The platform also states that there is need for a review of the efficiency of the unemployment insurance system, with a goal to avoid “disincentives to employment and excessive costs to contributors and taxpayers,” (ibid., p. 11, Paper 31).

The platform presents a very clear tory public philosophy on the *institutions* dimension, as the party “rejects the super-management theory of the Liberals and N.D.P. and reiterates its belief that true wisdom continues to reside within the whole of society,” (ibid., p. 1, Paper 8). At the same time the platform puts forth some neoliberal problem definitions, as the party reassures its dedication to “reversing the trend toward more and more government” and expresses concern that the inflation rate has surged due to “the rapidly escalating levels of expenditures by various governments, especially the federal one,” (ibid., pp. 2-3, Paper 30). The platform also contains some populist

problem definitions, exemplified here with a rather lofty passage concerning lack of openness in parliament:

“And we will move swiftly to open the windows of the musty corridors of power to the fresh air and sunshine of more information being made available: not just when the executive sees fit to give it – but because the law commands that it be done,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 1974, p. 2, Paper 8).

On the *moral* dimension there is a surprising mention of abortion, considering the assumption outlined in Chapter 3 that this was an absent issue from conservative politics in this period. The document states that the party, “realizing that there are personal moral commitments of both sides of the question, will provide adequate time for parliamentary debate on whether the law permitting therapeutic abortions should be amended, (ibid., p. 2, Paper 7). This, they suggest, should be followed by a free vote on the matter in the House. This kind is a populist policy solution. The statement is set within a section on women’s rights however, where the focus is on expanding and enhancing these economically and legally (ibid., pp. 1-2, Paper 7). I am tempted here to draw upon brokerage politics to explain this quite liberal focus on both women’s rights and abortion, but without even more context it is hard to say what was behind the 1974 decision to include this in the platform.

We have looked at party platforms from a time when the PC party is expected to be very closely associated with tory values, but also a time that is dominated by the brokerage way of doing politics. In the newer platforms we will see just how much of this tory legacy is thrown overboard for new, neoliberal ideas about the economy and other ideological developments.

1997 Progressive Conservative Party

In the 1997 platform, “Let the Future Begin: Jean Charest’s Plan for Canada’s Next Century”, the policy ideas on the *economic* dimension were consistently neoliberal. The general message is that tax cuts are the most important tool a politician can wield: “in order to achieve long-term, sustainable job creation and economic growth, we must reduce overall levels of taxation, because high taxes kill jobs, stifle initiative and shrink personal income,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 1997, p. 4). Federal debt

and deficit budgeting are identified as major challenges, and higher taxes are not an option to generate income for the government. All of these problem definitions and policy solutions fall under the neoliberal ideological current. Another major theme is cutting expenses by rolling back government and cutting “wasteful spending”, a neoliberal idea expressed both on the institutions, welfare and the economic dimensions.

However, the platform does emphasize that “We cannot afford to make cuts at the expense of our most important services, such as health care and education,” (ibid., p. 13), and criticizes the Liberal government for having cut health care transfers to the provinces. The public pension plan is described as “a fundamental part of the Canadian social safety net, an obligation that government must honour,” (ibid., p. 20). This all represents a clear tory commitment on the *welfare* dimension, but the problem definitions and policy solutions offered to enable this tory commitment to public health care, jobs and education, are neoliberal (ibid., p. 18). On the question of Quebec, the platform recognizes the right of the province to protect “their unique culture, civil law and language”, but puts forth the populist problem definition that all people and provinces are to be treated the same: “It does not and will not constitute special powers, privilege, preferential treatment or superiority,” (ibid., p. 40).

On the *institutions* dimension, there is an overwhelming majority of neoliberal ideas, such as reforming public services in order to cut spending. There are some nuances that sets the party apart, however. On Senate reform, PC does not go as far as Reform in calling for elected senators (see below), but are vague in their promise to “welcome discussions” on such changes. They instead suggest more careful reforms such as appointing senators after consulting the provinces, or limiting terms of service (ibid., p. 43).

I found no mention at all of any issue connected to the *moral* dimension, indicating as before either a tory or a neoliberal approach to this matter. Once again, it is hard to determine which current is the deciding one.

2000 Progressive Conservative Party

The final platform the PC party was entitled “Change You Can Trust: The Progressive Conservative Plan for Canada’s Future”. This platform had retained a major focus on neoliberal ideas on the *economic* dimension, but also included tory statements supporting regional development and the primary industries. The public philosophy statements are, however, undoubtedly neoliberal: “Economic growth is the means to achieve all other goals we might set for our society,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 2000, p. 1). This neoliberal problem definition explains the neoliberal view on taxation: “Canada’s economic performance is hampered by high personal and corporate taxes. Excessive taxes make our businesses less competitive, contribute to the “brain drain” and erode the standard of living of Canadian families,” (ibid.). Free trade is another trademark neoliberal problem definition and solution, and the PC is “committed to the principle of free trade and will actively expand global trading partnerships with other nations,” (ibid., p. 8). Yet another neoliberal problem definition deals with federal budget deficits: “We need an aggressive plan to pay down our national debt to make us more internationally competitive,” (ibid., p. 1). Their neoliberal policy solution is to legislate “a schedule for debt repayment”, but with “a goal of eliminating the debt within 25 years,” (ibid., p. 2). Compare this with Reform commitments to eliminating the deficit in just two years (see upcoming analysis). On the subject of regional development, we encounter a tory problem definition: “Economic development agencies should continue to play a role in funding activities which improve equality of opportunity for disadvantaged regions,” (ibid., p. 5). However, “their activities do not crowd-out private sector investment”, and the neoliberal policy solution is to suggest attracting venture capital instead (ibid.).

On the issue of *welfare*, the platform states that “Accessible health care is a core value of Canadians,” (ibid., p. 11), and commits to providing stable funding. I interpret this as a tory problem definition and solution. The party also commits to fighting poverty and alleviating homelessness through various tory policy solutions (ibid., p. 16), but as we have seen for the PC earlier, there is an attempt to balance these tory ideas with a neoliberal public philosophy:

“Canadians want to see their common values reflected in their social programs: self-reliance and self-sufficiency balanced by collective responsibility and compassion, investments targeted at ensuring well-educated and healthy citizens, fairness and fiscal responsibility,” (Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, 2000, p. 11).

As we saw in the 1997 platform, the PC approach to democratic *institutions* reform is a more moderated version of what we will encounter later in Reform programs. Although the party calls for elected senators and other Senate reforms (ibid., p. 22), they also remind the reader that the “Senate fulfills important functions that cannot be adequately addressed by the House of Commons,” and act as a “valuable check on the power of the Prime Minister and Cabinet,” (ibid., p. 18). This can be read as a tory respect and reverence for the institution. On reform of The House of Commons, PC is also quite careful in their recommendations. They want strengthen the influence of individual MPs, “to effectively represent the interests of constituents and play a meaningful role in the development of public policy,” (ibid., p. 22). As a populist problem definition on this dimension goes, these statements are both careful and incremental in their suggested policy. True to its neoliberal problem definitions on the economic dimension about wasteful spending, the party commits to neoliberal policy solutions like “elimination of excessive regulation, overlap, duplication and waste in the allocation of responsibilities between the federal and provincial/territorial governments,” (ibid., p. 5). Another neoliberal policy solution in the same vein suggests a “policy to require each department wishing to enact a new regulation to first have conducted an independent review of the economic impact and compliance costs,” (ibid.,).

I did not interpret any statements in this platform as an idea about *moral* issues.

The overall takeaway is that the PC party makes a quite substantial ideological journey from the first document analyzed from 1968, to the last one in 2000. Are the findings in this analysis consistent enough so that we can claim that some ideological influence is present in the party at all? I would argue that ideological coherence is visible throughout the period, and that an ideological shift is also evident in the material. As the

years go by, the neoliberal vein increases in importance while the tory brand fades. Yet it is still recognizable as a modifying factor in both the mainly neoliberal economic and institutions dimension, and the tory commitment to collective public health care is unshakeable. The findings of the ideational analysis of PC platforms is summarized below.

4.2.2 Summary table of the Progressive Conservative platforms

		Ideological Currents in the PC Party 1968-2000			
		<i>Tory</i>	<i>Neoliberal</i>	<i>Conservative populist</i>	<i>Social conservative</i>
Dimension	<i>Economic</i>	Dominates the 1968 and 1974 platforms, then decreases in influence.	Present since 1968, and increasingly important. In 1997 and 2000 it is the dominant current.		
	<i>Welfare</i>	Commitment to public health care evident throughout the period.	Not important in earlier platforms. Is called on in 1997 and 2000 as policy solutions to tory commitments.	Not an important current on this dimension in any platform.	
	<i>Institutions</i>	Present in 1974, after this it serves to modify populist and neoliberal statements by valuing the institutions in themselves.	An important current on the institutions dimension throughout the whole period.	Visible especially in the 1997 and 2000 platforms, but a weaker form than Reformist populism (see below)	
	<i>Moral</i>	A lack of mention of these issues could be either a tory or a neoliberal understanding of the matter.	A lack of mention of these issues could be either a tory or a neoliberal understanding of the matter.	One mention of a moral issue in 1974, suggesting abortion should be put to a free vote in the House.	No social conservative ideas were identified.

Table 4: Summary table of the PC Party

4.2.3 Reform/Alliance platforms

The Reform Party was created in 1986 as a populist, Western Canadian alternative in federal party politics. Reform entered their first general election in 1988, but did not win any seats in parliament until the next election in 1993. I will analyze three of their platforms, from 1993, 1997 and 2000. The party changed its name and profile to the Canadian Alliance ahead of the 2000 elections in an attempt to attract voters from across the country. Because of this I expected to see some kind of change in policy between 1997 and 2000. According to Chapter 3, the party was expected to have strong

populist and neoliberal ideas, and to become increasingly more preoccupied with moral questions and social conservative ideas towards the end of the 1990s.

1993 Reform

The election platform “Blue Sheet: Principles, Policies & Election Platform” is an eight-page document based on the famous Blue Book, the more comprehensive policy document to which all Reform politicians were bound (Flanagan, 2013, p. 82). Ideas on the *economic* dimension were consistently found to be neoliberal in this platform. It professes a neoliberal public philosophy with statements supporting the belief that wealth is created through “free-enterprise economy in which private property, freedom of contract, and the operations of free markets are encouraged and respected,” (Reform Party of Canada, 1993, p. 2). Although both PC and CPC are committed to neoliberal policy ideas (see upcoming analysis), the problem definitions and policy solutions of Reform are more extremely neoliberal in their suggestions for economic policy. For example, the platform proposes policy solutions like “depoliticizing economic decision-making,” altogether, by eliminating “grants, subsidies, and pricing policies and all federal taxes, direct or indirect, imposed on the natural resources of the provinces,” (ibid.). It accepts subsidies to primary industries only in the cases where it is a “transitional support” while working to have subsidies in other countries removed as well (ibid., p. 4). They also suggest creating a fund for debt reduction by collecting all revenue from the controversial Goods and Services Tax (GST) and “proceeds from the sales of Crown assets,” (ibid.). They envision working towards a flat tax system, and eliminating the GST altogether. A policy solution on deficit reduction includes “requiring the Government of Canada to balance the budget in each three year period or to be obliged to call an election on the issue,” (ibid., p. 5). The party also suggests privatizing the (then) Crown corporation Petro-Canada and the postal services (ibid.). Another neoliberal policy solution is to include property rights in Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the bill of rights in the Constitution (ibid., p. 6).

On the *welfare* dimension, the party presents a neoliberal problem definition when it “opposes the view that universal social programs run by bureaucrats are the best and only way to care for the poor, the sick, the old, and the young,” (ibid., p. 5). Instead they propose a neoliberal policy solution to “encourage families, communities, non-

governmental organizations, and the private sector to reassume their duties and responsibilities in social service areas,” (ibid., p. 6). Despite this, there is a tory commitment to accessible health care, as the party promises to ensure that “no Canadian is denied adequate health services for financial reasons regardless of where in Canada they live,” (ibid). The party also commits to neoliberal ideas about fiscal sustainability of government services.

There is a very clear populist public philosophy statements on the *institutions* dimension: “We believe in the common sense of the common people,” and in their influence in politics (ibid., p. 3). This belief also extends to the role of politicians, and the party states: “the duty of elected members to their constituents should supersede their obligations to their political parties,” (ibid., p. 2). A range of populist policy solutions follows these populist problem definitions. The platform suggests democratic by holding elections for Senate seats and proposes equal representations from provinces (ibid., p. 3). It also suggests direct democratic measures like “binding referendums on the Government of Canada by a simple majority vote of the electorate,” (ibid.) and citizens initiatives for binding referendums requiring the support of 3 percent of eligible voters.

Both populist and social conservative ideas on the *moral* dimension appear in this platform. In a populist policy solution the party demands direct democratic processes “on moral issues such as capital punishment and abortion, and on matters that alter the basic social fabric such as immigration, language and measurement,” (ibid., p. 2). In the section “Moral Decision Making”, the party “commits its Members of Parliament to stating clearly and publicly their personal views and moral beliefs on the questions of abortion and capital punishment,” (ibid., p. 3). This is a populist approach to moral issues, as it does not take a stand on behalf of the party, but simply demands that the voters know the opinion of the politicians before they decide to vote for them. The social conservative public philosophy of “the importance of strengthening and protecting the family unit” is also prominent (ibid., p. 7).

1997 Reform

In the 1997 platform, “A Fresh Start for Canadians: A 6 Point Plan to Build a Brighter Future”, the image is much the same on the *economic* dimension. The party now promises to balance the budget within two years of taking office, a neoliberal policy solution (Reform Party of Canada, 1997, p. 3). Compare this with the PC promise to balance the budget within 25 years. It makes clear the nuances between two parties that both adhere to neoliberal principles, but who suggest quite different policy solutions. Reform suggest policy solutions to ensure deficit reduction like privatizing major Crown corporations Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) television, rail service company Via Rail, and Canada Post. Their policy solutions to ensure a balanced budget goes quite a lot further than their PC competitors:

“Reform will put a stop to the spendthrift ways of any future governments by constitutionally entrenching a Balanced Budget and Spending Cap Amendment. This will require the federal government to run budgetary surpluses and severely restrict any future tax hikes,” (Reform Party of Canada, 1997, p. 8).

The party also supports a range of tax cuts, and illustrates the extent of these with the populist concept “Tax Freedom Day”, the day on which taxpayers start working for themselves instead of for the government. According to Reform estimates, this will occur in April instead of June if their policies are put in place (ibid., 11).

On the *welfare* dimension, the party continues to assert a populist public philosophy, based in the principle of equality for all individuals before the law:

“Liberal and Conservative Governments have tried to achieve equality by passing legislation that treats different groups of Canadians differently under the law, based on race, gender and other characteristics. Reform believes this special status approach is divisive and leads to intolerance and inequality,” (Reform Party of Canada, 1997, p. 19).

The policy solution consequence of this is that Reform proposes to “discontinue federal affirmative action programs and employment equity programs,” (ibid.). Another populist problem definition focuses on the threat of organized special interests: “While the federal government has been catering to special interest groups, the voice of

Canadian families in the policy debate has grown weaker and weaker,” (ibid., p. 13). I interpret this as a populist mistrust of politicians, claiming that they create policy for special interests or for themselves, while ordinary Canadians are ignored.

The *institutions* dimension is dominated by populist policy solutions for democratic reform: calls to reform Senate and decentralize government powers, the power of constituents to recall MPs, and allowing free votes in parliament (ibid., p. 23). However, there are also neoliberal policy solution to shrink government: “a Reform Government will immediately implement a complete overhaul of government operations, department by department, program by program, position by position,” (ibid., pp. 7-8). They even include a list of departments that will be “very significantly reduced in scope”, including Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the aid agency CIDA, and the Department of Transport, while also promising “merging, refocusing or reducing spending” in remaining departments and agencies (ibid., p. 7).

Both populist and social conservative policy ideas can be found on the *moral* dimension. In relation to federal spousal benefit programs, the party “will maintain the current definition of a man and a woman as recognized by the state, and define a family as individuals related by blood, marriage or adoption,” (ibid., p. 13). This policy solution does not go as far as defining marriage for all accounts and purposes, but still takes a strong social conservative stand on what it thinks should be the governments point of view in this debate. They also provide a populist problem definition and policy solution on moral issues, stating that: “On key issues of broad social importance – such as capital punishment, abortion or changes to the Constitution,” citizens must be able to voice their opinion through binding referendums, or by initiating these referendums by themselves through citizen’s initiatives (ibid., p. 23).

2000 Canadian Alliance

This is an interesting platform to analyze, as it is the first and last platform of the Canadian Alliance, Reform’s successor. The platform is called “A Time for Change: An Agenda of Respect for All Canadians”. The party was created with the goal of attracting voters beyond the western base of the party – can we identify this change with here?

On the *economic* dimension, I recognized no great change in policy following the rebranding of the party. There is a familiar neoliberal analysis of taxes and their role in the economy: “high taxes are an incredible hardship for ordinary Canadians,” (Canadian Alliance, 2000, p. 9) as they make Canadians struggle to make ends meet, and “has a negative effect on job creation,” (ibid., p. 11). The party also promises to end government subsidies to businesses, as “it’s simply not the place of government to pick and choose which businesses will have an advantage over others,” (ibid., p. 6). The problem is, claims the party, “when government gets directly involved by handing out subsidies or special favours, political interests rather than economic common sense usually prevails,” (ibid.). For the same reasons, they are also against regional development programs (ibid., p. 7). Another neoliberal problem definition concerns privatization; “Too many Crown corporations are still competing directly with private businesses in Canada, while government continues to own large stakes in private companies,” (ibid.). The party suggests selling stakes in Petro-Canada, and privatizing Via Rail. It acknowledges that in 2000, Canada no longer has a deficit, but criticizes that this was done through raising taxes, not cutting expenses (ibid., p. 4). Consequently, the party introduces a neoliberal policy solution called the “Debt Freedom Plan” that is “politician-proof”, meaning that the party would tie not only itself, but any future government, to the mast: “No matter which party is elected in the future, no matter who the Finance Minister is, the government will be legally obligated to pay down the debt according to this plan,” (ibid., p. 12).

The most interesting development here is on the on the *welfare* dimension. While the two earlier platforms focused to a much larger degree on populist and neoliberal policy ideas on this dimension, the party’s focus is now more likely to be considered a tory approach. The party acknowledges that although government spending should be slashed, “there are vital areas where the government must continue to spend. We need to support programs such as health care, education, and benefits for children and seniors,” (ibid., p. 5). Spending here will be maintained or even increased, through proposed long-term funding agreements with provinces (ibid.). These are definitely tory policy solutions to welfare challenges. The party maintains its populist problem definition when it comes to the equality principle, suggesting to abolish affirmative action programs, meaning “preferential hiring based on gender, race and ethnicity

quotas,” that “run counter to the values of fairness and equality cherished by Canadians,” (ibid., p. 22).

The Alliance continues a populist focus on the *institutions* dimension with a populist problem definition of a democratic deficit where “grassroots citizens and community groups feel that their opinions are not heard,” (ibid., p. 20). They offer up the usual range of populist policy solutions: free votes for MPs, citizen-initiated referendums, recall of “MPs who fail to serve and represent the people of their riding”, elect(ed) senators, Parliamentary review of government appointments, fixed election dates,” (ibid.). However, neoliberal problem definitions of wasteful spending are also included, listing agencies and departments that will be targeted for cuts, including aid agency CIDA, the Heritage Department, Regional Development, Public Works, Northern Affairs Departments, and subsidies to businesses (ibid., p. 4).

As expected, the Canadian Alliance takes an even clearer stand on moral issues than its predecessor. The party wants to “Give families the respect and recognition they deserve,” expressing a social conservative public philosophy (ibid., p. 17) that “Family is the most basic building block of society,” (ibid., p. 20). The party offers the social conservative problem definition that families need to be protected and preserved, and takes an even clearer stand on marriage. They commit to the policy solution to “protect the institution of marriage as the exclusive union between one man and one woman,” (ibid.). The findings from the analysis of Reform and Alliance platforms are summed up in the table below.

4.2.4 Summary table of Reform/Alliance platforms

		Ideological Currents in Reform/Alliance 1993-2000			
		<i>Tory</i>	<i>Neoliberal</i>	<i>Conservative populist</i>	<i>Social conservative</i>
Dimension	<i>Economic</i>	Opposition to tory economic policies like government subsidies.	Economic policy is consistently neoliberal, and even more so than its PC competitor.		
	<i>Welfare</i>	In 2000 there are more tory policies than early Reform platforms had.	The commitment to fiscal responsibility and cuts is stable throughout the period.	Present throughout, but decidedly stronger presence in the earlier stages of Reform.	
	<i>Institutions</i>	Not a relevant current on this dimension.	The commitment to fiscal responsibility and cuts is stable throughout the period.	Democratic reform is trademark Reform/Alliance, and is a consistent presence throughout.	
	<i>Moral</i>	Not a relevant current on this dimension.	Not a relevant current on this dimension.	Populist takes on moral issues are more prominent in the earlier period.	Are present since the 1993, but are increasingly important, especially in 2000.

Table 5: Summary table of Reform/Alliance

4.2.5 Conservative Party of Canada platforms

After the merger took place in 2003, the Conservative Party of Canada's first election platform was presented in 2004. As outlined in Chapter 1, we expect Reform/Alliance ideas will dominate over the PC ideas. Having analyzed these two parties above gives us a good starting point for evaluating which of the ideological currents have been carried into the new party, and which have been left more or less behind.

2004 Conservative Party of Canada

The 2004 platform was called "Demanding Better". The platform includes the founding principles of the new party, providing us with an opportunity to closely examine statements the two parties explicitly agreed upon, and which are mostly on a public philosophy level. I will analyze these founding principles first, and then the rest of the 2004 platform.

Founding principles

All quotes are from the 2004 CPC platform's one page appendix containing the founding principles of the party. On the *economy*, the following statement represents a neoliberal public philosophy: "the purpose of Canada as a nation state and its government (...) is to create a climate wherein individual initiative is rewarded, excellence is pursued, security and privacy of the individual is provided and prosperity is guaranteed by a free competitive market economy." The new party supports "A balance between fiscal accountability, progressive social policy and individual rights and responsibilities," indicating both a neoliberal commitment on the economic dimension, and tory commitments on the *welfare* dimension. There is also a tory commitment to universal health care: "all Canadians should have reasonable access to quality health care regardless of their ability to pay." On the *institutions* dimension, statements such as: "Honoring a concept of Canada as the greater sum of strong parts," and "A belief in our constitutional monarchy, the institutions of Parliament and the democratic process" are nods to tory public philosophy of society as something more than a sum of its parts, and a support of institutions and their role in society. Yet there is also a populist problem definition as the platform addresses the need for "strong provincial and territorial governments," and a government that is "attentive to the people it represents." Finally, there is no mention of any policy concerning *moral* issues, which is interesting considering the prominence of this in the Alliance platform.

The 2004 platform

For the platform itself the policy ideas on the *economic* dimension are mostly neoliberal, not surprisingly given the PC's neoliberal focus in recent years as well as Reform/Alliance's profile. The only tory economic idea I have identified focuses on government subsidies to a struggling agricultural sector (Conservative Party of Canada, 2004, p. 23). Aside from this, the economic ideas were recognizably neoliberal in their focus on cutting taxes and reducing the deficit through cuts to "wasteful corporate subsidies" and other federal spending (ibid., p. 16). On debt repayment, however, the party suggests "a legislated debt repayment plan that sets a target debt-to-GDP ratio" (ibid., p. 21), a considerably more moderate approach than those suggested by the Reform party earlier.

Policy ideas on the *welfare* dimension are overwhelmingly tory. The party promises to ensure “access to health services for all Canadians, regardless of their ability to pay,” (ibid., p. 25). This is paired with concrete promises to keep funding for health care stable and to work with different levels of government to see this through (ibid., p. 13). There is also a commitment to providing higher education for all, and to assist people on low and fixed incomes (ibid., pp. 25-26). Already in the Alliance platform we saw a lot of populist policy ideas shed in favor of tory ones, and this platform consolidates that development in the new CPC.

On the *institutions* dimension, neoliberal problem definitions and solutions are found in calls for regular audits of program spending to “reduce waste and fraud,” (ibid., p. 9). There is also a very distinct populist profile on this dimension, a clear legacy from the Reform/Alliance side. There were very few populist ideas on this dimension in the PC party’s program in 1997 and in 2000, but populism was an important part of the Reform/Alliance programs from the same time period. These populist policy problem definitions call for independent review mechanisms in Parliament and of government, as they claim the government cannot be trusted to operate in the interest of the people (ibid., pp. 8-9). Another example is fixed election dates for federal elections: “Our greatest democratic deficit is that one person dictates when Canadians have their say at the ballot box,” (ibid., 2004, p. 12). There is the populist policy solution of elected senators rather than having them appointed by the Prime Minister is present in the platform, but interestingly no mentions of Reform policy solutions like binding referendums and citizen’s initiatives (ibid., p. 13).

On the *moral* dimension, it seems that both Reform/Alliance and PC have had to make compromises. On a social conservative public philosophy level the platform asks how government can support “the family as a social institution”, (ibid., p. 30), while the policy solution is populist in suggesting that “Parliament, not unelected judges, should have the final say on contentious issues like the definition of marriage,” and that the platform promises to “hold a free vote in Parliament on the definition of marriage,” (ibid., p. 14). Clear expressions of social conservatism as seen in the Alliance platform are not present in this one.

2006 Conservative Party of Canada

The 2006 platform is called “Stand Up for Canada”, and on the *economic* dimension I find the usual neoliberal problem definitions and policy solutions of tax cuts that “create jobs and grow the economy,” (Conservative Party of Canada, 2006, p. 16). There is, however, a tory commitment to maintaining interventions in the economy, like subsidies to the traditional primary industries (ibid., p. 18). The platforms also supports the continuation of “regional development agencies, like ACOA, WED, FEDNOR and CED-Q, and maintain their current funding levels,” a tory policy solution (ibid.).

On the *welfare* dimension, the platform presents a tory public philosophy for health care: “We are committed to a universal, publicly funded health care system,” (ibid., p. 30), but state that the party is open to private health care delivery as long as funding remains public. The platform also vows to maintain benefits to students, the elderly, and the unemployed. On the welfare dimension, the overall impression is tory.

On the *institutions* dimension there are neoliberal problem definitions of too high federal spending: “Far too much taxpayers’ money is absorbed by the Ottawa bureaucracy or spent on ineffective or inefficient programs,” (ibid., 17). The platform suggests a limit to “future growth of spending on federal grant and contribution programs and by federal departments and agencies (other than National Defence and Indian Affairs) to the rate of inflation plus population growth,” (ibid.). There are also quite a few populist problem definitions of a political system that cannot be trusted. There is a populist policy solution that suggests reforming financing to political parties by limiting donations from individuals and banning donations from corporations, unions and organizations altogether (ibid., p. 8.). There are also a range of suggestions to ensure accountability and openness in government, for example by reining in lobbying and reviewing appointment procedures (ibid., pp. 8-13). Finally there are also the usual suggestions to reform Senate and Parliament, but the phrasing is more careful than earlier, as they promise to: “Begin reform of the Senate by creating a national process for choosing elected senators from each province and territory,” (ibid., p. 44).

For the *moral* dimension, the populist commitment in the previous platform to hold free votes on the definition of marriage is maintained (ibid., p. 33), and so is the social

conservative public philosophy that “the family is the building block of society,” (ibid., p. 30). Abortion is mentioned this time, as opposed to in the 2004 platform, but only to make it clear that the party will not pursue this specific moral issue at all: “A Conservative Government will not initiate or support any legislation to regulate abortion,” (ibid., p. 33). The question is whether to read this as a neoliberal commitment to keeping out state interference in the personal life, or as a tory idea of the state interfering with issues best left to institutions like churches. It is mentioned under health, not under family issues, in itself a statement which removes it from a social conservative viewpoint. Either way it is a considerable deviation from earlier Reform/Alliance policy.

2011 Conservative Party of Canada

The final CPC platform up for analysis is “Here for Canada: Stephen Harper’s Low-Tax Plan for Jobs and Economic Growth”. The title itself is a pointer to the platform’s focus, informing us that the *economic* dimension will be of particular importance: the entire platform is a “low-tax plan”. Tax cuts and tax credits are neoliberal policy solutions proposed for a range of policy areas. The platform also emphasizes its record in government, such as having “reduced the tax burden on the businesses that create jobs for Canadians,” (Conservative Party of Canada, 2011, p. 7). Other neoliberal policy solutions in the platform are promises to keep negotiating free trade agreements with the EU and other individual countries, and deregulating rules applying to businesses – for example proposing that government has to eliminate a rule each time it would like to propose new regulations (ibid., p. 13). On the level of public philosophy, neoliberal ideas are represented in statements that link economic freedom with individual freedom: “Harper’s government believes in increasing the freedom of Canadians to spend their own money on their priorities,” and is “putting money back in the pockets of taxpayers,” (ibid., p. 25).

However, as a response to the global economic crisis, the party also puts itself forth as an active government in fighting unemployment and securing jobs. An example of this kind of economic involvement is programs that supports employees whose employers are struggling financially or go bankrupt, sending a signal that the market may not work completely uninhibited on the CPCs watch (ibid., pp. 7, 30). This I interpret as a tory

solution on the *welfare* dimension. In fact, I was unable to find any section that could be classified as a neoliberal or populist philosophy, definition or solution on the welfare dimension. Tory ideas of an active government intervening on behalf of the people's social well being were predominant in the platform. Other examples were the party's commitment to "a universal public health care system," (Conservative Party of Canada, 2011, p. 30).

On the *institutions* dimension, the populist problem definition of a democratic deficit is played up, but with the twist that the party now has to defend itself as the establishment:

"Before Stephen Harper became Prime Minister, Canadians had lost faith in the integrity of their government. Waste, mismanagement, and corruption were rampant on the inside. And regular Canadians – people who work hard, pay their taxes, and play by the rules – were left on the outside," (Conservative Party of Canada, 2011, p. 62).

On known issues like Senate reform, the platform blames the opposition for blocking the government's attempts to act, and this platform continues to suggest populist policy solutions like term limits for senators and promises to appoint only senators "who are selected through democratic processes," (ibid., p. 63). There are also neoliberal problem definitions about irresponsible state spending, and policy solutions like promises to review government spending (ibid., p. 23) and "to cut low-priority or ineffective programs," (ibid., p. 62).

I did not identify any statements in the platform as belonging to the *moral* dimension. The social conservative public philosophy idea of the family as an important unit in society is mentioned, but rather as the benefactor of tax cuts and as being able to make choices for themselves economically, instead of than in a moral issues setting (ibid., p. 25). Once again, it is hard to determine whether this is a neoliberal or a tory expression of policy. Nevertheless, the ideational analysis of the CPC party platforms are summarized below, followed by a summary of the main findings of the ideational analysis in its entirety.

4.2.6 Summary table of Conservative Party of Canada platforms

		Ideological Currents in the CPC 2004-11			
		<i>Tory</i>	<i>Neoliberal</i>	<i>Conservative Populist</i>	<i>Social conservative</i>
Dimension	<i>Economic</i>	Very limited influence, but found in subsidies to primary industries and regional development	A strong current in the party throughout the period.		
	<i>Welfare</i>	Tory ideas of public welfare dominate this dimension.	Although cuts to government spending are important to the party, cuts to welfare are never once called for, so this is not an important current on this dimension.	Populist conceptions of welfare policy have as good as disappeared from the CPC's ideology, so this is not an important current on this dimension.	
	<i>Institutions</i>	This is not a strong current on this dimension.	Important on this dimension, as cuts to federal spending are important to reduce deficits for the party	Populism on this dimension is still an important part of the party's ideology, but toned down from the Reform days, and also slightly after the party becomes a governing party	
	<i>Moral</i>	By the time the party is in government, these issues have disappeared entirely, indicating either a tory or neoliberal reluctance to regulate such issues.	By the time the party is in government, these issues have disappeared entirely, indicating either a tory or neoliberal reluctance to regulate such issues.	In the earlier platforms this is the most important current on this dimension, with promises to determine moral issues by free votes. Decreases in importance.	The family as a building block in society remains in the policy, but apart from this there is no social conservative presence in the party.

Table 6: Summary table of the CPC

4.3 Summing up

The ideational analysis produces some pretty clear patterns when it comes to variation between parties and over time in terms of which ideologies are represented in their programs. The PC was a tory party that became more and more neoliberal in its policies on both the economic and institutions dimension, but remained tory in its approach to welfare politics. Moral issues were never an important part of the PC party's platform. Reform/Alliance was a populist party with neoliberal inclinations, and eventually also became a social conservative party. What set Reform apart from the PC party is that it went further in its problem definitions and policy solutions within both the neoliberal

and populist currents. The two parties subscribed in large part to the same political logic, or public philosophies, but the Reform party proposed more radical solutions. When the two of these came together in the merger, the result is a CPC that is a mix of neoliberal economic policy, tory welfare policy, neoliberal and populist institutions policy, and some populist policy on moral issues, which eventually disappears.

When it comes to these currents' prominence over time and within parties, the tory influence, very strong and present in 1968 and 1974, disappears almost entirely from all the platforms. The notable exception is the tory commitment on the welfare dimension. In Reform/Alliance we see a moderation over time on the economic and welfare dimensions, but on the moral dimension the party becomes increasingly social conservative. The social conservative current is interesting. It is absent until the advent of Reform, increases in strength in the party throughout the period, and Alliance can definitely be coined a social conservative party. After the merger, however, the current that dominates is the populist current, and even it disappears towards the end of the period. The neoliberal current turned out to be the one current that was an important presence in all of the parties at all times, and on all policy dimensions.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

In this final chapter, I will discuss the results and findings of this thesis on a theoretical, conceptual and empirical level. My research has been guided by the questions of what ideological currents of conservatism are present in the Conservative Party of Canada, and how its ideological profile best could be conceptualized. I remind the reader that my focus has been to map out the ideological projects of the parties, and not electoral competition or success.

5.1 On the theoretical level

The main theoretical question examined in this thesis was whether brokerage still is a relevant model for analyzing Canadian politics, or if the ideological model could be a valuable approach. Are the ideas that appear in the election platforms organized around an internal logic and coherence, conceptualized as public philosophies and problem definitions? Or are they simply collections of all kinds of ideas intended to win votes? As we saw in Chapter 2, some scholars have concluded that Canadian politics has a clearer ideological commitment now than earlier. Farney and Rayside call it “a form of strategic pragmatism mixed with unequivocal ideological commitment,” (Farney & Rayside, 2013a, p. 349). In this study I have found relatively clear patterns of ideas, across parties and over time. Overarching public philosophy ideas organize views on issues like the economy and the welfare state. Parties draw upon various currents in their election platforms, but neither the public philosophies, problem definitions nor policy solutions seem in any way random. The ideas are recognizable as tory, neoliberal, populist or social conservative. One caveat is of course that I have not examined politicians’ actions. The “strategic pragmatism” that Farney and Rayside mention presumably catches some of this, meaning that parties and leaders navigate in a political context. Critics may assert that this thesis overlooks an important element by not including this in the analysis, and that brokerage can be alive and well outside of the realm of election platforms. However, to the extent that this holds sway, it is equally true that parties operate within constraints defined by their platforms, and this is no less true with regards to Canadian parties. However, unless a party plans to lose credibility altogether, never acting upon one’s stated policies would eventually catch

up in some form or another. Finally, I reiterate the point made in Chapter 2 that there is no absolute causal relationship between party ideology and the actions taken by party leaders.

Did I see less ideological consistency in the two platforms analyzed from the “brokerage era”, in 1968 and 1974? Not really. What I did discover was that earlier policies were consistently more tory than most recent policies examined. It is possible that these tory policies were closer to the Liberal party’s politics, than those of the later parties who embraced populism, neoliberalism, and to a degree social conservatism. However, an elaboration on the similarities of the Liberal party’s ideological mix and that of the Progressive Conservatives-is beyond the scope of this thesis.

5.2 On the conceptual level

The second part of my research question concerns how the CPC’s current ideological profile best could be conceptualized. Analyzing party development on the basis of the different ideal-typical forms of conservatism prepares the ground for an assessment of the conceptual framework itself. The challenge in creating and using an analytical tool is that by definition it cannot capture the whole and complete picture of conservatism in Canada. Ideal types are a workable compromise between capturing too much meaning by being too specific, and not capturing enough by being too general. I also discovered the challenge in using ideal types to study development over time, and in retrospect the analytical table proved to be a better fit for the more recent political platforms from 1990 and onwards. The four policy dimensions were present in all platforms, but policy solutions especially were easier to identify in the newer platforms. This might be because the format was more recognized among the various parties, but it could also support the notion that the system did indeed operate according to brokerage logic in this earlier period, as discussed above. Even so, I would argue that the analytical tool proved useful to study ideological development over time and in various contexts.

Regarding the analytical table’s usefulness and how I structured it, I learned that a lot of space is taken up with describing the political or policy problems (level 2). Even more statements describe the concrete policy measures that the party suggests to remedy

these problems (level 3). There are rarely broader philosophical statements corresponding to level 1, but they do occur. These experiences support the argument that idea levels are indeed a useful aspect to include in the analytical tool. The policy dimensions were broad enough to catch a range of policies, but specified so that I wouldn't have to deal with the entire range of existing conservative politics. Some categories proved to be more useful than others. The two neoliberal and tory categories on the moral dimension made sense at a theoretical and conceptual level, as their reasoning for non-interference in moral matters is indeed quite different. In the actual analysis of the platforms, this difference was not useful in distinguishing between the two currents, as a non-mention of an issue is quite hard to place. Other insights regarding the operationalizations were that elements prominent in the literature were not necessarily found in the election platforms. An example is upholding the connection with Britain, reportedly an important tory ideal. The reason could be that this was an even older heritage in the tory tradition than the selection of data was able to capture here. Another was the lack of religious concerns expressed in the texts.-Although some social conservative views probably are a result of religiously held beliefs, religion was not a very helpful indicator in locating them in the programs. It might also have been fruitful to include populism on the economic dimension. As argued earlier, populism simply adheres to neoliberal policies and therefore did not merit its own category. However, after having performed the analysis it became clear that the PC party's economic policies were sometimes a far cry from the economic policies of Reform, even though they could both be categorized as neoliberal in the analytical table.

Another methodological insight is that knowing all relevant circumstances of each platform, for instance the specifics of policy, the names of government programs, or knowledge of economic policy and various economic theories and welfare arrangements, is challenging. When a party states that it supports voluntary membership in the Canadian Wheat Board, or that it will honor the principles of the Canada Health Act, research is required into what these actually are, before one can even begin to classify them as one type of ideology. Another example is the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the 1997 elections in Canada, as the province of Quebec just two years earlier voted no in a referendum concerning whether to seek independence from Canada. A lot of the policies in the party platforms were geared

towards reassuring people that their politics would keep Quebec within the federal state. For further research with similar analytical tools, I suggest a shorter time period, fewer documents, and more background information in terms of circumstantial evidence. The researcher should invest time in reading biographies, parliamentary debates or newspaper articles from the period, as it would provide and even better angle when classifying a policy as belonging to one ideology or another. I will still argue that my findings have contributed both to the empirical knowledge about Canadian conservatism, as well as to the development of analytical tools to conduct similar investigations.

5.3 On the empirical level

The empirical analysis showed that there has been a shift in Canadian conservative ideology, both in general and within the three parties. Farney and Rayside claim that “the fading of tory elements marks both the emergence of today’s style of conservatism and the reduction of the distinctiveness of the Canadian form, particularly with regards to its prominent American comparator,” (Farney & Rayside, 2013a, p. 341). My empirical analysis has shown that toryism indeed has lost its position within Canadian conservatism, but on one policy dimension it is still the most important ideological influence. On welfare policy, all platforms except the earliest Reform documents were staunch supporters of universal, publicly funded health care and other welfare state benefits. This aspect of conservatism still sets the Canadian brand apart from the American version.

Another finding is the massive influence neoliberalism has had on the economic, welfare and institutions dimension in all three parties. This is to the detriment of tory policy especially on the economic dimension. Neoliberal public philosophies, problem definitions and policy solutions become a way of thinking about politics and justifying policy for all the conservative parties on all the dimensions, even when other ideological currents determine policy. For example, even when a party professes a tory commitment to the welfare state, it finds it important to mention that it requires welfare bureaucracy to be efficient and fiscally responsible.

The moral dimension was one of the most interesting policy dimensions in terms of how many different ideological approaches were used to suggest policy on these issues. Moral issues such as abortion, gay marriage and capital punishment only start to gain traction in conservative politics with the Reform party's entrance. Their approach to the issues is populist at first, but become increasingly more social conservative. What is interesting is that moral issues are increasingly disappearing from the new CPC platforms altogether, and even when they are addressed in the earlier platforms of the party the approach is populist rather than social conservative. This is another trait that sets Canadian conservatism apart from American conservatism.

As I had to narrow down the scope of my empirical analysis, many important and intriguing policy areas had to be left out of the analysis. Canadian politics are rife with exciting debates about multiculturalism, bilingualism, federalism, nationalism, the environment, defense and security, or about law and order. All of these areas merit further study in a conservative context. I hope my analytical table can serve as a model to study conservative ideology in Canada further by including or focusing on some of these other policy dimensions.

5.4 Conclusion

If the Conservative Party of Canada's ideology has shifted to the right, it is in the form of an economic neoliberal right. I have found that the ideological profile of the Conservative Party of Canada politics is neoliberal when it comes to the economy, and tory when it comes to welfare policies. This analysis shows that neoliberal problem definitions concerning balanced budgets, low taxes and free markets serve as a platform for all other policy to be based on in the party, with the exception of a tory commitment to public health care and other welfare state benefits. The party has carefully removed itself from social conservatism and populist approaches to moral issues like abortion and gay marriage. However, populist approaches to democratic reform still exist, although toned down significantly since the Reform days of conservative politics. When considering the transformation to neoliberal policies that the PC party had already made in the 1990s, the CPC ideological profile was not as dominated by Reform policy after the merger as many have suggested. I have come to these conclusions by

conceptualizing both policy and ideology in ideal types and incorporating both in a useful analytical table. When equipped with a well-developed and sufficiently specified analytical tool, ideational analysis can yield precise, insightful and interesting observations about ideologies in politics.

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