

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA
AND THE POLITICS OF CITIZENSHIP, IMMIGRATION
AND MULTICULTURALISM
(2006-2015)

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Abstract

This dissertation assesses the modern Conservative Party of Canada and government's (2006-2015) discourses, political approach and policy record in the fields of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. This is done in the context of the party's evolution from its Reform Party and Canadian Alliance predecessors on the terrain of a Canadian settler colonial state with significant racialized and ethnicized (im)migrant and refugee populations from whom some electoral support is required to achieve and exercise power.

The main argument of this dissertation is that the Canadian Alliance Party's absorption of the former Progressive Conservative Party of Canada saw the birth of a new Conservative Party that at its core remained an exclusionary political force whose authoritarian populist approach to politics and policy reinforced and further intensified existing social hierarchies between settler colonial and (im)migrant Canadians, particularly with their treatment of Muslims, refugees, migrant workers and prospective citizens. Their policies and policy-making approach also greatly accelerated the further decline of permanent in favour of temporary or "two-step" immigration, family class immigration, and the public and parliament's role in making immigration policy.

To achieve and maintain power, however, the Conservative Party project had to be connected to an attempted hegemonic political project that could obtain enough support to win elections and govern. This dissertation develops and employs the descriptor and concept of *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism* respectively to explain and explore the disciplinary yet creative neoconservative political project the Conservatives undertook in these fields and to win office.

Support for the arguments advanced comes from an anti-racist critical political economy analysis of Conservative and predecessor party platforms, speeches and policies and the consideration of a wide variety of primary and secondary sources. The analysis incorporates prior research on political parties and considers and employs critical literatures on citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in Canada. These are considered and synthesized into an approach to help further our understanding of neoconservative ideologies and discourses in these fields. Several cases are explored to contrast and illustrate the rhetoric and governing realities of the Conservatives' authoritarian populist approach and their effects on (im)migrants, refugees and many "ethnic" Canadians.

Dedication

While at times experienced as solitary endeavor, no piece of writing is completed without forms of solidarity and support. This dissertation is dedicated to my first collectivity -- my family -- particularly my deceased parents Nora and Wally Carlaw whose support, struggles and sacrifices in many ways led to me eventually having the chance to do a PhD. Thank you to my siblings Libby and Tom and to many extended family members and family friends who are too many to name. I will particularly thank my Uncle Davey and Aunty Anne Marston and my surviving Aunts Shirley Marston and Orvilla Amstrong for your love and support from near and far through many family ups and downs. Thank you to Sallie Smyth and Linda and Ian Rankine for your support and birthday outings every year and to Irene Watt, my mother's "oldest, dearest friend." I know that my parents would be grateful to all of you for the support you have shown our family, for keeping in touch and for choosing to treat us as family in your own ways.

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While there are many inspiring scholars I have not met, thank you Stuart Hall (1932-2014) and in particular critical scholars of settler colonialism, citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in Canada. Many racialized scholars who have experienced what Himani Bannerji refers to as the “dark side of the nation” (2000, 104) have developed theoretical and conceptual tools, examples and analyses that helped me complete this project and better grasp this country, its social relations and these policy fields. Any shortcomings in this dissertation are of course my own.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to Chapter 1

The good news is that the Conservative Party of Canada is not the GOP, and there's no reason it ever has to become it. The modern Republican Party was born out of the racial politics of the 1960s, which Donald Trump has now brought to the surface like never before. That isn't Canada's modern conservative history.

It wasn't part of the DNA of Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative Party – he substantially increased immigration, aiming to have immigrant and visible minority voters see the PCs as their party. The Conservative Party continued that tradition, led by the outreach efforts of Jason Kenney. In elections prior to 2015, the party made significant inroads with visible minority voters, offering them a vision of a country of economic and educational opportunity, where success was open to anyone, regardless of religion or race – a vision of what Canada should be and, far more than the United States, actually is.

But something snapped in the fall of 2015. The Conservatives started to lose and they started to get desperate. They reached for an enemy to rally their voters, and settled on Muslims. The polls may have suggested that crying wolf over niqabs and calling for a hotline to report “barbaric cultural practices” would be a winner with a large number of Canadian voters, and that was what was so disturbing about the strategy. It didn't just damage the Conservative brand, it hurt Canada. The hurt would have been worse if the Conservatives hadn't lost.

The Conservatives have to once again become the party that successfully “targets” immigrant and visible minority voters – not to stigmatize them, but to win their votes.

- Globe and Mail Editorial, May 27, 2016

The Conservative decade (2006-2015) in power marked a period of significant change and tumultuous politics in Canada. Contrary to the assertions of the editorialists of the *Globe and Mail*, cited above, it marked the first time an avowedly neoconservative party held political office federally in Canada. It also marked the culmination of the rise of the adjective purged Conservative Party of Canada from its Reform and Canadian Alliance predecessors, a process that sidelined remnants of the Progressive Conservative despite the party's selective borrowing from that party's legacy to moderate their image. Under the Conservatives the discourses and policy realms of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism witnessed an ambitious reshaping

of government policy and how those policies could be made, most prominently but not exclusively under the watch of former cabinet Minister Jason Kenney.

Upon their 2011 majority victory, then Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Kenney declared the Conservatives to be the “party of new Canadians” (Kenney 2011) and former Conservative and Reform Party campaign manager and strategist Tom Flanagan declared the party had found a new “ethnic pillar” of electoral support (Flanagan 2011a) . While the extent of these claims has been challenged, despite the party’s controversial record some have argued they offer a positive model to other conservatives world-wide (Ibbitson 2012b; 2012a; Saunders 2012). Indeed, in some ways they accommodated themselves to Canada’s modern demographics. They maintained immigration levels in terms of permanent residency and reached out to new Canadians and “ethnic voters” in a variety of ways as they sought to achieve Stephen Harper’s goal of becoming Canada’s “natural governing party.” (Macdonald and Harper 2011, 6).

However considerable levels of concern were expressed by civil society organizations, academics, and opposition politicians over what were perceived to be radical changes in the policies, practices and rhetoric concerning Canada’s immigration system. And somewhat surprisingly to some, citizenship, immigration and refugee policies became significant campaign issues in the 2015 election campaign which saw the Conservatives defeated by the Liberal Party. Trailing in the polls, the Conservatives’ campaign approach in 2015 featured the government promising a “barbaric cultural practices” tip line in a manner that promoted Islamophobia, and the touting of policies enacted to strip Canadian citizenship from some dual citizens convicted of very serious crimes, including terrorism. The Conservatives also promised legislation to prohibit (Muslim women in practical terms from) wearing a face covering while swearing the citizenship oath- irrespective of their religious beliefs and court decisions against their stance.

The Conservatives also offered a slow, tone-deaf response in the wake of published images of Syrian child Alan Kurdi's body washing up on Turkish shores after his family attempted to reach Greece, as the Canadian public learned he had a Canadian Aunt. That response came during a moment of public empathy that increased the sense of urgency in the Canadian public concerning the Syrian refugee crisis and focused the Canadian public's attention on the Conservatives' approach to citizenship and immigration. Rather than acting upon that sense of urgency, the Conservatives raised the spectre of security threats amidst public calls for action. In a likely form of 'dog whistle politics' former Prime Minister Stephen Harper also referenced "old stock Canadians" in a leadership debate on September 17, 2015 while defending government policy and misleading the public on health cuts for refugee claimants by asserting they only affected "bogus refugee claimants" (Gollom 2015). These were cuts which one judge had described as "cruel and unusual treatment" and debunked the government's "bogus refugee" discourse while criticizing such language in ruling them unconstitutional (Fine 2014). Such were the proposed policies of a government the Globe asserted to have "snapped" only in the fall of 2015.

In the wake of their October 19, 2015 electoral defeat, with the exception of defeated former Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander- who received his electoral loss with a sense of defiance and self-righteousness (Le Couteur and Young 2015)- prominent MPs and former Conservative cabinet members such as Jason Kenney (Chase 2015b) and (in her case tearfully) later party leadership candidate Kellie Leitch (Zimonjic 2016) lamented the tone and tenor of their campaign messaging. Questions surrounding citizenship, immigration, Canadian identity and values in and since the 2017 Conservative leadership as well as their vociferous opposition to the Global Compact on Refugees and irregular border crossings from the United States also invite further reflection on their time in office.

Less remarked upon by these politicians have been their actual policies while in office, though they have criticized the reversal of several policies they had implemented that had made citizenship “harder to get and easier to lose” under the Liberals’ Bill C-6 and criticized the Liberals for their handling of irregular border crossings from the United States since 2017 (CBC Radio 2018) sparked by Donald Trump’s xenophobic policies and rhetoric, which they fail to mention as they assert the US is a safe country of asylum and rail against “illegal” rather than irregular migrants and refugee claimants (CBC Radio 2018).

These dynamics pose significant questions. Did the party simply “snap[pped] in the fall of 2015” out of desperation and as an aberration, as asserted by the *Globe and Mail*, who sought to place the Conservatives within a longer and less antagonistic tradition of Canadian Progressive Conservatism? Or were and are there more continuities than seems commonly agreed upon? That the Conservatives’ time in government was a time of significant change is not contested. There are few areas of immigration and refugee policy that were left untouched under an “unprecedented pace and scope of change” in those policy fields (Alboim and Cohl 2012, iv). As will be seen, however, the assessments of those changes vary significantly.

This dissertation engages in a critical examination of the Harper government and the Conservative Party of Canada’s political approach to outreach to immigrant and “ethnic” voters and their citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism discourses and policies from 2006 until 2015. I place them within the context of the Conservatives’ long term neoconservative political project and attempt to achieve electoral hegemony while maintaining their core neoconservative orientations. This dissertation is an attempt to both grasp the nature of Canada’s modern Conservative Party and its policy directions in important fields- fields which determine who and how people become Canadian citizens- or do not; who may seek refugee and under what

conditions; and fields that help to define Canadian identity and policies that govern the terrain of important social relations within the settler colonial state.

After considering literature analyzing the Conservative party and Canada in the fields under consideration concerning their time in office in chapter two, I combine insights from the pioneering work of Stuart Hall in diagnosing and conceptualizing the authoritarian populist politics and Thatcherism in the United Kingdom with critical literatures on citizenship, immigration, multiculturalism and political parties in Canada to develop the concepts of *Kenneyism* and its component *neoconservative multiculturalism* to seek to help answer the question of how one reconciles and assesses the party's simultaneous outreach efforts to court many new, ethnicized and racialized Canadians on the one hand, while also implementing highly exclusionary policies in many realms of citizenship and immigration on the other. This dissertation addresses both adaptations of the party to a popular consensus in favour of multiculturalism, alongside the regressive form of citizenship, nationalism and social relations the Conservatives promoted in these fields.

Also addressing questions of democracy and state theory, *Kenneyism*, it will be seen, is not solely about the politics of a single Minister in a single government, but rather the at times seemingly contradictory, neoconservative authoritarian populist trends in the form and substance of politics that can be fairly included under the label to describe the approach of Canada's Conservative party immediately preceding and during its time in office. It is a conceptual label that captures the government's approach to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism within the context of its more generally authoritarian approach to governing that has been observed by other authors (Harris 2014; Gutstein 2014; Jeffrey 2015) and helps to further grasp the neoconservative variant of governance in settler colonial Canada.

Popular Interpretations of the Conservative Party of Canada's Approach to Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism

Praise from the "respectable" and further right

Though usually undertaken separately, many authors have written about the Conservatives' record in citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism, as well as their political project. In Canada's conservative press it has been argued that "they have become a mainstream party that has made positive reforms and offer a positive model to other conservatives world-wide, particularly in the Anglo-American context (Ibbitson 2012b; 2012a). Before the recent resurgence of right-wing anti-immigrant populism in Western Europe and the United States, politicians such as Britain's David Cameron sought the Conservatives' advice on how to win the hearts- or at least the votes- of immigrants (Saunders 2012). Conservative periodicals have also provided many flattering profiles and defences of former Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney (Castonguay 2013; Wells 2010; O'Neil 2011; Selley 2013).

Prior to the rise of Donald Trump, following Mitt Romney's 2012 defeat in the United States' Presidential Election it was asserted by some that Republicans should follow the example of their Canadian Conservative counterparts (Ibbitson 2012a). And while many on the centre and right of the political spectrum criticized the party's democratic credentials given their record in terms of measures such as prorogations of parliament and use of omnibus bills, sympathetic observers such as the *Globe and Mail's* John Ibbitson and co-author Darrell Bricker dismissed such concerns and the progressive critics making them (Bricker and Ibbitson 2013, 209). Despite listing a litany of abuses of parliamentary democracy, the *Globe and Mail* endorsed the Harper Conservatives in a rather incredible editorial (*The Globe and Mail* 2011) that also saw them issue

a rare dissenting view as well that listed and explored such practices (Hays 2011). The themes of democracy and social relations will be explored more thoroughly in chapter seven in particular.

For its part the Conservatives described Canada's immigration system as a long abused and mismanaged policy field in need of fundamental change to conform to Canada's "national interests," to accept the terms of discussion set by then Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney (2008-13) and some media and think-tank supporters (Ibbitson 2012a; Simpson 2013). Indicative of the at times xenophobic social forces that gave birth to the Conservatives, Canada's political right was particularly pleased with Minister Kenney's tenure. Controversial former Sun News and now "Rebel Media" personality Ezra Levant has described Kenney as "a great freedom fighter," his favourite member of parliament (Levant 2012) and participated in a process that saw Kenney receive a controversial honorary doctorate from Israel's Haifa University "in recognition of his steadfast position against anti-Semitism, racism, and intolerance"- a decision met with a large protest in light of his and the government's record concerning Israel and Palestine and human rights more generally (Canadian Press 2012) as well as petitions against it (Avaaz.org 2012). Charles Alder (then also of Sun Media), a self-declared purveyor of "Canadian Common Sense" referred to Kenney as "one of the finest cabinet ministers in our history" (Kenney and Adler 2012). Thus the Conservatives seemingly pleased at least the political right and centre-right in their approach to citizenship and immigration for the majority of their tenure- a political accomplishment not to be underestimated given the complete breakdown of the Progressive Conservative political coalition by the early 1990s and the baggage the Reform Party carried with it on these files. For without solidifying such a base that remained the core of its temporary "Minimum Winning Coalition" (Flanagan 2011a) the Conservatives' ability to form a government would be severely hampered.

Qualified Praise for Neoconservative Multiculturalism and Intensified Neoliberalism

In what could be reasonably characterized as faint praise, while frequently critical of the Conservative government for its disregard of evidence and harsh policies, centrist and liberal analysts took pains to offer praise where they could find positive reforms or comparative moderation by the Conservatives relative to their European or American brethren.

Now-Senator Ratna Omidvar, appointed in large part due to her refugee advocacy, credited the Conservatives for not being as negative about immigration and multiculturalism as their European counterparts, calling it “remarkable and laudable that the outlook of Harper’s Conservative Party remained liberal and pro-immigrant in a growing anti-immigrant environment” globally (Omidvar 2016, 182). Overall, citing policies such as the 2015 Immigrant Investor Venture Capital Pilot Program (189) and the increased speed with which parents and grandparents can visit their family members under the “super-visa” program (189), Omidvar suggests that “a review of the decade finds pockets of great innovation. There were positive, forward-thinking policies, but elsewhere there were poor and even cruel ones. In the Harper era, there are examples of good, bad and ugly decisions” (Omidvar 2016, 180), which she seems to place on equal footing.

Omidvar and others also applauded former Minister Jason Kenney for the energy and high profile he brought to the multiculturalism portfolio with some tongue-in-cheek praise. She called the “new importance” of the multiculturalism file a “Harper-Kenney innovation” where “to come close to his performance, a minister would need foreign policy fluency and be the ultimate retail politician, happy to don a turban, dance a tarantella and chow down on just about everything” (Omidvar 2016, 185). Indeed, explicating the dizzying, often contradictory politics of what I term *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism* is the key puzzle of this dissertation.

Other observers cited the immigration system's long-standing policy challenges that the Conservatives seemed to be attempting to address, including comparatively poor economic outcomes for recently arriving immigrants compared to their predecessors, long processing backlogs throughout the immigration system and a desire to increase immigrants' short term contributions to the Canadian economy (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 3). For his part, while his views also included significant reflections on "the bad," "the ugly" and "the barbaric" in his assessments of Kenney and Chris Alexander's periods as Citizenship and Immigration Minister, lawyer Steven Meurrens applauded an increased emphasis on economic establishment, standardized language testing, crackdowns on fraud, open bridging work permits, and reduced processing times for economic immigrants (Meurrens 2013; 2015). Though as will be seen in chapter seven, these came within the context of overall trends of an intensified neoliberalization of and increased barriers to citizenship with differential impacts on (im)migrants and refugees.

Others have highlighted and touted continued growth in provincial nominee programs that had begun under prior governments for helping to disburse immigrants across Canada, for their relatively strong economic integration of nominees, and for meeting provincial needs by helping immigrants arrive and stay in more regions of the country (Seidle 2013, 20). It should be kept in mind, however, as Dobrowolsky notes in an analysis of the Provincial Nominee Program in Nova Scotia spanning both Liberal and Conservative periods in office, that such decentralization in policy is neither inherently good or bad for immigrants, but that the success or failures of such trends and policies depends on local conditions and political factors. Neoliberal logics and emphases on marketization and privatization, combined with negative local conditions informing them can lead to troubling dynamics such as a disregard for immigrants' needs and policy failure in the case of that province and its nominee program (Dobrowolsky 2011, 127–31).

Overall Alboim and Cohl argue that “Some of the changes are potentially positive, such as the increased focus on the Federal Skilled Worker Program, plans to introduce a program for skilled tradespersons, access to an appeal for some refugee claimants, increased protections for live-in caregivers, and transition to permanent resident status for eligible students and temporary workers. However, the success of these changes will depend on how they are implemented” (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 2). Coupled with authoritarian populist discourses and exclusionary policies concerning citizenship and immigration, it was the rapid implementation and de-implementation of many of these programs, the concentration of power in ministerial hands, and the harshness of their attitude and policies towards refugees that sparked major levels of concern and exacerbated unequal social relations. Many reforms which began positively or had such potential were undermined by subsequent or accompanying changes. While assessing every minute policy change is of course beyond the scope of this or any single work, this dissertation observes troubling dynamics within the overall neoliberal, neoconservative and anti-democratic discourses and policy directions that dominated the Conservatives’ citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism agenda.

Critics sound the alarm

The primary reaction from centre and centre-left of the political spectrum- Ibbitson’s purveyors of rants (Bricker and Ibbitson 2013)- has seen Canada’s immigration system described as a system under brutal and often irrational ideological attack by critics and opponents of the Conservative government (Yalnizyan 2011). In appraising and protesting the government’s policies critics asserted that the party engaged in manipulative practices (Embassy 2010), undertook reforms that have been particularly harmful to refugees in terms of both their immediate health (Keung 2012) and prospects for being recognized for their at-risk status in

Canada (Canadian Council for Refugees 2012; Canadian Civil Liberties Association 2012). Their treatment of refugees was probably their most controversial set of discourses and policies.

Procedurally, and in terms of democratic decision making, many argued that the government failed to work with those concerned about their policies, attacked service-providing civil society organizations over political differences that do not govern their work (Siddiqui 2012) and sought to unduly influence both the immigration and refugee board (Gurzu 2010) and the judiciary in matters related to refugee claims (Foot 2011). The criticism was also levied that many of their policies were not based on evidence (McGrath 2012; Alboim and Cohl 2012) and that they inappropriately worked to reshape Canada's policies and institutions in this realm in undemocratic ways, in a manner consistent with broader criticisms of undemocratic policy practices under the Harper Government (Healy and Trew 2015; Healy 2008; L. Martin 2010; Nadeau 2011; Gutstein 2014; Harris 2014). Further to the left, it was asserted by members of social movement organizations such as No One is Illegal - who nicknamed him "Minister of Censorship and Deportation," (No One is Illegal- Vancouver n.d.) - for example, that Canada's former Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Jason Kenney and his policies "scapegoat migrants and pander to racists" (No One Is Illegal Montreal 2009), while Kenney was also more moderately criticized for presenting a negative image of refugees to the Canadian public. It has also been asserted that "the expansion of TFWs [Temporary Foreign Workers] is a Harper government initiative that breaks with past policies" and represents a "sea change" in Canada's immigration model (D. Green 2011) from one based on permanent settlement to one that leads to a more precarious existence for migrants to Canada. These are clearly neither minor charges nor minor accusations, which will be explored in this dissertation.

These concerns reached such a level before the 2011 federal election that saw the Conservatives achieve a majority government with just under forty percent support that many

prominent members (and over forty in all) of Canada's legal and academic communities took the extraordinary step of writing to oppose the re-election of the Harper government for what they asserted as being the party's negative changes to the immigration system during their time in office (Yalnizyan 2011). Kenney and other Conservative ministers also frequently faced protests at events over cuts made in 2012 to the Interim Federal Health Plan that provided basic health care for refugee claimants and defeats in court over such changes. Most of these criticisms and concerns were heightened after the Conservatives achieved a majority government in May of 2011, given the fast pace of regulatory and legislative change. One 2012 report, already cited above, summarized the content and pace of changes made since 2008 as having some positive measures, but asserted that overall that "the future of Canada will be negatively affected by the recent emphasis on short-term labour market needs, the lack of evidence based policies, a retreat from traditional democratic processes, and a less welcoming environment for immigrants and refugees" (Alboim and Cohl 2012, iv) .

So, what is the balance and how does one account for the Conservatives' approach and record? With the rise of the Conservatives from the ashes of the Progressive Conservative and the electoral limitations of the Reform and Canadian Alliance Parties, have we witnessed the maturation and growth of a mainstream political party that moved towards some sort of Downsian middle to maximize their electoral support, as brokerage models of party behaviour (Clarke, Kornberg, and Scotto 2009, 22) and the editorialists of the *Globe and Mail* would seem to suggest? Or rather, as this dissertation argues, did the Conservatives take a genuinely new and more cynically creative and incremental approach to achieve a greater share of the "ethnic" and immigrant vote and achieve a majority government within a first-past-the-post electoral system that permits them to maintain and perhaps even deepen exclusionary inclinations that long troubled many Canadians?

Given the Conservatives' long term project of becoming Canada's natural governing party, their aggressive legislative approach and continued strength as a party these are significant questions for the process and substance of political membership in Canadian society and policy fields such as citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. Chapters three to five of this dissertation will attempt to offer an alternative and sober assessment of the substance of the Conservative Party's evolution as it sought to grow its support amongst "ethnic" and immigrant voters before considering the party's record, approach to government and impacts on Canadian democracy, identity and social relations in several policy fields in subsequent chapters.

Methodology

The method of analysis employed in this dissertation is primarily based in discourse analysis of Conservative and their Reform and Canadian Alliance predecessors' platforms, speeches and public statements. This approach is rooted in and paired with an anti-racist critical political economy analysis of the substantive impacts of the Conservative government's policies, their effect on social relations on Canada's settler colonial terrain and the creative ideological work of the Conservative government. In part inspired by Stuart Hall's work on authoritarian populism in the British context, this form of analysis is meant to "address[es], directly, the question of the forms of hegemonic politics" in the present moment, and "deliberately and self-consciously foregrounds the political-ideological dimension" (Hall 1985, 116). It is an analysis that seeks to grasp how the Conservatives achieved a sufficient share of votes to achieve a majority government while significantly impacting the terrain of both electoral politics and policy making in Canada, particularly in the fields of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. This study is undertaken in the belief that there is a significant need for a more holistic, critical political economy approach to the Conservative government's time in these portfolios that simultaneously

provides insight into both their politics and their policy-making approach, and unites these analyses with a necessary focus on their ideological components.

Such analysis is consistent with earlier feminist analysis of the Harper Conservatives by Porter, who has emphasized the mutually reinforcing relationship between neoliberal and neoconservative political projects and called for methodologies that highlight the inconsistencies between neoconservative rhetoric and its actual practices. In her work she noted the juxtaposition of the Harper government claiming to “stand up for families” while analyzing and highlighting policies that negatively affected households by implementing policies that made it difficult to maintain their survival (Porter 2012, 28). This dissertation is in part engaging in a similar project, questioning Conservative claims to be the “party of new Canadians” (Kenney 2011) by widening the scope of analysis for this question and examining the effects of their discourses, policies and policy-making approach on many (im)migrants, “ethnic voters” and racialized Canadians. Though clearly there are no such monolithic categories, the differential impacts of the Conservatives’ discourses and policies are certainly observable. Thus this dissertation in part engages in such a methodology that examines not only their political approach, but also their modes of policy making and their policies themselves.

The means to undertake this analysis include a review of periodical analyses and reports of the Conservative government’s legislation, civil society reports and academic articles on government policy and their approach to the fields of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. It also includes analysis of government departmental reports and data on citizenship, immigration and temporary foreign worker program and a consideration and reconsideration of secondary literature on these policy fields. Published government documents and speeches from the Conservatives’ time in office are considered as is their legislation passed and the titles and discourses associated with them. I benefited greatly from access to information

requests and their analysis by journalists writing about these fields. Critical literatures, particularly critical feminist and race scholarship have helped me to better understand and examine public policy, Canadian nationalism and the evolution of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in Canada. While these were the means primarily used in writing this dissertation, I was also a regular participant in the activities of civil society organizations analyzing and affected by the government's changes in these fields. I conducted several interviews and attended presentations by refugee advocates, academics and civil servants working in these fields. While responsibility for this work remains my own, I also benefitted from my regular participation in and conversations arising out of activities of the Canadian Council for Refugees and FCJ Refugee Centre, as well as my status as a Research Associate of York University's Centre for Refugee Studies (CRS), Centre for Research on Latin American and the Caribbean (CERLAC) and Global Labour Research Centre, and the rich communities of discussion and debate they have provided.

Conclusion to Chapter One and Dissertation Overview

In this dissertation I argue that rather than serving as a positive model, the Conservative Party is better viewed as having taken a creative yet cynical incremental approach to achieving a majority government and shifting the gravity of Canadian politics to the right. They have fostered new and in other ways maintained and even deepened exclusionary inclinations held over from their Reform (1987-2000) and Canadian Alliance (2000-2003) predecessors. Theirs is a highly ideological and *disciplinary* approach to politics aimed at gaining a stable minimum winning coalition entailing relatively little compromise. The Conservatives offered "a few policy innovations" and intensive outreach efforts (Flanagan 2011b) rather than seeking social consensus. Their victory and time in power is best seen as the long term culmination of a process

of “Invasion from the Margin” – the right margin- of Canada’s political system, as Flanagan once framed the Reform Party project (2009b, 208). Their policies adversely affect many actual and aspiring immigrants and refugees and have weakened the extent of democracy in policy-making in these fields. They did this while attempting to change the nature of public debate around citizenship, immigration and Canadian identity in troubling ways. In substantive terms, rather than fostering a more inclusive conservatism, the party has invited new and “ethnic” Canadians to join Canada’s settler colonial project on particularly regressive terms. These terms invited some, but also fostered the marginalization and exclusion of many immigrants, migrants and refugees who aspire(d) to permanent residence and citizenship, particularly those that would assert their own religious principles or were demanding positive substantive policy shifts.

The Conservatives came to office and began governing from a neoliberal baseline on Canada’s settler colonial terrain that had seen its own negative trends (Arat-Koç 1999; Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Macklin 2005) and left considerable space for symbolic changes to send signals that could convey a progressive meaning amidst electoral competition (chapters four and five). While working towards and achieving a “minimum winning coalition” to allow them to govern under minority (beginning in 2006) and eventually majority rule (2011-2015), through a creative politics of *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism* the Conservatives employed a sophisticated authoritarian populist recipe for nearly a decade to deepen neoliberalism and shift the terms of citizenship, immigration, multiculturalism and Canadian identity in rightward and exclusionary directions.

This introduction and chapter two outline popular and academic perspectives on the Conservative Party of Canada and their approach to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism, particularly focused on its time in office. In addition to a literature review, chapter two outlines my own approach to their time in office and introduces key concepts to

guide subsequent analysis. This approach calls attention to the foregrounding of the reality of Canada as a settler colonial state to widen the scope of analysis of citizenship and immigration policy beyond narrow bureaucratic immigration categories. It also entails a critical consideration of political parties literature and asserts the need to more substantively link the impacts of Conservative policies and discourses to such analyses, particularly when evaluating their approach to immigrant and “ethnic” voters. In doing so I argue it is particularly important to consider the interplay between neoliberalism and neoconservatism. I build upon prior work by Stuart Hall on authoritarian populism as well as critical scholarship on immigration and multiculturalism in Canada to develop the concepts of *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism* to grasp the Conservatives creative but anti-democratic approach to these policy fields. These concepts are explicated at the end of chapter two.

Chapters three to five explore the party’s evolution from its Reform incarnation to the Conservative phase of Canada’s dominant right-wing party in greater depth. For this analysis it is important to recognize that some of the policy and political paradoxes already noted are part and parcel of neoconservative politics. Concerning the merger of neoliberalism with law and order and socially conservative politics Hall posed the question “How do we make sense of an ideology which is not coherent, which speaks now, in one ear, with the voice of, free-wheeling, utilitarian, market-man, and in the other rear, with the voice of respectable , bourgeois, patriarchal man? How do these repertoires operate?” Considering what seem to some to be the paradoxes of the Conservatives’ authoritarian populist approach to citizenship and immigration, one could also ask how does one speak in welcoming platitudes and even some policies to be more welcoming towards immigrants and “ethnic” voters while simultaneously implementing highly exclusionary policies directed towards and even manufacturing political others?

Hall's observations concerning such seeming paradoxes are illuminating. He notes that "the whole purpose of what Gramsci called an organic (i.e. historically effective) ideology is that it articulates into a configuration, different subjects, different identities, different projects, different aspirations. It does not reflect, it *constructs* a 'unity' out of difference" [emphasis added] (Hall 1987, 19). It is this attempted construction of a disciplinary 'unity' under the Conservative right's settler colonial conception of Canada that is the substance of what I describe as neoconservative multiculturalism.

Chapters three to five consider how Canada's conservatives creatively adapted their authoritarian populist recipe as they moved from their Reform, Alliance and finally new Conservative Party incarnation to create an innovative form of politics more friendly in tone to Canada's demographic realities from a political heritage not generally seen as receptive to immigrants. Particular attention is paid to the evolution of party discourses in the platforms of the Reform, Alliance and Conservative Parties, speeches and writings of key political party actors as well as the evolution of immigration and multiculturalism policy.

Chapter three examines the roots of neoconservative multiculturalism in examining the moralistic, civilizational bent applied by these party elites to Canadian identity and nationalism and the evolution of party discourses from the discursive assaults on immigration and multiculturalism launched by the Reform Party as it entered the Canadian party system from its margins before reconfiguring its discourses and rebranding the party through its late Reform, Alliance and early Conservative phases. Chapter four explores the theme and substance of neoconservative pragmatism and outreach towards "ethnic" and immigrant voters as the Conservative Party sought to achieve what Tom Flanagan has described as a "minimum winning coalition" (2011). Such neoconservative pragmatism, in some ways unwittingly assisted by state multiculturalism, is a key and defining aspect of the Kenneyist political project. In these chapters

it can be seen the Conservatives recognized - to cite Hall employing Gramsci - that “‘account be taken of those interests and tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised,’ so that ‘a certain compromise be formed’” (1980, 168).

However chapter five, “The Rise of Neoconservative Multiculturalism,” begins to illustrate the substance of how that creative compromise takes place on the regressive and disciplinary terms of Canada’s most aggressive and vociferous mainstream settler colonial political party, as can be seen in their discourses and policies surrounding multiculturalism, immigrant and minority women and refugees. Thus in examining the evolution of the Conservative Party from its Reform and Alliance predecessors, these chapters employ the concepts of *Kenneyism and neoconservative multiculturalism* to explore how the Conservatives developed and employed their own authoritarian populist recipe to invite some “ethnic voters” and immigrants to join the Conservative political project while disciplining others as they implemented policies to the detriment of many (im)migrants and refugees, which are explored in subsequent chapters.

Because of its hegemonic importance in popular conceptions of Canada and the terms of political debate, multiculturalism is the first policy realm dealt with in some depth in this dissertation within this chapter. Despite being addressed in later chapters, the discourses, policy-making approach and social relations of citizenship and immigration advanced by the Conservatives are foregrounded in the title to this dissertation due to their greater significance to the daily lived experience of immigrants, refugees and migrant workers.

Refugee policies and discourses are accorded significant attention in chapters five, seven and eight. This was a key battleground demonstrating the Conservatives neoconservative credentials and exclusionary approach and instincts. Adversarial policies of cruelty and uncertainty were applied to refugee claimants and even to some refugees who had already been

granted permanent residence in Canada, as will be seen in chapter seven. In this field some of the Conservatives' most xenophobic discourses and tendencies were exercised and revealed in contrast to their creative but disciplinary xenophilic language of outreach employed by the Conservatives, a dynamic explored in chapter five.

Chapter six explores the Conservatives' Kenneyist authoritarian populism in government and use of spectacles in their approach to citizenship and immigration. It considers the case of Bill C-24, the 2014 *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act* as exemplary of their disciplinary approach to citizenship and immigration. The Conservatives demonstrated a preference for a punitive and disciplinary mindset and practices over reaching a consensus or evidence-based policies, which can be seen in the forms of spectacles and neoconservative, disciplinary forms of citizenship they implemented. Such trends make it less surprising that a 2015 campaign whose prospects were turning dim took on such a negative, divisive tone, for they were rooted in many of the party's existing policies and discourses and can be seen in their subsequent behavior (conclusion).

Chapter seven is concerned with questions of democracy, policy making and the social relations of citizenship and (im)migration in Canada. It explores the further decline of democracy in policy making under the Conservatives, including the concentration of power in ministerial hands, attacks on political and judicial opponents and some shifts in the state observable during their time in office. It considers regressive shifts in social relations on Canada's settler colonial terrain, where relations of greater economic, social and political *unfreedom* became increasingly the norm for many immigrant, migrant and refugee members of Canadian society. Facilitated by government policy shifts serving business interests rather than protecting workers, more people were brought in to Canada in vulnerable positions as migrant workers rather than as permanent residents. Further intensifying neoliberal trends in these policy fields, family reunification and

citizenship acquisition became more costly and difficult while non-economic class categories of immigration were targeted for reduction. Shifts within the economic class towards greater “two-step” rather than permanent residence on arrival are discussed. The latter portion of this chapter explores the way the Conservatives sought to manage the backlash against the vast expansion of the temporary foreign worker program they had advanced and overseen.

Chapter eight, the conclusion, summarizes and reflects upon the findings of this dissertation and considers the future of Kenneyism and neoconservative multiculturalism as forms of politics and developments since the Conservatives’ 2015 electoral defeat. It discusses some of the limits to and the continued strength of the Conservatives’ attempted hegemonic political project. The chapter tentatively explores the shift from neoconservative back to neoliberal multiculturalism under the Liberal government, most concretely in the realm of refugee policy. It ends by encouraging comparative research on alternative projects of (im)migration and belonging in Canada.

Chapter 2: Interpreting Partisan Neoconservatism and its Paradoxes in Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism

Introduction to Chapter 2

“It is a project that confuses the Left no end- which is, simultaneously, regressive and progressive. Regressive because, in certain respects, it takes us backwards. You couldn’t be going anywhere else but backwards to hold up before the British people, at the end of the 20th century, the idea that the best the future holds is for them to become, for a second time, ‘Eminent Victorians’. It’s deeply regressive, ancient and archaic.

But don’t misunderstand it. It’s also a project of ‘modernisation.’ It’s a form of regressive modernization . . . Mrs. Thatcher knows, as the Left does not, that there is no serious political project in Britain today which is not also about constructing a politics and an image of what modernity would be like for our people. And Thatcherism, in its regressive way, drawing on the past, looking backwards to former glories rather than forwards to a new epoch, has inaugurated the project of reactionary modernization.”

(Hall 1987, 18–19)

“We argue that the combination of immigration settlement patterns, citizenship laws, and Canada’s single member plurality (SMP) electoral system create a context in which appeals to immigrant voters are required of any party with aspirations to national power . . . On the other hand, efforts to maintain support among grassroots conservative voters account for a countervailing push to the right. The resulting balancing act marks a peculiarly Canadian solution to a more basic ‘populist’s paradox’ confronting right-of-centre parties interested in preserving their conservative base while expanding support among ‘ethnic’ and other voters. The Conservative Party’s marked shifts away from Reform’s positions on immigration respond to precisely this populist’s paradox.

(Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013, 96)

In addition to the popular impressions of the Conservative approach to citizenship and immigration discussed in the introduction to this dissertation, considerable academic attention has been paid to the Conservatives’ political strategies and record in these policy areas. The theme of paradoxes has been a recurring theme raised both directly and implicitly in weighing their approach. This has primarily referred to paradoxes of simultaneous outreach and exclusion, or between and pragmatic political outreach efforts on one hand, and satisfying the exclusionary

desires of the party's base concerning how to treat "ethnic" Canadians, immigrants and refugees on the other. Often these have been accorded equal weight.

Some, such as *Globe and Mail* editorialists and Omidvar quoted in chapter one, cite a perceived and admirable moderation or openness by Canada's Conservative Party compared to their compatriots in other countries. As will be discussed below, some liberal pluralist or institutional approaches have emphasized the imperatives of political party competition and party models as ways to grasp the nature of Canada's main governing parties, including the Conservatives. Most cite Canada's demographics, electoral system and comparatively liberal citizenship and immigration policies as moderating influences on the Conservatives' behaviour. Each of these *are* important factors to consider in assessing the Conservatives' political approach and record. However implicitly, if not explicitly accepting assumptions of liberal pluralism as the most appropriate framework to conduct analyses of the Conservatives' approach leads to insufficient engagement with the substance of that project and the regressive social relations that it has advanced.

Employing an anti-racist political economy perspective, I argue that such approaches lead to an overly optimistic assessments of the Conservatives' time in office and greatly underestimates the social and political exclusions evident in their discourses and record in government. Those "ethnic" or "immigrant" Canadians invited to join the Conservatives' political coalition have in fact been welcomed primarily and at best as superficial or junior partners in the Conservatives' supremacist neoconservative political project on Canada's settler colonial terrain. At the same time, many other actual or potentially aspiring immigrant and "ethnic voters" were excluded or marginalized by the party and government with many migrants and refugees denied the opportunity to achieve such a status. Such is the *substance* of the Conservatives' project of political modernization -- what I describe as the authoritarian populist

politics and social relations of *Kenneyism* -- that the party has undertaken to effectively compete politically and attempt to rule in contemporary settler colonial Canada.

Despite these realities, dismissing the Conservatives' outreach efforts based primarily on assertions that they implement Reform Party doctrines as a wolf in sheep's clothing conceptually underestimate the creativity and appeal of the Conservatives' political project. Theirs is an at times confusing project that mixes both backward-looking conservative nostalgia with a mix of contemporary platitudes concerning the contributions of immigrants to Canada and multiculturalism. Compared to their predecessors, however, the Conservatives at times provide a more uplifting though disciplinary rhetorical version of neoconservatism – what I term *neoconservative multiculturalism*. These political innovations and renovations of the electoral right's approach to the realms of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism mean that a critical appreciation and understanding of this political project is necessary.

The purpose of this chapter is to consider multiple approaches to grasping the Conservatives' time in office and political approach to the politics and policy fields of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism while developing a framework that can be employed in subsequent chapters to meaningfully contribute to developing conclusions about the party and its record in office.

This chapter begins by 1) considering political parties, liberal institutionalist and pluralist interpretations of the Conservatives and their approach to politics more broadly before shifting to the realms of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in particular. While such assessments provide some insight concerning the balance between party base policy preferences and the imperatives of “outreach” due to party competition, it is argued that an anti-racist critical political economy approach is required to better grasp the substance and motivations of Conservative

Party politics in these fields and the shifts in common sense thinking that they have sought to accomplish.

Critical political economy literature is employed to demonstrate the limits to liberal institutionalist and pluralist analyses, including their inability to account for change in the fundamental political questions addressed in the public realm, or to sufficiently weigh the substantive governance and policy shifts that took place under Canada's Conservative government in particular. Considering authors who explore the Conservatives' approach as one of paradoxes, it is found that exploring the paradoxes of outreach and exclusion in Canadian neoconservatism can be done fruitfully by exploring the links between neoliberalism and neoconservatism, and the evolution of conservatism in Canada away from its earlier Red Tory variant. This is a recurring theme in this chapter and dissertation as the Conservatives employed neoconservative innovations to discourses, policy making approaches and the state while also accelerating and deepening existing neoliberal social relations in these fields.

To grasp the contemporary ruling relations and ideologies of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in Canada through which the Conservatives operate it is necessary to secondly 2) delve deeper both theoretically and historically into patterns and relations of dominance and hegemony between settler Canadians of primarily European origin and ethnicized and racialized (im)migrant others. As is noted in considering Thobani's important anti-racist and feminist scholarship in *Exalted Subjects*, both formal and informal multi-tiered structures of citizenship shaped by settler colonialism and racism have shifted and evolved since Canada's beginnings. Thobani's lens foregrounding power differences and political projects within which exalted settler colonial subjects and (im)migrants operate is highlighted to allow for a critical consideration of the types of citizens and non-citizens the Canadian state and its political parties

are attempting to produce, as well as the hierarchies and dominant ideologies they wish to adapt or reinforce.

This chapter then 3) discusses some of the contributions of critical literatures on the Conservatives in particular and citizenship and multiculturalism more generally to better grasp the party's orientations and the contemporary politics and ideologies of multiculturalism that they must navigate as they simultaneously seek to shift and employ them. Having engaged questions of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in their long term context and the terrain in which they operate, the chapter 4) returns to literatures on neoconservatism, neoliberalism, democracy and the Conservative Party and government to situate their approach to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism within their overall anti-democratic political project.

Finally, having laid the groundwork to examine the Conservatives within the *longue durée* of Canada's settler colonial project and drawing on critical literatures on citizenship and multiculturalism attentive to some of the ideological shifts evident in the Conservatives' approach, I introduce and explicate the concepts of *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism* to explain the Conservatives' creative adaptation of what Stuart Hall has termed the neoconservative politics of "authoritarian populism" (Hall 1980). Hall's conception of authoritarian populism draws heavily on Gramsci's insights and the themes of hegemony, common sense, and civil society as a contested realm of social struggle. Writing in the context of the United Kingdom and what he termed the politics of *Thatcherism*, Hall employed the concept to grasp an emergent and powerful form of conservative politics reliant on a mix of law and order discourses, invocations of conservative renderings of history and harsh neoliberal governance that sought to achieve popular consent for their political project, with troubling anti-democratic aspects. Hall builds upon and adapts Poulantzas' work and insights on the simultaneous strengthening and weakening of the state in terms of its coercive and democratic apparatuses

under contemporary capitalism respectfully, a highly useful insight in conceptualizing some of the key shifts in power and social relations during the Conservatives' time in office.

To examine the authoritarian populism of Canada's Conservatives in their own national context and fields of study examined in this dissertation, the concept of Kenneyism seeks to address apparent paradoxes and help to answer the question of how one reconciles the party's simultaneous outreach efforts to many new, ethnicized and racialized Canadians while at the same time implementing highly exclusionary policies in many realms of citizenship and immigration- particularly but not only with respect to Muslims, refugees and temporary foreign workers. The term *Kenneyism* is also heuristically useful given the political background, policies pursued, and leading role Jason Kenney played in the Conservative government's outreach strategies and the Ministries of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Human Resources and Defence. It also addresses the regressive forms of nationalism promoted in these fields through a version of *neoconservative multiculturalism* in Canada's settler colonial social formation. This concept addresses a central plane of Canadian identity over which significant political and hegemonic battles were and are being waged by the Conservatives. This framework will be employed and further explored and illustrated in subsequent chapters.

(Neo)Conservative Paradoxes in Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism in Canada

The New Conservative Party of Canada: Brokerage, "Catch-all" or Authoritarian Populist Politics?

Canadian political parties' literature has grappled to make sense of changes to party politics in Canada since the 1993 federal election, as well as how to characterize its political parties. This has been particularly due to the rapid decline of the Progressive Conservatives and rise of the Reform Party and Bloc Quebecois that year and significant changes in the ensuing years.

Subsequent developments resulted in the eventual establishment of the new Conservative Party and the roller coaster rides of the Liberals and New Democratic Party (NDP).

In terms of party models, Tanguay and Gagnon note that brokerage theory is one of the most accepted in the political science subfield of the study of Canadian political parties (2007, 7). Carty states that for most accounts examining the particularities of Canadian party politics and electoral competition, “Canadian Politics *is* brokerage politics” (Carty 2013, 10) (emphasis added). Dominant approaches employing brokerage theory have included those based on market analogies that stress competition leading to short-term cost-benefit analyses in hopes of “maximizing” votes, as well as sociological approaches stressing the need for elites to “serve as brokers for divergent interests in order to maintain social harmony,” with political parties’ performance being judged on that basis (Brodie and Jenson 2007, 41–42).

Carty outlines that key traits of brokerage parties include 1) their attempts to win support from any and all voters without being married to a strong ideological vision or party base; 2) That they are created by leaders seeking to set up “an autonomous organizational base” from where they can balance diversities of both interest groups and the wider electorate; 3) A self-conceived and politically marketed role as the party that embodies a nation’s “national interest,” and 4) A demand for “unquestioning” party loyalty and party discipline, “whatever policy twists are required by the demands of electoral pragmatism” (Carty 2013, 14–15). Carty asserts that the Liberal Party’s approach to politics could be described as such during the twentieth century, with its far more willing and successful accommodations of English and French Canada.¹

¹ Writing before the 2015 election, Carty (2013) argued that due the fractious federal political scene of the prior quarter century, its 2011 election debacle and its then-declining support in Quebec that not even the Liberal Party could accurately claim the mantle of a brokerage party any longer (21). However as he based that assessment in large part due to the party’s loss of support in Quebec, which it since reclaimed, it seems reasonable that he might bestow such status again given that the party had “not abandoned its nation-building calling” (21).

Concerning the Conservative Party, Carty argues that the Conservatives are better described as a more ideological “catch-all” party because in neither its historic nor contemporary incarnations since the death of John A. Macdonald had it tried to represent the interests of all Canadians or include them in their party (Carty 2013, 18). Citing Kirchheimer (1966), Carty states that while catch-all parties are often portrayed as “organizations in which ideology has been deliberately abandoned . . . to operate as political consensus purveyors,” in actuality they tend to be more ideological and be based on a historic core of support and defined political base. Such parties are also established, defined and evolve against their major political opponents through electoral competition. Their leaders are expected to personify the *party’s* message, which must be “restrained to balance appeals to old supporters and new targets” (15). Thus “the catch-all label is misleading: such parties do not even try to appeal to all voters . . . having started with a clearly defined base, the catch-all party is never able to completely escape from its demands and the core support it provides” (2013, 12).

Thus rather than appealing to all, catch-all parties like the Conservatives historically are more likely to be constrained by their core voters despite a requirement to sometimes “de-ideologize” their discourse due to their political ambitions, while requiring strong leadership that is relatively uninhibited by party oversight (Carty 2013, 12–13). However, while helping to pointing out long term political limitations of the Conservative Party at a basic ideological level, as well as pragmatic realities that would drive them to moderate their discourses or reach out to different parts of the electorate, debates about whether particular parties have a “brokerage” or a “catch-all” orientation can overlook important questions of substance. And the limits of their primarily liberal pluralist conception of Canadian politics will become clear.

As Brodie and Jenson argue from a critical political economy perspective, while such models might *help* explain the particular strategies of parties balancing multiple cleavages on a

short term basis at a more superficial level, they do little to address fundamental moments of *change* in the key political questions being asked, or “those moments when ‘normal politics’ breaks down” (2007, 43). During such periods of change common sense notions of politics and of the political can rapidly shift away from those of stable periods when prior understandings and consensus prevailed: “times . . . in which political parties were differentiated by proposals of more-or-less rather than a contest over fundamentals (Brodie and Jenson 2007, 44). Brokerage models, for example, do not “account for the politicization of particular cleavages or the emergence of consensus about policy prescriptions,” they note (Brodie and Jenson 2007, 43). Such politicization is apparent in the policy fields of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism under discussion in this dissertation, and requires consideration of change over time.

Brodie and Jensen explain that there was a breakdown of social consensus by the early 1980s- rooted in a crisis of Fordism and the rise of neoliberalism that helped lead to a (re)politicization of social questions that brokerage theory approaches to political parties have done little to explain, which manifested itself in the delegitimation and breakdown of the prior political party system by the early 1990s. They observe that “the federal party system is now experiencing . . . a profound shift in fundamental assumptions about the role of government and the rights of citizens,” while new actors and forms of democratic politics and social movements asserted themselves (2007, 44–49). Reflecting on the 1993 election, they observe that from the right the Reform Party offered a major departure from the post-World War II Keynesian consensus, appearing as “ ‘Tories in a hurry’ - complete with homespun rhetoric about ordinary Canadians, living within one’s means, and only slightly cloaked racism.” The Reform Party was repudiating the state’s role on several fronts: in economic development, in encouraging bilingualism and multiculturalism while attacking pan-Canadian institutions that helped support

the earlier post-war consensus (Brodie and Jenson 2007, 34). These authors left the question open as to whether Harper and the new Conservative Party would adopt the strategies of Mulroney and Diefenbaker before him to seek a majority government, which they did see as a potential form of brokerage politics, but one operating under a new set of common sense assumptions as to the role of the state (Brodie and Jenson 2007, 49).

In moving beyond such models to explain party behaviours -- while highlighting that parties themselves also help to define the nature of politics, political interests and who may participate in such conversations (36) -- Brodie and Jenson's insights help point to the need for critical political economy approaches that pay closer attention to the ideological shifts within the Conservative Party (along with its predecessor Reform and Alliance parties) in the present conjuncture and move beyond questions of models that can fail to foreground important questions of political and policy substance. It was the Conservative Party and its recent predecessor parties that worked most to politicize the prior version of "normal politics" in Canada around questions of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism, for example (Hardcastle et al. 1994; Bloemraad 2012). While brokerage or "catch-all" characterizations point to the imperatives to grow one's party, they are less helpful in explaining how and why the Conservatives aggressively pursued significant public policy shifts and to change common sense notions of Canada in those fields while in power, though simultaneously trying to maintain and modestly expand their prospective "minimum winning coalition" (Flanagan 2011a) of supporters. While the general neoliberal and securitization shifts in policy since the 1990s have been identified in the context of Canada's long term immigration policies (Pratt 2005; Arat-Koç 1999), it is asserted here that the Conservative Party of Canada's particular approach to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism merits greater scrutiny and theorization than such party models permit.

Beyond Brokerage Models: Grappling with (Neo)Conservative Paradoxes

As quoted at the beginning of this chapter, from a liberal institutionalist perspective Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White have convincingly argued that Canada's Conservative Party seemingly found an intriguing and plausible "answer to the populist paradox" of courting "ethnic" voters while maintaining their core support- an answer "of use to other conservative parties seeking to remain competitive in political contexts transformed by immigration" (2013, 112). They rightly point to the importance of settlement patterns and Canada's comparatively liberal citizenship regime in requiring political parties in Canada to reach out to immigrant and "ethnic" voters in Canada, in contrast to more divisive approaches of conservative parties in other jurisdictions. Immigrants, they note, naturalize more quickly in Canada than in other 'immigrant countries,' turn out to vote as much as non-immigrant voters, and support more open immigration policies, realities which must be addressed (101-102). Marwah et al. also identify a novel Canadian Conservatism entailing a "marked shift" away from Reform Party positions against immigration and multiculturalism, but one that takes place along a "subtle restrictiveness" in citizenship and refugee policy (96) in these fields that can be contrasted with their Liberal predecessors.

From that institutionalist perspective, they note that basic brokerage models do not sufficiently explain the novelty of what they assert to be a liberal consensus on immigration in Canada compared to that in many European countries, for example, or account for Canadian Conservative outreach efforts relative to other conservative parties internationally (Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013, 97). The Canadian Conservative project, they argue, is a "distinctive and noteworthy approach" that has "led Canadian Conservatives to explore what they have in common with immigrant voters," (96) a dynamic which they explore alongside a

discussion of changes to citizenship and a short discussion of refugee policy (Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013, 110).

While the authors invoke “structural factors” to explain the paradox they identify, I classify theirs as a liberal institutional perspective because in addition to their observations concerning Canada’s significant immigration levels and the preponderance of immigration to large Canadian cities (97-99), their primary emphases on Canada’s citizenship regime as well as its first-past-the-post electoral system as factors in explaining the approach of the Conservatives to “new Canadians” foregrounds institutional analysis rather than the social relations of Canada as settler colonial state and the party’s place within that landscape.²

Marwah et al’s institutionalist approach is insufficiently critical of the government’s record in their focus on their electoral success rather than the substance of crucial policy directions and state-society relations. One must take care to ensure that the social relations advanced by the Conservatives or any other political project are not too far divorced from analyses of their politics. In the chapter cited here, for example, the vast expansion of the temporary foreign worker program is relegated to a single footnote, while conservative journalist John Ibbitson’s approval and the Conservative government Cabinet Minister Jason Kenney’s remarks are the primary source cited concerning their record on refugee policy, which is described as achieving approval in “wider circles,” absent any competing assessments (Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013, 112 note 3, 110). While space constraints are always a challenge, these are two crucial realms of policy making where the party’s impact has been enormous, impacting thousands of refugees and workers on Canadian soil. Such dynamics are too

² Briefly summarizing their argument, Marwah et. al write “We maintain that Canada’s immigration policy consensus is based on a distinctive intersection of immigration settlement patterns, citizenship rules, and political institutions – particularly Canada’s electoral system. Canadian parties are drawn to relatively open positions on immigration policy because the interplay of these structures ensures that immigrants are able to express their interests and have them acknowledged in a politically meaningful way” (Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013, 97)

significant not to be foregrounded in analyses of the party in these fields. In short, the paradoxes they rightly identify demand greater substantive exploration. To centre and focus debate primarily at the level of the political party and the dominant institutionalist form of analysis without a critical look at the substantive and disciplinary effects of their discourses and policies is to risk performing analysis at too superficial a level or in a manner that lends legitimacy to such policies.

Viewed from an anti-racist critical political economy lens, Marwah, Triadafilopoulos and White's analysis and discussion of settlement patterns contains important if insufficient recognition of the dynamics of Canadian civil society and the hierarchies and ideologies at work on its settler colonial terrain. They rightly cite the novelty and relative success of the Conservatives' electoral approach and identify a "New Canadian Conservatism" (Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013, 106) in citizenship and immigration. However their analysis places the Conservatives' quest to expand their base to include some "ethnic" voters on too equal a footing with the party's base instincts. Their net of analysis is cast too narrowly to sufficiently analyze the *substance* of the Conservatives' approach to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. It also overstates the extent of policy continuity, and the extent of prior "liberal" consensus on immigration policy in Canada. While these and other authors are certainly correct in noting that Conservatives have been forced to expand beyond their most narrowly defined political protestant Anglophone base³ to compete on the terrain of Canadian civil society, the Conservatives governed in ways that adversely affect many (im)migrants that have arrived

³ Flanagan has described the party's base as Protestant Anglophones (Flanagan 2009a, 279–80). Harrison provides an interesting discussion of this base in terms of nativism, Canadian history and the Reform Party (1995, 164–68), while Laycock describes the Reform Party incarnation of the party as having "appealed to those disturbed by government officials' unethical behaviour, by non-white immigration, by the secular decline of Christian values, and by intrusive social programmes that reduce 'personal responsibility' and threaten traditional family authority structures" (2005, 184).

relatively recently or desire to make their way to Canada. The Conservatives also significantly weakened the extent of democracy in policy-making in these fields.

While editors of the book on *Conservatism in Canada* to which they contributed helpfully note the party's overall shift from a more consensual brokerage model under the Progressive Conservative Party to a more ideologically based coalitional politics under the new Conservative banner in their conclusion, they also repeat the claim and emphasis on relative moderation on the part of the Conservatives with allusions to strong rhetoric rather than exclusionary policies concerning immigration and refugees (Farney and Rayside 2013a, 343, 350). These are problematic divorces between electoral politics and public policy in these fields that this dissertation seeks to address. This undertaking requires the consideration of multiple literatures relevant to the politics of policy making and implementation in citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism.

Critical sociologists Forcier and Dufour make a valuable foray into such an exploration in a comprehensive and insightful article on the Conservatives' record. Forcier and Dufour explore similar "paradoxes" to those identified above between an at times nativist electoral base and the courting of immigrants. Their approach is rooted in critical sociological and political economy perspectives, and fruitfully explores the relationship between neoliberalism, neoconservatism and the exclusionary policy directions of the Conservative Party (Forcier and Dufour 2016, 13–14). This identifies a promising direction for research. They find the Conservative Party and its predecessors' long-term neoconservative orientations to be of great explanatory value for their exclusionary policies and politics, which they lay out and explore in several policy areas.⁴

⁴ The primarily competing arguments Forcier and Dufour consider for the directions of exclusionary policies in citizenship and immigration in Canada under the Harper Conservataives are 1) economic and financial crises affecting both Canada and Europe following the 2008 financial crisis in particular, to which some have attributed the

Forcier and Dufour rightly emphasize the division in the popular vote amongst competing parties that permitted the Conservatives to achieve power and practice a politics of exclusion under Canada's first-past-the-post electoral system. They also note the increased dominance of executive decision making in the fields of citizenship and immigration while emphasizing the negative impacts of their policies on newcomers to Canada (Forcier and Dufour 2016, 13–14). They also found the Conservatives changes to Canada's immigration system to be the most major by any party since the introduction of the point system in 1967.

Pace Brodie and Jenson, cited above, in analyzing the shifts that took place under the Conservatives, Forcier and Dufour point to a major reorientation in citizenship and immigration policies noting that Conservatives' "ideological project calls into question the ensemble of institutions that left a mark in Canada since the post-war period" and the institutions and institutional configurations that had been defended by the Diefenbakers and Joe Clarks of earlier incarnations of the party rather than such policies simply being a legacy of only the Pierre Trudeau Liberals (Forcier and Dufour 2016, 12). It is the rise of the new Conservative Party from its Reform and Alliance predecessors, the extent of its posited "moderation," and the explication of the paradoxes addressed by authors from multiple perspectives that represent a key puzzle of this dissertation.

These are themes this dissertation attempts to carry forward, alongside an examination of writings and discourses of influential Conservatives who played defining roles in their political project and an examination of the nature of the policies they pursued in office. This dissertation acknowledges these paradoxes, though I argue they are best understood as evidence of a creative and disciplinary form of neoconservative authoritarian populist (Hall 1980) politics whose

rise of anti-immigrant politics and a tightening of citizenship regimes in Europe, and 2) the ideological orientations of Canada's neoconservative right.

flexibility helped to advance the Conservatives' exclusionary political project while simultaneously and more plausibly engaging in "ethnic outreach" to eventually achieve a majority government within Canada's settler colonial terrain. Hall's work on authoritarian populism, written in the United Kingdom context, helps to grasp the nature of modern neoconservative politics with great relevance elsewhere. The Conservatives use and modification of authoritarian populist recipes and the pre-existing Canadian political landscape provided significant political and ideological space to advance their neoconservative project. However before outlining this dissertation's approach to the Conservatives' politics of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism it is necessary to first consider the terrain on which the Conservatives have operated and existing critical approaches to their policy record.

Settler Colonialism, Critical Multiculturalism and Critical Political Economy

Critical literatures on settler colonialism and multiculturalism that foreground the social relations and ideological nation-building constructs of the Canadian social formation are perhaps the best analytical and substantive corrective for political science approaches in Canada where in the mainstream "discussions of ethnicity and culture figure prominently in a number of areas," but "discussions of 'race,' racialization and racism remain conspicuously absent" (Nath 2011, 162)⁵

Taking seriously and foregrounding Canada's status as a settler colonial society is a powerful corrective to liberal approaches to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism that mainstream scholars have arguably avoided through a lack of genuine engagement with critical scholars (Day 2014). These literatures also help provide global and historical context to the

⁵ Nisha Nath argues that "the overarching movement in CPS [Canadian political science] is to focus on ethnicity-culture and its social-psychological groundings. Moreover, CPS's tendency to erase the institutional basis of 'race' and racism in Canada cannot be read apart from discourses of nationalism which posit a raceless past for Canada in contrast to the supposedly more deeply racialized and racist politics of the US. The Canadian case is particularly interesting given that the absence of 'race' in CPS is not straightforward because 'race' is often recoded as culture or ethnicity (Bannerji, 2000; Razack, 1999; Thobani, 2007)" (Nath 2011, 162-63).

settler-immigrant and colonial-neocolonial social relations of Canada, a nation founded on the dispossession of Indigenous peoples and privileging of European settlement. It has been a state that, as Thobani notes, has implemented and enforced racialized and gendered immigration policies that have historically differentiated between preferred and ‘non-preferred’ immigrants based on race, which permitted the settlement of those territories and accompanied the colonization of Indigenous territories (Thobani 2000, 36). Narrower questions concerning the strategies and approaches of political parties to governing and achieving electoral victories need to be grounded in the contested constructions of Canadian identity and its social relations, particularly in the policy fields being explored in this dissertation.

As Fobear argues, while making linkages between migration and settler colonialism in the refugee context, “[m]igration and settlement cannot be adequately theorized outside of spatialized relations of imperial and colonial power” (Fobear 2014, 49). While all nations are “imagined communities” (Benedict Anderson 2006), as will be seen throughout this dissertation there is a particular creativity to be witnessed and analyzed in the behaviour those seeking to exercise political leadership within the Canadian social formation.

As can and will be seen, actively building, borrowing from and modifying nation-building mythologies based in ideologies of pluralism and notions of tolerance as defining characteristics of Canada (Mackey 2002, 2)⁶ -- and shifting them to the right -- have been a key part of the neo(C)onservative political project in Canada. With multiculturalism being a dominant, hegemonic idea within Canada (Lewycky 1992; Reitz 2011), the crafting of a neoconservative variant of multiculturalism has been an important part of that project. Such a project involves

⁶ Beginning with representations of First Nations-state relations in the nineteenth century, Mackey asserts that in contrast to foregrounding Canada’s foundations in settler colonialism, the “Canadian myth of tolerance,” often in contradistinction to a less compassionate United States “has gained great authority throughout the nation’s history” and that “cultural pluralism is institutionalized as a key feature of the mythology of identity of the dominant white Anglophone majority,” including in ongoing national projects and in the mindsets and subjectivities of those who see themselves as “‘mainstream’ or simply ‘Canadian-Canadians’” (Mackey 2002, 2–3).

balancing many dynamics, however. As Fobear notes, “Canada’s national identity and its regulation of immigration is informed through ongoing settler colonialism in which the erasure of Indigenous persons and the control of non-white immigrants go hand-in-hand with the creation of the Canadian state and the solidifying of its borders” (Fobear 2014, 50). In her particular area of interest she argues that “investigating refugee settlement in a settler state involves looking at whiteness and national mythologies of white settler colonialism in Canada” (Fobear 2014, 50).⁷

The necessity for such considerations of dynamics of settler colonialism may be highlighted for any citizenship, (im)migration or multiculturalism policy. Considering the terms of debates, analyses and policies within the *longue durée* of Canadian politics and development as some have done allows one to consider competing political projects from a much broader and long-term perspective.⁸ This includes not only the addition of important ethical elements, such as the way dominant social forces in a settler-colonial state treat those they displace and whose lands they colonize, but also the treatment meted out to immigrants, migrants and refugees and those racialized within that social formation. Though the treatment of Canada’s Indigenous peoples is not accorded central emphasis in this dissertation, in the realms of citizenship and immigration such an approach enables one to move beyond simply accepting state categories of those coming to Canada as “temporary,” “permanent,” “landed” or eventually citizens- and to critically consider rather than accept the discourses and boundaries of debate of Canada’s political parties and state officials at face value.

⁷ Fobear notes that such an approach allows one to ask important questions. Those include “what the ramifications are of providing refuge in a settler state and what it means to be a refugee in a state where there is a settler racial hierarchy that marginalizes refugees from the global South and silences ongoing violence towards Indigenous communities. It is by asking these questions that we may work toward unsettling underlying settler-colonialism in the refugee and immigration process, as well as build valuable and supportive relationships between refugee and Indigenous communities” (Fobear 2014, 54).

⁸ See, for example, Stasiulus and Jhappan (1995), Abel and Stasiulus (1989), Coulthard (2014), and more general works such as Veracini (2010) for critical interpretations of Canadian and general approaches to settler colonialism, history, political economy and the politics of settler colonial societies.

A lens foregrounding power differences and political projects within which settler colonial subjects and (im)migrants operate allows for a critical consideration of the types of citizens and non-citizens the Canadian state and its political parties are attempting to produce. Those on Canadian soil are born or migrate into these social relations and their political loyalties and acquiescence are sought in both their daily lives and their electoral choices. Part of one's agency in such a context concerns their attitudes and behaviours towards such political discourses and practices.

Interestingly, distinctions are often made between “settlers” and “immigrants” on the political right in Canada in insisting on conformity or to justify exclusion. Those in conservative think tanks such as Martin Collacott, of the Fraser Institute and Centre for Immigration Policy Reform privilege the perspectives and dominance of those who they term “settlers,” or those they term the founders of a Canadian political and demographic order they wish to preserve. Perhaps not inconsistently as a result, for example, Collacott advocates for Canada's withdrawal from the global refugee convention to allow Canada to permit fewer successful refugee claims, and for less family reunification in immigration all the while aggressively targeting his political opponents with labels such as “special interests” to delegitimize their voices and claims (Collacott 2010; Creskey 2010). For thinkers such as Collacott, when they are not posing a threat by upsetting Canada's existing demographic balance (Collacott 2017), more recent immigrants are expected to conform and passively acquiesce to the terms set by prior settlers, “setting aside” the presence of First Nations peoples for millennia preceding such settlement (Todd 2012).

Such formulations that marginalize -- if not outright erase -- the standing and claims of First Nations peoples are echoed by other contemporary conservatives such as former Immigration Minister Jason Kenney, who labels Canada's First Nations as “those who first settled in Canada” (Cram 2016). Kenney has also extolled the role of what he frames as a

benevolent British liberal imperialism as accepting of diversity and sought to protect Canada's "Christian patrimony" from critical theorists (Press Progress 2015a). Such settler colonial nationalist formulations and mythologies are employed to simultaneously strengthen the standing of Canada's "exalted subjects" of British and French settlers while also fending off the agency and resistance of (im)migrants to Canada and First Nations peoples. As Thobani argues, narrations of such "mythological lines of descent" allow contemporary descendants to "define themselves as repositories and preservers of the national inheritance, even as they make invisible the colonial violence which in actuality brought for more 'hardships' and 'dangers' to Native peoples than it did to the 'early explorers and settlers.'" They also obscure the "contributions of non-preferred races to the development of the national economy" (Thobani 2007, 87).

Given their prominence, agenda setting, ideological and governing roles political parties are central actors as they seek to promote and encourage acquiescence, if not the active promotion of particular settler colonial worldviews and policy approaches. This is a dynamic which can be applied globally as well, when one considers the world view, foreign policies and acquiescence to them being promoted within such a world order and the political projects of Canada's major political parties. The path Canada has often chosen has been one of solidarity amongst settler colonial states and the disciplining of internal and external "others."

The dynamics of settler colonialism, immigration and its hierarchies are assessed by Sunera Thobani in her book entitled *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada* (2007). This work of broad historical and theoretical scope features several case studies and examines Canada from the nineteenth century to the early days of the Harper government. Thobani traces and historicizes what she terms a process of *exaltation* and privileging of European-origin English and French Canadians over racialized immigrants and First Nations peoples. She explicates how "[t]he categorization of human beings into Canadians,

Indians, and immigrants ranks them in terms of their legalistic and sociocultural status” whose treatment is “organized through state policies and popular practice” (2007, 6). Through such processes white “Canadians” are exalted as privileged subjects while First Nations people have been marginalized and others – namely immigrants, migrants and refugees - face “perpetual estrangement or *conditional* inclusion as supplicants” (Thobani 2007, 6) (emphasis added).⁹ As it was established historically in Canada, Thobani argues:

Citizenship was instituted in a triangulated formation: the Aboriginal, marked for physical and cultural extinction, deserving of citizenship only upon abdication of indigeneity; the ‘preferred race’ settler and future national, exalted as worthy of citizenship and membership in the nation; and the ‘non-preferred race’ immigrant, marked as a stranger and sojourner, an unwelcome intruder whose lack of Christian faith, inherent deviant tendencies, and unchecked fecundity all threatened the nation’s survival. These foundational horizons were institutionalized in the burgeoning apparatus of the settler state and its expanding geographical domain, as well as in the inscription of whiteness as embodiment of legitimate and responsible citizenship” (Thobani 2007, 75).

These relations, she argues, were produced and are maintained “[i]n the settler colony-cum-liberal democracy” where “the status of the immigrant remains ambivalent, fraught within the dynamics of the structural forces that propel their migration and their subsequent relocation between indigenous peoples and nationals.” Thobani highlights the need to examine “complex racial hierarchies developed by colonizing powers that introduced and sustained force relations not only among settlers and Aboriginal people, but also among the other racialized groups ranked in the Canadian hierarchy as lower than whites but higher than Aboriginal peoples” (Thobani 2007, 17).

⁹ Thobani notes that Canada’s demographics -- created through government policies -- were no historical accident: “State support for white nationals, prominent among which was their access to citizenship, gave them the decisive edge in their conflicts with non-preferred races. This support enabled them to emerge as the dominant majority with control over the emerging socio-economic and political institutions” (Thobani 2007, 76–77) . Settler colonial European-Canadian hegemony was by design and was accomplished through “White Canada” policies. Immigration patterns would only shift in the latter half of the twentieth century, “Whereas 90 per cent of all immigrants prior to 1961 were European born, they came to represent only 25 per cent between 1981 and 1991, during which six out of the ten largest source countries were in Asia” (Thobani 2007, 97).

The importance of seeing policies and governing ideologies with a long term perspective that pays attention to dominant social relations is crucial. Given its origins and historic policies, Thobani argues that Canada is a state that “can accurately be characterized as having been an overt racial dictatorship up until the mid-twentieth century, as it organized the governance of Aboriginal populations through the Indian Act and upheld racialized immigration and citizenship legislation to produce a homogenous and dominant white majority” (25). Only after the mid-twentieth century was citizenship and immigration liberalized, as a result of struggles by immigrant communities (Thobani 2007, 25).

Crucially, Thobani argues, Canada’s liberalized citizenship regime has “failed to be the panacea many had dreamed it to be,” as a “multi-tiered structure of citizenship” has continued to exist in other forms. Such structures include the conditions of entry attached to family class immigration, domestic and temporary foreign worker programs, sponsorship regulations extending even past the formal acquisition by immigrants of citizenship, as well as the day to day practices racialized communities face, such as the questioning of their “real” origins and practices such as racial profiling and surveillance (Thobani 2007, 99–101). Tragically, for Thobani, the positive outcomes of long political struggles by immigrants to liberalize citizenship were contemporary to the settler state project of marginalizing and placing Indigenous communities on reserves. Together those simultaneous dynamics would increase the “social and political distance” of immigrants from Indigenous communities (96) and help lend legitimacy to and help “sustain contemporary exaltations of Canadian nationality as the most generous and humane in the world” (96-97), obscuring its reality as a settler colonial society (Thobani 2007, 100).

Thus a fetishized Canadian identity that fails to foreground the inequalities and hierarchies of Canadian society obscures the origins and contemporary social relations of the nation-state. Within “Canadian historiography,” she argues, “exaltation conceals the colonial

violence that marks the origin of the national subject, even as it mythologizes and pays obeisance to its national essence.” Such ideological processes are a “necessary condition for the ongoing efficacy of national formation” (Thobani 2007, 10). They help to perpetuate and legitimize an unjust social order.

Crucially, Thobani notes, processes of what she terms exaltation of the Canadian national subject “*ought not to be naturalized or individualized,*” (emphasis added) but rather, are attributable to “politicized social processes.” Such processes must be treated critically, rather than be seen “as rooted primarily in the character of the individual national subject, with the nation being simply the aggregate of such qualities . . . shaped by the innate nature of national subjects in the manner of humanist and liberal traditions” (Thobani 2007, 6).

With such settler colonial terrain in mind, one can ask what forms of inclusion and exclusion are on offer and for whom amidst competing claims and social forces? What types of shifts in identity, policy, and substantive citizenship are taking place? Taking into account Canada’s immigration history over a longer period, including its creation as a settler colonial project (Abu-Laban 2007; Abel and Stasiulus 1989; Stasiulus and Jhappan 1995) in a manner that has privileged some groups over others, permits a richer understanding and critical approach to policy studies able to grasp continuities rooted in colonialism and elite nation-building strategies that go beyond “normative accounts of multiculturalism . . . disconnected from colonialism and history, and therefore from explicit consideration of power” (Abu-Laban 2007, 142). Commonalities as well as discontinuities can be seen in political projects within such a wider terrain.

While many dynamics of racialization, ethnicization and exclusion are common to Liberal, Progressive Conservative and Conservative governments that have governed the country -- whose similarities should not be overlooked -- this study aspires to examine the shifts and trace

the significance of some of those shifts from Liberal to Conservative governance in the twenty-first century in the realms of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism.

Keeping in mind the longer historical context of these fields is crucial in analyzing the shifts in contested political projects from above, which of course must always deal with contestation from below, witness the rise of multiculturalism as partly the result of groups that had felt excluded from state commissions of inquiry on biculturalism and bilingualism in the 1960s. In the *longue durée* of Canadian politics and ruling ideologies one can observe, for example the shifts from Anglo-conformity to Pierre Trudeau's "Just society" of a more social democratic multiculturalism of the 1970s and 1980s to what Abu-Laban and Gabriel diagnosed as a "Selling diversity" or Winter termed a "smallest common denominator" (Winter 2014a) vision of multiculturalism under both Liberal and Progressive Conservative governments in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Following the context of shifts towards a more explicitly neoliberal form of multiculturalism in the 1990s, we are able to witness the simultaneous rejection of much of the legacy of "Just society" multiculturalism and a creative reconfiguration and appropriation of select elements of that project under the Harper Conservatives within an explicitly neoconservative political project. This dissertation will explore what I label the Conservatives' political project or strategy of *neoconservative multiculturalism* that seeks to incorporate new and "ethnic" Canadians into a conformist, and unapologetically imperialist national vision coupled with nods to diversity and even multiculturalism to give that project greater hegemonic potential. It will be seen that the Conservatives undertook a creative, if highly regressive ideological project as they simultaneously sought to perform the balancing act of reshaping the country along more neoconservative lines- including in the realms of citizenship and immigration policy- while attempting to bring recently arrived and "ethnic" Canadians under their political umbrella.

Grasping these shifts requires macro-level perspectives that go beyond day to day and thrust of parliament and party platforms in order to allow one to see to what extent ruling ideologies represent a reassertion or reconfiguration of prior dominant perspectives of Anglo-conformity that demanded and prioritized loyalty to a conservative vision of Canada and its norms (Palmer 1994) . Such critical perspectives also expose some of the ideological blind spots concerning the highly optimistic views of prior periods. While greatly expanded, the dynamics of the Temporary Foreign Worker Programs and the human rights concerns they raise are not new, for example (Sharma 2006). Canada's treatment of refugees has also long been subject to critical appraisals, as has official multiculturalism.

The field of settler colonial studies helps to expose and analyze the inconsistencies and hypocrisies of a settler colonial society and its treatment of (im)migrants. Loud proclamations of "Canadian values" can be put into longer term perspective when the colonial foundations of the society are critically exposed, as can ruling strategies that offer little in the way of substantive progressive change, and the nature of the political invitation being made to "new" and "ethnic" Canadians, itself an ideological construct in Canada's "imagined community."

More generally, political economy approaches informed by settler colonial studies can also break down mythic nationalisms on both the left and right that obscure political and economic realities. This is an important task as the Conservative government regularly asserted that it was implementing immigration policies in "the national interest" and reflecting "Canadian values," while actively trying to shape those values through countless initiatives, including the rewriting of Canada's citizenship guide with a greater emphasis on the role of the monarchy and militarism (McKay and Swift 2012, 15–18; Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009). Such perspectives counter conceptions of Canada as a "population imagined as a singular and bounded community . . . sharing a national interest" where the "symbiotic relationship between some

segment of the bourgeoisie and national states . . . is represented as a legitimate support that the nation extends to a member of its own family” (Sharma 2006, 34). Rather the policies governments pursue in the name of nationalist ideologies can be seen to be driven by values whose related policies have clear winners and losers with important material effects (Bridget Anderson, Sharma, and Wright 2009). While earlier analyses have moved beyond the limitations of hegemonic common sense and liberal theory to illustrate how these outcomes in terms of immigration policy have been raced and gendered even when they are superficially “objective” (Arat-Koç 1992; 1999; Simmons 1998), they have not been sufficiently applied to rapidly changing contemporary policy developments and the ideological project of the former Conservative government, which demands further assessment. This is particularly the case considering the continued strength of the party, which will be reflected upon in the conclusion to this dissertation. Recognizing and foregrounding this context allows one to explore the nature of political parties and grasp the hegemonic projects they offer.

Critical Perspectives on the Conservatives, Citizenship and Multiculturalism

Rightly preoccupied with questions of political power, inequality and societal membership, some of the strongest and theoretically rich analyses on the Conservatives’ time in office have come in the fields of citizenship and multiculturalism.

As will be discussed further, the Conservatives implemented many changes that made citizenship “harder to get and easier to lose” and sought to define Canadian identity on neoconservative terms. Figuring prominently in this was not only a re-writing of Canada’s citizenship guide but also a reconfiguring of multiculturalism. Concerning the citizenship guide, while some saw little change nor took issue with returning to a 1950s or 1970s vision of Canada as a framework for the guide (Chapnick 2011), more critical scholars remarked upon the

reassertion of a less inclusive, white vision of Canada (Winter 2014b). Jafri has observed the Samuel Huntington-inspired “clash of civilizations” approach to relations between newcomers and the host society within a paradigm of transnational whiteness employed by Canada’s Conservatives. This approach emphasizes colonial and military history, where racism is confined to the past and “the inclusion of particular kinds of racialized bodies may be read as a means of affirming multiculturalism while remaining committed to the war on terror” (Jafri 2012, 10). Jhappan (2010) has highlighted the double standards and antagonistic singling out of particular cultures and ‘barbaric practices’ within a country where domestic violence and other manifestations of patriarchy continue to be major societal issues. As Swift and MacKay have noted in their work chronicling the Canadian right’s attempts to turn Canada into a “Warrior Nation,” with the rise and promotion of militarist sentiment on Canada’s right, the citizenship guide introduced by the Conservatives “could just as well have been titled *The Beginner’s Guide to Warrior Nation*,” where “on closer inspection readers quickly discover that Canada, past and present is centrally about *war*. Warriors are the significant Canadians- no one else is in the running” (2012, 14–15). Such was the level of concern and the need identified for a competing narrative that some sought to provide their own “People’s Citizenship Guide” as “a response to Conservative Canada” (Jones and Perry 2011). Within such analysis however there is still the need to venture further to conceptually marry the party’s political approach to its policies.

Yasmeen Abu-Laban (2014), one of the country’s foremost critical analysts of contemporary multiculturalism, provides a highly informative analysis of the substance of multiculturalism under the Conservatives in its long term context. This includes the negative impact of their actions on some civil society actors and voices through what she describes as a process of “Reform by Stealth.” This characterization rightly points to continuities between prior Reform and subsequent Conservative approaches to multiculturalism. However, given the high

profile and how loudly many of the government's pronouncements and initiatives were made, the moniker and framework of "Reform by Stealth" does not sufficiently capture the creativity of the Conservative decade of politics in these fields overall, though many of their changes were less than transparent. This is the case even though she very helpfully recognizes some consistency with the Party's Reform Party heritage and that the Conservatives' project "undoubtedly takes a considerable amount of strategizing and political maneuvering vis-à-vis minorities- perhaps even the same kind of 'genius' that gives rise to Kenney's open and unabashed admiration of 'British liberal imperialism,'" which shares "the tendency to include minorities only on the terms of those in power" (2014, 150). The framework on offer here aspires to further capture and explore some of that creative "genius," while Abu-Laban and Bakan's work (2008) is employed in chapter six to help place the Conservatives' approach within that of a global solidarity amongst settler colonial states and the disciplinary politics directed at their internal and external others.

Of great use is Winter's (2014c) notion of the "re-ethnicization of Canadian citizenship," where she observes in the Canadian context how policies implemented by the Conservatives that appear "objective" or neutral to all societal groups in practice reinforce processes of ethnicization, hierarchy and othering when placed in their historical, political and economic context. In such contexts some members of Canadian society become "impossible citizens" who are expected to "redeem themselves by proving their loyalty to the country" in contrast to what Mackey has described as white "Canadian-Canadians" situated at the core of the constructed Canadian nation (Winter 2014c, 149). This dissertation is indebted to these critical feminist and anti-racist analyses.

Matt James' (2013) examines what he terms "neoliberal heritage redress," a recent policy in the federal multiculturalism portfolio that recognized some historic war time and immigration related rights violations by the Canadian state. James labels the forms of historic redress

neoliberal due to a policy framework that forsook formal apologies and compensation for those who suffered historic wrongs and their descendants in favour of commemorative and educational projects that downplayed or ignored the dominant society's role in harming particular groups (36). The term and concept of neoliberal heritage redress helps capture the ideological creativity and simultaneously *disciplinary* forms of politics in Canadian settler colonial politics. James impressively chronicles and discusses the disciplinary terrain governing how and which groups of Canadians that have experienced racism and discrimination historically could seek funding to commemorate their experiences on highly circumscribed terms. He explains how this approach became a bi-party consensus between the Conservatives and the Liberals in the context of electoral competition in the early 2000s, and how the Conservatives' implementation of this policy was used to discipline civil society groups. However, as James' work demonstrates, this shift in policy came as part of *Conservative* efforts to appeal to immigrant and 'ethnic' groups in the early 2000s, as the Liberals had resisted apologies for historic wrongs in Canada for many years. Such creative appeals, which came at the intersection of civil society demands and creative neoconservative politics were central to the project of the Conservative Party to shift the centre of gravity of Canadian politics to the right while at the same time seeking to attract sufficient support amongst "ethnic" constituencies to achieve power.

In this sense, the Conservative project lays in part in providing a political party as a vehicle to further the domination of one set of Canada's exalted subjects over First Nations peoples, immigrants and refugees while simultaneously trying to increase their electoral support within some members of those groups' communities. In attempting to dominate antagonistic groups while providing a form of "intellectual and moral leadership" to subordinate ones, including efforts such as those chronicled by James, such efforts confirm Gramsci's dictum regarding the necessities of the exercising hegemonic leadership in modern society to obtain and

employ power (1971, 57). Neoliberalism – and what James terms “neoliberal heritage redress” - is certainly contained within, and helped to foster contemporary Canadian neoconservatism, and their commonalities and relationship should be recognized (Arat-Koç 2012, 12; Porter 2012, 28). However neoconservatism also requires its own concepts to grasp its character and significance, particularly its desire to reshape Canadian electoral politics and civil society in its own image. Such processes, as Thobani calls for, need to be critically examined, *denaturalized* and analyzed politically.

Neo(C)onservativism, Neo(L)iberalism and Democracy

Neoconservatism and Neoliberalism

As Forcier and Dufour (2016) note, neoconservatism and its interaction with neoliberalism is a definitive variable in the Conservatives’ approach. The Conservatives’ moralistic, neoconservative imaginary, at times tempered by political pragmatism, was a driving force behind many of their policy directions.

Reflective of the party’s discourses and the harsh ideological nature of the Conservative political project one sees a steep decline in evidentiary basis for public policy. While some are consistent with neoliberal trends already apparent in Canada’s approach to immigration, many of the changes made under the Conservatives are only explainable only through neoconservative ideology. Many of these were exemplary of the ideology that Prince attributed to the Harper Conservatives- a “reliance on strict moralism” part of a “failure to temper moralistic and retributive sentiments in light of actual evidence,” which characterizes their Hobbesian, “Night Watchman” approach to government (Prince 2012, 58).

The Conservative government demonstrated a strong distaste for social scientific research. Highlighting the lack of an evidentiary base for decision-making associated with neoconservative

ideology, the government withdrew funding to Metropolis, a major government-university sector partnership that provided valuable research on immigration and settlement (Keung 2012). Perhaps most famously for researchers, they eliminated the mandatory long-form census, prompting the head of Statistics Canada to resign and subsequently refer to the data produced by the voluntary Household Survey as “largely useless,” a somewhat more charitable description than that by others who labelled it “garbage” (Grant 2013). Such was the mindset of a government that notably admonished people not to “commit sociology” when it came to societal problems such as grasping the roots of terrorism or violence against Indigenous women (Kaye and Béland 2014; Fitzpatrick 2013). The Conservatives’ harsh brand of neoconservative politics played out particularly strongly in the refugee field. Their retributive, moralistic mindset led the government to willfully ignore charter rights concerns and the negative impacts of their policies on refugee claimants for both reasons of ideology and political expediency (Bond 2014; Bates, Bond, and Wiseman 2016). Their distaste for evidence and the social sciences also strongly influenced their approach to issues of racism and their vision and implementation of multiculturalism policy.

The Conservatives instead relied on what former Director General of Citizenship and Immigration Andrew Griffith termed a preference for “anecdote over evidence” (Griffith 2013) in addition to or in support of their established ideology. Their distaste for evidence and inclination to punitive measures and hostility to critics are evident of what Jeffrey refers to as the “closing of Conservative mind” in contemporary neoconservatism (Jeffrey 2015). It is an ideology weaponized most effectively when coupled to appeals to moral outrage and a self-flattering ideology of asserted Canadian fairness and generosity.

However there is a need for critical attention to *both* neoliberalism and neoconservatism to grasp the party’s and contemporary Canadian politics. In a highly informative volume entitled

Dismantling Canada: Stephen Harper's New Conservative Agenda, former Liberal Party head of research and election candidate Brooke Jeffrey (2015) is highly critical of the Conservative Party throughout her book on the Harper government. While chronicling many troubling policy directions under the Conservative Party, her analysis does not consider the limits of the Liberal Party's time in office or policies they implemented as sources of exclusion, however. She seemingly saw a return to Liberal governments as a solution to all of the country's problems after a decade of Conservative rule. Often conclusions to chapters are framed around the hopes of a Liberal return to power and restoration of (L)iberal values, which she sees and portrays as synonymous with those of Canada and Canadians as a whole. Such a lens obscures the continuities between Liberal and Conservative governments within Canada's settler colonial social formation.

The Liberals' prior and most recent time in office to date will be briefly considered in the conclusion to this dissertation, but suffice to say they both preceded and have since continued and in some cases exacerbated many problematic policies negatively impacting (im)migrants and refugees while in office (Dobrowolsky 2017). As has been stressed in this chapter, a wider critical lens than just that of two political parties' electoral fates and calculations is needed. However, as will be seen, the differences and interactions between neoliberalism and neoconservatism in the immigration context in Canada do matter, for their political and social exclusions interplay and reinforce each other, as authors such as Wendy Brown (2006), Ann Porter (2012) and Sedef Arat-Koç (2012) have argued. Neoliberalism's vacation of democratic space for governments to pursue greater social goods leaves the political battlefield ripe for moralistic and neoconservative populist political appeals, which can capitalize on and manipulate peoples' real grievances with the state of contemporary politics and fears of economic insecurity. The similarities in their economic policies, the manifestation of what Ali (2015) has called the

“extreme centre,” can at times leave surprisingly little room in multiple policy areas to differentiate between the political projects of (neo)Liberalism and (neo)Conservatism.

Within such social and political-economic terrain, what some see to be the paradoxical approach of the Conservative Party has far more room to prosper than one might originally expect as the distance from neoliberal multiculturalism to a neoconservative variant becomes a much shorter distance to travel, particularly for a party led by a highly committed but pragmatic neoconservative such as Stephen Harper (Patten 2008, 29–30) .

Democracy

The theme of democracy and its decline has been prominent in discussions of the Harper government. As discussed in the introduction, many commentators have explored the theme of (anti-)democratic governance under the Harper Conservatives. Much of this literature has had to do with their overall disrespect for parliament and antagonistic treatment of the press and relations with civil society (Healy and Trew 2015; Eliadis 2015; Dobbin 2010; Gutstein 2014; Nadeau 2011; Healy and Trew 2015; Jeffrey 2015). Some of the developments discussed in this dissertation are thus consistent with broader criticisms of anti-democratic policy practices under the Harper Government. The title of Michael Harris’ *Party of One* (Harris 2014) is indicative that a great deal of that literature has focused on the in particular persona and approach of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper. However the party’s Reform heritage, neoconservative ideology and civil society ties as well as the role of former Minister Jason Kenney merit consideration beyond the role of the former Prime Minister. The social relations of citizenship and immigration also feature their own particular dynamics of inclusion and exclusion which merit sustained attention.

Instead of focusing only on a “liberal Canada” under siege by the Conservatives –as some of the literature does-- it is important to foreground the settler colonial nature of Canadian society. As argued earlier, in many ways the Conservatives were helped to power by the prior government’s national exclusions, policy failings and neoliberal dispositions. Launching from the baseline created by many shared dispositions, however, the Conservatives both intensified earlier and introduced novel forms of exclusion.

As Banack (2015) argues, for the Conservatives and their brand of neoconservative populism, parliament was itself seen a place at risk of allowing “special interests” to subvert their market-based view of democracy, where Canadians were seen more as consumers than as citizens. Conservatives, Banack notes, combat this perceived threat of asserted “special interests” ideologically and in governing style by adopting a technocratic, neoliberal version of democracy that allows them to subvert parliamentary institutions and grant themselves the discretion to directly act on behalf of Canadians, without being hindered by procedures that could slow or limit them. Civil society voices or “special interests” must not be allowed to subvert their ability to govern- their government needed to be unencumbered by regular norms of procedural democracy (Banack 2015, 98–100). The Conservatives, and they alone, represent “the people,” in their world view.¹⁰ This approach was evidenced by their leaked manual designed to subvert parliament and undermine perceived threats to their rule. Tactics included in the manual leaked in 2007 included adjourning committees amidst testimony and dynamics they could not control, as well as having the party select and coach witnesses favourable to government and the ministry’s

¹⁰ The decline of democracy and implementation of an authoritarian, neoconservative project that erodes democracy can be seen in several ways. Harper’s expressed view of the Conservatives facing hostile state institutions in the midst of the 2006 election campaign while encouraging the Canadian public to grant him a majority government is worth recalling. Even before being elected Harper saw the civil service and courts as a form of built-in opposition to his government’s neoconservative agenda (Galloway, Clark, and Laghi 2006). With such a view it is perhaps not surprisingly how aggressively the Conservatives dealt with the courts and inherited knowledge of the civil service. Parliament itself was also conceived of as threat.

activities under discussion (Bryden 2007; D. Martin 2007). Amidst such tactics, the process of making citizenship, immigration and refugee policy would witness “disturbing examples of constructive criticism being dismissed, discounted and undermined as coming from a ‘special interest group’ or unworthy commentator” (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 68).

Under the Conservatives there was an observable, overall decline of democracy in both the way citizenship and immigration policies are made as well as the overall social relations promoted and instituted in these fields. Of particular interest is how the Conservatives further concentrated policy-making power in the hands of the Immigration Minister (and at times the Human Resources and Public Safety Ministers), insulating them from public scrutiny through the use of omnibus bills, regulations and other legislation, while also seeking to undermine counterweights to their power such as the judiciary and within civil society. During the Conservatives’ time in office we witnessed a strengthening of the state in terms of its authoritarian aspects- targeting vulnerable (im)migrants- and a weakening of liberal democratic institutions and access to them. As will be seen in subsequent chapters describing the evolution of the Conservative Party from its Reform and Alliance predecessors, the Conservatives promoted authoritarian populist discourses and practices in public policy and shifted power towards employers whose access to vulnerable workers was supported by the state while fostering insecurity for migrant workers and reducing their access to citizenship. They also created a more adversarial system and discourses surrounding refugee policy and employed a disciplinary form of neoconservative nationalism, described as *neoconservative multiculturalism*. Combined what is witnessed is a fusion of neoliberalism and neoconservatism, and of authoritarian statism and populism.

Kenneyism, Neoconservative Multiculturalism and the Politics of a “Minimum Winning Coalition”

In introducing and explicating the concepts of *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism* this dissertation seeks to advance beyond disparate understandings of the Conservative Party and its record and approach to citizenship, immigration in key respects both descriptively and analytically. There has been more coherence to their approach to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism than some of the Conservatives' critics give them credit for and many more negative impacts than their supporters acknowledge. These concepts are inspired by the work of earlier critical social theorists. The notion of *Kenneyism* helps to capture the observed paradoxes and actual social relations of outreach and exclusion promoted in the Conservatives' politics and policies of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. For its part, neoconservative multiculturalism involves both a hollowing out of the anti-racist potentials of multiculturalism discourses and policies as well as shifting the concept in more conservative directions. It includes adherence to a neoconservative worldview and "clash of civilizations" discourses that exalt some immigrants and ethnic Canadians while denigrating others. The novelty of neoconservative multiculturalism is in seeking to creatively tie such rhetorical and ideological work with outreach to immigrants and "ethnic" voters. In the case of the Harper Conservatives, it even involved public statements in favour of and even celebrating multiculturalism in Canada while appropriating the Progressive Conservative Party's legacy to claim it as a conservative value despite their rejection of red Toryism. These were accompanied by highly anti-democratic trends in governance.

Gramsci, Hall, Poulantzas, and Authoritarian Populism

The moment when you can get sufficient power in the state to organize a central political project is decisive, for then you can use the state to plan, urge, incite, solicit and punish, to *conform* the different sites of power and consent into a single regime. That is the moment of 'authoritarian populism' - Thatcherism 'above' (in the state) and 'below' (out there with the people)

(Hall 1987, 20)

Having established the importance of foregrounding the settler colonial nature of Canada, the approach taken in this dissertation is influenced broadly by the work of Antonio Gramsci on the themes of hegemony, common sense, and civil society as a contested realm of social struggle (1971), and more specifically Stuart Hall's conception of authoritarian populism which draws heavily on Gramsci's insights. While not centrally focused on immigration policy,¹¹ Hall's analysis is worth considering not only for its diagnosis of the regressive yet highly ambitious nature of the neoconservative political project to simultaneously preserve privilege and transform societies, but also the changing balance of social and political forces that helped foster its rise and advance- including the weaknesses of oppositional social forces and parties in the British context (Hall 1979, 16–17). Hall offered prescient insights for how neoconservative forces had shifted the terrain of struggle and debate in Britain in the 1970s and 1980s in a manner to which other parties were forced to react and conform that remains highly relevant given the significant ideological work their political project has required. In the British case, such forces, embodied most strongly in “Thatcherism” drove fundamental changes in the common sense of British society by combining old and new themes of British identity and conservative politics with neoliberal economic policies in a manner that should ring familiar to students of the Harper government. For his part, Stephen Harper has approvingly described “the Reagan and Thatcher revolutions” as “the most successful period in democratic conservatism's history” (Harper 2003), and both have been documented as major figures and inspirations in his political development (Boessenkool and Speer 2015).

¹¹ Though Thatcher's “accomplishments” in this area of “common sense” and with respect to ‘race’ is noted by Hall (1980, 81–82) and other authors (Bourne 2013).

The Conservative Party's electoral and governing approach in the fields under study in this dissertation is a highly ambitious and creative form of neoconservative politics, emblematic of what Hall labeled a divisive project of "authoritarian populism." Hall described authoritarian populism as a political project merging contradictory elements (1979, 14) in ways that challenge earlier forms of consensus thinking and seek to create a new "common sense" while reshaping a country (Hall 1979; 1980; 1985). Hall's formulation, inspired by his reading Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* is particularly useful for multiple reasons. Hall's emphasis on populism is important in that it emphasizes the attempt to construct sufficient electoral support through the use of populist discourses that can bind seemingly contradictory constituencies together. For example in terms of attitudes towards immigration and "visible minorities," Conservative voters are the most likely to believe there is too much immigration or too many visible minorities in Canada (Graves 2015). However in order to achieve a majority government the party needs to reach out to such voters. Albeit cynical, the Conservatives attempt to marry various political constituencies as they constantly work to achieve and configure their "minimum winning coalition" to achieve electoral victories are a fascinating and indeed highly creative ideological project.

Appealing to in many ways contradictory constituencies to achieve majority government is a project that neoconservatives have had to undertake in any Western democracy on the terrain of its particular civil society - including its demographics - if they hope to govern, for they are both subject to and seek to shape hegemonic ideas. While in general terms the political right favours less equal social relations and is more prone to offering authoritarian models of governing, there cannot be a universal conservative project (Laycock 2002, 8). One must examine the national project in each social formation.

A first hand witness to the emergence of Thatcherism, Hall's labelling the British right's approach as one of authoritarian populism borrowed from and adjusted Poulantzas' conception of

“authoritarian statism,” by which Poulantzas referred to the decline of democratic institutions alongside growing inequality in the West in the 1970s (2000, Part 4). Poulantzas’ conception of the state as a social relation, which reflects a given balance of forces in society rather than the state being a tool to be yielded or subject with agency in its own right (Poulantzas 2000, 129) allows one to think critically about what shifts are taking place within the state, and to begin to grasp their significance. Poulantzas’ insights on the simultaneous strengthening and weakening of the state in terms of its coercive and democratic apparatuses, respectively, is highly useful in conceptualizing some of the key shifts in power and social relations during the Conservatives’ time in office. For that reason chapter seven and the analysis within opens with a quote of Poulantzas on the relative lack of access to democratic institutions and “growing distance between political democracy and socio-economic democracy” for increasing numbers of people in Western societies (Poulantzas 2000, 158). Such analyses should consider all of those living and labouring within the Canadian settler state.

As Peter Graefe (2007) has argued with respect to the potentialities of Marxist contributions to policy studies more generally, while “there are aspects of policy making related to bargaining dynamics, chance and creativity that elude political economy’s grasp”(35), there are several benefits to a political economy approach. These include the ability to recognize the state as *both* “a site of political struggle and representation” (25) and as subject to social forces, whose institutions are the outcomes of prior compromises that may change amidst new relations of power (27-8). This dissertation will indicate that the Conservatives’ rise to power reflects such a shift, which Marxist approaches can greatly illuminate.

Hall highlighted that a key strengths of Poulantzas’ approach was its recognition of “a new combination of coercion/consent, tilted towards the coercive end of the spectrum, while maintaining the outer forms of democratic class role intact.” Hall’s modification of Poulantzas

involved remedying what he describes as Poulantzas' relative neglect of the political/ideological level of struggle and New Right anti-state discourses and strategy (1985, 117–18). For this project Hall's emphases are highly useful, for ideological struggle and creative politics are crucial aspects of the Conservatives' politics, particularly in their approach to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism.

Following Poulantzas, Hall strongly differentiated his analysis from simplistic "name calling" and accusations of fascism lobbed at Thatcher's government by many of its left opponents for its anti-democratic tendencies and confrontational political style, accusations that did little to help understand neoconservative politics and its successes. Instead, he offered the concept of authoritarian populism to describe what was then felt to be an emergent and powerful form of conservative politics that sought to achieve an "active popular consent" for its agenda and "entailed a striking weakening of democratic forms and initiatives, but not their suspension," (1979, 15). These elements will be explored in subsequent chapters.

Hall, pace Poulantzas invites readers to engage in sober assessments of shifts in democratic institutions- or forms and initiatives- rather than engage in polemics or dismissals of critiques. Such conceptual analysis certainly offers a far more useful form of analysis than defences of the Conservative government from the mainstream right. Bricker and Ibbitson, for example, dismiss critics of the Harper government's approach to parliament and policy making as merely engaging in "rants" from the left chalked up to the misgivings of media left outside of the corridors of power, rather than taking such concerns seriously (Bricker and Ibbitson 2013, 213).

The *authoritarianism* of authoritarian populism highlights the anti-democratic nature of the neoconservative political project, both symbolically and in substantive terms. These include policy making approaches and policies themselves that make Canada's political system less democratic, as well as authoritarian discourses and symbolic politics that attempt to delegitimize

political opposition and social actors. In the Canadian context in the fields under discussion in particular this has included the demonization of vulnerable migrants- particularly refugees- while promoting deference to authority. It has also included a decline in the rights, possibilities and security of (im)migrants in Canada's economic, political and social life.

Of course right-wing populism has major contradictions despite being “discursively effective” (Hall 2011, 713). As Laycock has noted, citing Laclau, all populist appeals are designed to reach across class differences to create “politically powerful discursive antagonisms between ‘the people’ and a ‘power bloc,” in a manner that creates a particular democratic imaginary (2005, 172–73). As noted above concerning conservative notions of democracy, for right-wing populists, a key distinction drawn is frequently between “special interests” and oppressive governments and self-interested bureaucrats that support them on the one hand, and “the people” and the “free market” on the other. Notably, however, Laycock points out that excluded from such definitions of special interests are corporate interests and lobbies and the media that support them. Indeed, closely allied to right-wing think tanks and organizations, business groups and corporations are purportedly “not just more legitimate public actors than the special interests; their opposition to special interests’ ‘interventionist’ agendas made them allies of ‘the people’” (2005, 187).

Laycock notes that “special interests” were a category introduced to Canadian politics by the Reform Party and that they passed on to their successors. The notion includes a long list of groups, including state employees, “ethnic and cultural minority groups . . . providers of state-subsidized legal assistance to the poor or traditionally advantaged,” and includes any attempt to “offset the market’s distribution of benefits and opportunities” (Laycock 2005, 57). The “refugee lobby” is also a term in the asserted family of special interests that has been adopted by Canada’s right.

As will be seen with the government's dismissal of calls by civil society actors to reform the temporary foreign worker program to better protect migrant workers, market models of democratic decision making -- which idealize and assert the supremacy of consumer choice over democratic citizenship and collective goods -- deny the legitimacy of supporting marginalized voices and equate the power to spend in the marketplace with genuine political participation in the face of stark inequalities. However such inequalities, which are further exacerbated by the structure of migrant worker programs and their denial of citizenship to such workers undermine and mark an even further departure from "inter-group decision-making that disadvantaged groups and classes have used since the Second World War . . . to enhance the voice and impact in public policy development, and to counter the power of organized capital in shaping state policy" (Laycock 2005, 191). Furthermore, the track record of neoconservative governments in power provincially in Canada demonstrated their forms of decision-making to in fact be *less* democratic, *more* elitist and beneficial to the interests of the organized right. Such is the result of a mode of thought that erases history and inequality from its modes of analysis.

Despite claims to offer a more democratic market alternative framed in terms of equal opportunity, forms of consultation and decision-making under neoconservative governments have tended to see meaningful participation often restricted to elite business interests while others are demonized (Laycock 2002, 36). Such a tendency is visible in the Conservatives' approach to the temporary foreign worker program, where labour rights were a far lower priority than facilitating business access to that labour. Parallel to this favourable treatment accorded elite economic interests, market and informal processes set the terms of opportunity structures and define the national community without addressing social inequalities or challenging already dominant groups, for example (Patten 1999, 39). In facilitating employer access to migrant workers' labour without full labour rights, such as to change employers, such inequalities are exacerbated.

Such an approach can be at best superficially non-racist and certainly not *anti-racist* (Simmons 1998), for it fails to in any way address problems of structural racism. In many cases the Conservatives' exacerbated regressive social relations in Canada for (im)migrants and refugees. This dissertation will consider how the Conservatives have adapted their discourses and policies to shed some of the worst political baggage they inherited from their Reform predecessors while identifying significant continuities in the exclusions and creative adjustments to their discourses and ideological stances that help one grasp their contemporary policies and politics. Elements of change in the discursive and policy realms under discussion in this dissertation that will be explored in subsequent chapters -- including in the realms of multiculturalism, citizenship, immigrant, migrant worker and refugee policy -- represent perhaps the most novel phase of a political project by Canada's Conservatives designed to grow their electoral base while simultaneously implementing exclusionary and disciplinary policies.

It is important to acknowledge, as Hall did in the British case, that the Conservatives' electoral and political project profited from the lack of strong, progressive, and convincingly argued alternative from the opposition parties in these fields, which provided important political openings that they skillfully exploited. In Gramscian terms, it is the Conservatives who were attempting to dominate antagonistic groups- those with whom they disagree in civil society and electoral politics- while providing a form of "intellectual and moral leadership" to subordinate ones (Gramsci 1971, 57). The Conservatives undertook their political project as they worked to shift the centre of gravity of Canadian politics to the right while more recently seeking to attract sufficient support amongst "ethnic" and immigrant constituencies despite enacting policies that run counter to the well-being of many (im)migrants and refugees. While of course "ethnic voters," immigrants and refugees do not have any single set of objective interests given the heterogeneity of experiences within these problematic categories (Satzewich 2011), overall trends

of policies, policy making and whether such sets policies and practices are making Canada a more or less inclusive society can be assessed.

As Hall notes concerning the United Kingdom -- and of great relevance to Canada's conservative movement -- Thatcher's project of building sufficient popular consent to gain election was not reliant only or even primarily on neoliberal market rationality, but as Hall notes relied on "archaic" forms of nationalism and "[n]ationalist discourse" with "imperial undertow . . . haunted by the fantasy of a late return to the flag, family values, national character, imperial glory . . ." that serve to paper over the harshness of neoliberal governance (Hall 2011, 713). Such forms of governance are also reinforced by expressions of public morality and populist 'law and order' discourses that legitimize more coercive forms of governance (Hall 1980, 72–73). These themes permeate the rhetoric and citizenship, immigration and other policies implemented and espoused by Canada's Conservative Party and former government. The Canadian context and its demographics and political context and history of social relations are markedly different from the UK, however, particularly its history as a settler colonial system and Canada's relative embrace of notions of multiculturalism and in its self-image as a country welcoming to immigrants. For that reason, I develop and employ the terms *neoconservative multiculturalism* and *Kenneyism* to capture the shifts and contradictions apparent in the political approach of Canada's Conservative Party.

Kenneyism and Neoconservative Multiculturalism

Hall's concept of authoritarian populism can be usefully applied to the Canadian context and its Conservative Party. However Canada's unique context and the policy fields to which it is being applied means that the concept requires adaptation to "Canadian conditions" and the relative uniqueness of the social terrain that Canadian neoconservatism must navigate. The concepts of

Kenneyism and *neoconservative multiculturalism* help to grasp the specific character of the Canadian neoconservative project both electorally and in the fields of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism on the country's settler colonial terrain.

In the Canadian case, these themes can be applied in part by contrasting the harder edged "blue" neoconservatism of the present Conservative party with the prior "red" Toryism of prior federal Progressive Conservative governments. However Canada's hard right, operating through the Reform and its successor parties needed to learn to operate within a popular consensus and demographic realities working in favour of expansionary immigration policies and a generally positive disposition towards multiculturalism on the part of the wider population. Such a vision of Canada is considered by many to be a central part of Canadian identity (Reitz 2011, 7).

Within such a context, however, the Conservatives have proactively taken the initiative to try to shift popular understandings of Canada towards a terrain of their own making, to make it a more hospitable place for neoconservative policies and practice. The evolution of the Conservative Party from its predecessor parties towards a flexible form of *Kenneyism* has been a long term process of reconfiguring the party, constructing a novel form of Canadian nationalism and seeking sufficient numbers of new supporters to form an exclusionary "minimum winning coalition," to employ a term from a description of party strategy by Tom Flanagan whose full meaning will be explored in greater depth in subsequent chapters. Grasping the realities of Canadian demographics, in the 2000s the Conservatives increased their efforts to incorporate "ethnic voters" into the Conservative political tent as a new "third and essential pillar" of electoral support to replace that of Quebec, which had helped elect prior Progressive Conservative governments (Flanagan 2011b).

Kenneyism is in part the story of the creative, temporary construction of this third "pillar." The Conservatives developed an authoritarian populist discourse for Canadian conditions that

made sympathetic appeals to “hard working” immigrants and that was no longer openly antagonistic to significant sectors of the voting population, though still operating within an authoritarian populist imaginary that demonized refugees while appealing to Canadians’ self-image as fair and just, and raising social anxieties about the security of Canada’s borders. As will be seen, the party moved to a higher level of sophistication with respect to its outreach efforts, albeit with very negative substantive impacts for many (im)migrants in terms of policy and discourse while they were in power.

In addition to its potential theoretical contribution, the term *Kenneyism* is also heuristically useful in a number of ways in grasping the Conservative decade in these policy areas. These include: 1) Kenney’s embodiment and centrality to the articulation of the Conservatives’ political project and its evolution since its Reform incarnation (he was also a Reform MP with deep roots in the North American neoconservative movement), including his widely acknowledged – even decisive (Jeffrey 2015, 70) - role in the Conservatives’ outreach efforts to immigrants and “ethnic” voters (while holding the Multiculturalism portfolio from 2007-2015); 2) the *highly creative yet substantively regressive* form of *neoconservative multiculturalism* -- he espoused, featuring disciplinary nationalist discourses and narratives he promoted and employed in speeches, legislation and the portfolios of Citizenship & Immigration (2008-2013), Defence (2015), Employment and Social Development (2013-2015) and Multiculturalism (2007-2015) (Carlaw 2015a). The mix of portfolios he held and linked developments in those fields during Conservative rule themselves offer a shorthand reference for the directions in which he and the Conservatives’ took citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in Canada by also encompassing the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the militarism of the Defence portfolio; and 3) the *substantive impact* and *authoritarian forms* of

decision-making and policies promoted during the Conservatives time in office, where he became the most well-known minister attached to the portfolios considered in this dissertation.

The concept of *Kenneyism* is not solely or even primarily about the politics of a single Minister in a single government, however, but rather about the trends in the form and substance of politics that can be included under the label in contemporary Canada. It is a concept that seeks to address apparent paradoxes and help answer the question of how one reconciles the party's simultaneous outreach efforts to many new, ethnicized and racialized Canadians while at the same time implementing highly exclusionary policies in many realms of citizenship and immigration- particularly but not only with respect to Muslims, refugees and temporary foreign workers. It addresses the regressive form of nationalism promoted in these fields through a version of *neoconservative multiculturalism* in Canada's settler colonial social formation that has both benefitted from the neoliberal evolution of Canadian multiculturalism but also the Conservatives' own creative and disciplinary politics. The concept of neoconservative multiculturalism addresses a central plane of Canadian identity over which significant political and hegemonic battles are waged.

In the Canadian context, as have many scholars have noted, the concept and practice of multiculturalism itself possesses inherent limitations. Its dominant meanings have also shifted significantly over time, including devolving from anti-racist conceptions of the 1980s towards neoliberal and pro-business "selling diversity" and "smallest common denominator" versions in the 1990s and early 2000s (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Abu-Laban 2014; Winter 2014a; Bannerji 2000). While it can be seen as many different things, dispositions concerning "multiculturalism" are a crucial part of the contested terrain of Canadian politics. Inclusionary common sense ideas of multiculturalism are a core aspect of national identity to many members of Canadian society, if a matter of disdain for others. In hegemonic struggles over national

identity its progressive use marked a major improvement in some ways over notions of Anglo-conformity. However it can also be employed to conceal inequality, particularly the structural inequalities of a settler colonial state and its immigration system. It can be adopted as a fig leaf and even further hollowed out of any progressive meaning, and, as will be seen, deployed in neoconservative directions at a relatively low price.

To return to the label of Kenneyism, its first defining characteristic, primarily discussed in chapters three to five is I) the hard work of “ethnic outreach” coupled with emotive, flattering appeals to the immigrant experience in Canada. These are a component of the party’s electoral pragmatism, featuring aggressive “ethnic” outreach designed to achieve an exclusionary “minimum winning coalition,” as discussed with reference to the work of Tom Flanagan. The second is II) the project of a disciplinary neoconservative multiculturalism, also enacted through their approach to citizenship and their wider divisive and militarist ‘civilizational’ nationalism and III) the authoritarian populist demonization of refugees and other vulnerable migrants. Fourth IV) is the intensification of neoliberal social relations and accelerated erosion of paradigms of permanent immigration and of security for (im)migrants and refugees on Canadian soil, coupled with V) the decline of democratic decision-making and concentration of ministerial power while targeting opponents to the exercise of that power. Together these capture much of the substance of their authoritarian populist project.

Chapter Two Conclusion

Chapters one and two have overviewed general and academic perceptions of the Conservatives’ time in office and situated the approach this dissertation will take to grasping the Conservatives’ political project and approach to the governance of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in dialogue with multiple relevant academic literatures.

In this chapter I have argued that liberal pluralist or institutional approaches to the Conservatives' forms of politics record in these policy fields insufficiently engage with the substance of their project and the regressive social relations that it has advanced. Employing an anti-racist political economy perspective, I argue that such approaches lead to an overly optimistic assessments of the Conservatives' time in office and greatly underestimate the social and political exclusions evident in their discourses and time in government.

The absences in such literatures are remedied by engagement with works and approaches informed by analyses of settler colonialism and critical citizenship and multiculturalism studies that are more attuned to the social relations and political and ideological terrain upon which any political project must operate in Canada. Particularly helpful is Thobani's conception of *exalted subjects* and their others, where white English and French-speaking descendants of Canada's settler colonial subjects are privileged while the country's racialized (im)migrant and refugee others experience an array of disciplinary ideologies and practices that merit extended attention. Also of great importance are the interplay between neoliberalism and neoconservatism within such political projects and their anti-democratic tendencies.

While the particularities of Canadian society and the Canadian Conservative Party must be considered and analyzed on their own terms, Stuart Hall's work on the creative politics of authoritarian populism provides important tools with which to consider ideological and material changes in both political projects and public policies and approaches to governance. In these chapters I have provided the concepts of *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism* in order to help grasp the contradictions and mix of outreach, exclusion and ideological creativity that have featured in the party's politics, policies and policy-making approach in the Canadian context.

The next three chapters explore the evolution of the Conservative Party of Canada from its predecessor parties and further describes and illustrates these concepts before providing a greater focus on changes to policies, the process of policy-making and social relations advanced by the Conservatives in chapters six and seven in particular.

Chapter 3: The Road from Reform to the Conservative Party in Neoliberal Canada

Introduction to Chapter 3

“There is perhaps no area of public policy where the views of Canadians have been more systematically ignored through the undemocratic structuring of political debate than the area of immigration. Despite the cries of 'racism' and the invocation of legal fictions, political change can occur where political will exists and is articulated. Immigration abuse must be ended, and not just by legalizing it. All Canadians, not just the political and immigration establishment must get a better handle on our long-term immigration goals and needs . . .

Immigration should not be based on race or creed, as it was in the past; nor should it be explicitly designed to radically or suddenly alter the ethnic makeup of Canada, as it increasingly seems to be.”

- Reform Party of Canada Platform and Statement of Principles (1989, 23)

The Conservative Party recognizes Canadian society has been built by successive waves of immigration from all sectors of the globe, and that immigration tremendously enriches our economy and national life . . . Too often, immigrants find it difficult to use the very skills that earned them admission into Canada in the first place. Too many skilled workers and professionals face trouble having their credentials recognized, even after they have been assessed and vetted during the immigration process. We will not allow special interests to prevent immigrants from contributing their best to Canadian society.

- 2004 Conservative Party Election Platform (2004a, 32)

As discussed in the last chapter with reference to Brodie and Jenson’s work, the rise of the Reform Party was an integral part of the breakdown of “normal politics” and politicization of social questions in the 1980s and 1990s with respect to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in Canada. The Reform Party was instrumental in the re-politicization of Canadian identity in a manner that challenged what for many had become the common sense and political party consensus around a multicultural and bilingual definition of Canada that had to some extent accepted what Tully has described as the “politics of cultural recognition” (Tully

quoted within and Patten 1999, 28). As can be seen above in the first quote from the party's 1989 "Statement of Principles," the Reform Party's early positions expressed anxiety about the changing demographics of Canadian society, even positing that immigration policy might be "designed to radically or suddenly alter the ethnic makeup" of an implied white Canada and expressed skepticism about the existence of racism in Canada through the use of scare quotes. In doing so the party gave voice to right-wing populist and racist anxieties of some of the party's political base. These were also the types of publicly expressed views that would limit the party's potential for electoral growth and hegemonic leadership in a settler colonial state that had seen significant levels of immigration from outside of Europe since the end of official white Canada immigration policies in the 1960s.

As will be seen, Reform's early statements and platforms were overtly hostile to immigration and multiculturalism. These stances, along with fundamentalist "free market" and law and order predilections were part of a less sophisticated authoritarian populist approach by the early Reform Party than those eventually witnessed under the Harper Conservatives, despite Harper's early involvement in the Reform Party. Employing the conceptual apparatus outlined in the previous chapter -- which employs Gramsci-inspired tools to help to grasp shifts in the exercise of political leadership on Canada's right on questions of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism -- this chapter begins to trace the evolution of the Reform, Canadian and Alliance Parties' evolution from an often crude "invasion from the margin" approach towards a politically savvy and hegemonic politics of Kenneyism and neoconservative multiculturalism. As outlined in the last chapter, amongst the key dynamics of Kenneyism are emotive, flattering appeals to the immigrant experience in Canada as well as the project of a disciplinary neoconservative multiculturalism enacted through their approach to citizenship and their wider

divisive and militarist ‘civilizational’ nationalism. Both of these took time over the course of the 1990s and early 2000s to take shape and develop, however.

These shifts were necessary for Canada’s right to have a realistic chance to grow enough to graduate from the role of official opposition and to one day achieve a majority government. The shift towards a more hegemonic form of politics in the Canadian demographic context are evidenced in the 2004 Conservative Party platform recognition cited above, that celebrates how “immigration tremendously enriches our economy and national life” and acknowledges the economic struggles many immigrants face. Such xenophilic rather than xenophobic statements mark a shift from outright antagonism to attempts at hegemonic leadership over racialized and ethnicized Canadians and an attempt to avoid alienating to those uncomfortable with overt expressions of racism and xenophobia. Coupled with these platitudes, however, was a disciplinary neoconservative vision of citizenship and multiculturalism that leading Conservative thinkers were also cultivating.

To grasp the party’s evolution and the roots of its approach under the Harper government this chapter will trace two *prior* stages in the Conservatives’ long term political development since the early Reform Party period. The first, to borrow from Tom Flanagan’s writings is that of 1) “invasion from the margin” (Flanagan 2009b, 208). That invasion saw the disruption and breakdown of Canada’s political party system and the country’s definition of “normal politics” during a period in which multiculturalism was “under siege,” to a significant extent as a result of Reform’s rhetoric and stances concerning immigration and multiculturalism (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 1992) . Such an approach, however, had limited potential for growth and was unresponsive to the shifts in demographics that had changed the face of and common sense notions about Canada since the 1960s and the end of white Canada immigration policies. It was an authoritarian populist approach heavy on law and order emphases and committed to the

intensification of neoliberalism, but with little effort devoted by the party's white neoconservative base to attempt to exercise hegemonic leadership over new and "ethnic" Canadians whose electoral support they needed to achieve office. The at times crude and pragmatic calculations of Kenneyism and the project of achieving a "minimum winning coalition" are the focus of the next chapter, however.

The shifts in political approach by Canada's Conservatives and their predecessors discussed here are observable through close readings of Reform, Alliance and Conservative party platforms, speeches, as well as the writings of key Conservative Party figures such as Stephen Harper himself (in the late 1990s and early 2000s), Jason Kenney and former Conservative and Reform Party stalwart Tom Flanagan. These sources as well as secondary literatures provide important insights concerning questions of political strategy and the evolution of party discourses and the evolution of their authoritarian populist approaches.

Following that of "invasion from the margin," the second and third stages I identify stem from an awareness of party elites of the former's limitations: 2) that of the cleansing of the Reform Party and its successor parties' discourses concerning questions of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism and 3) the party's attempt to reconfigure Canadian nationalism in neoconservative directions.

This chapter will also consider the limits and openings created by neo(L)iberalism in citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in Canada that in part left significant political terrain open to neoconservative appeals. Seen in the context of a country considered by some to have a mainstream consensus in favour of multiculturalism and comparatively high levels of immigration (Reitz 2011), the twenty-first century Conservative Party of Canada's discourses of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism represent a significant advancement in their

political sophistication over those of their Reform predecessors, but a political achievement accompanied by highly regressive policies.

The next two chapters consider how the Conservative Party and their neoconservative predecessors creatively adapted their authoritarian populist recipe to create an innovative form of neoconservative multicultural politics more friendly in tone to Canada's demographic realities from a political heritage not generally seen as receptive to immigrants and racialized Canadians. In doing so they invited some "ethnic voters" and immigrants to join the Conservative political project as they sought to grow their base and compete more effectively for political power, however in a politically disciplinary manner.

The Road to *Kenneyism*

It will be seen in subsequent chapters that the significance of the concepts of *Kenneyism* and *authoritarian populism* for analyzing the policy fields discussed are their acknowledgment of the attempt to build enough popular support to govern by fusing contradictory constituencies, even if doing so with relatively little respect for democratic institutions, and to invoke conservative populist themes that seek some, or at least sufficient legitimation through the national imaginary. This is a task that neoconservatives have had to undertake in any Western democracy on the terrain of its particular civil society - including its demographics - if they hope to govern, for they are both subject to and seek to shape hegemonic ideas. For while in general terms the political right favours less equal social relations and is more prone to offering authoritarian models of governing, there is and cannot be a truly universal conservative project (Laycock 2002, 8). One must examine the national project in each social formation. Such lessons and insights are neither gained nor formulated overnight, however. This and the next chapter consider such a process over a period of nearly two decades. This chapter considers how the Reform, Alliance and

ultimately the Conservative Parties have proactively taken the initiative to try to shift popular understandings of Canada towards a terrain of their own making to make it a more hospitable place for neoconservative policies and practice, while balancing what might appear contradictory elements, such as an at times nativist political base and new and/or “ethnic” Canadians. It considers these developments in stages rooted in the concepts and analysis provided by party thinkers such as Tom Flanagan.

Stage 1: “Invasion from the Margin”: Discursive Assaults on Immigration and Multiculturalism by the Early Reform Party (late 1980s to early 1990s)

In the early 1990s prominent students of Canadian immigration policy wrote of a fundamental and comparatively- relative to other wealthy industrialized countries- enlightened consensus around immigration issues between Canada’s national governing parties, the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives. Hardcastle et al. (1994) considered a wide variety of potential explanations for immigration policies in the Canadian and Australian contexts. They concluded that the best way to understand Canadian immigration policy is that of a tension between statism and pluralism, but also pointed to a cosmopolitan elite ideological consensus as having some explanatory plausibility (121) within this policy field, where bipartisanship amongst the traditional governing parties seemed to reign (112, 120).

While the extent of such “enlightenment” has and can be challenged by critical scholars, the question of consensus and its breakdown is worthy of consideration. It is worth noting though that entering the 1990s in Canada multiculturalism was considered the hegemonic, if challenged nation-building ideology within that consensus (Lewycky 1992). However with shifts in the 1990s it was coming to be viewed substantively as being practiced in its “lowest common denominator” form, having been hollowed out in terms of state funding and anti-racist content

(Winter 2014a). Of great interest to this project, Hardcastle et al. (1994) noted that “[s]ubstantial national support for the Reform Party would be a challenge to bipartisan norms in immigration policy, though it is likely that its policies would need to be moderated in order for it to win substantial support beyond its western base” (114).

It is noteworthy that the distinctly neoconservative and skeptical thrust of Reform Party policies with respect to immigration and multiculturalism came during a period in during a time when Stephen Harper was the party’s policy officer, and later influential Conservative strategist and later Campaign Co-Chair Tom Flanagan had served as director of Policy, Strategy and Communications for the party. Reform’s policies and discourses through to the late 1990s were insightfully analyzed by Kirkham (1998). She found that “the party’s discourse on immigration and multiculturalism reveal[ed] an attempt to undo decades of progress on a number of initiatives that have sought to redress the structural inequalities in the distribution of power and resources, and foster greater racial-ethnic equality,” including that of “a more liberalized immigration policy” (264). Having risen to the level of the official opposition, the party had also “re-politicized issues that in recent times have remained uncontested at the level of party politics,” seeing immigration and multiculturalism polices as “long-standing shibboleths that require dismantling” (Kirkham 1998, 265).

As Tom Flanagan has described it in game theoretic terms in his *Waiting for the Wave* (2009) -- a work heavily influenced by Stephen Harper’s contributions¹² -- the Reform Party project was politically a strategy of “invasion from the margin”- the right margin- of Canadian politics. The notion of invasion from the margin is that a political party can shake up a more centrist form of politics and become an important player by appealing to a constituency further

¹² According to Flanagan, interviewed by Lawrence Martin, “Stephen was virtually a silent co-author of that book . . . He made extremely valuable contributions, and he also furnished documents to me” (L. Martin 2010, 9–10)

towards the margins rather than the centre of a political system or set of social values, and in doing so draw support away from more mainstream, centrist political parties (Flanagan 2009b, 224–25).

Reform's early statements and platforms were overtly hostile to immigration and multiculturalism- part of what Abu-Laban and Gabriel termed a situation of "ethnic pluralism under siege" in the late 1980s and early 1990s (1992). As seen in part at the beginning of this chapter, the Reform Party argued that immigrants should be completely self-sufficient, that definitions of family and the ability to sponsor be narrowed while they expressed anxieties over changing demographics of Canada. Such statements clearly expressed alarm over shifts in Canadian society since the 1960s that accompanied the end of "White Canada" immigration policies. Reform targeted the Multiculturalism Ministry for dismantling and took aim at the "special interests"- the "career politicians and immigration advocates" and "bogus refugees and other illegal entrants" they claimed were ruining Canada's immigration system and harming the country (Reform Party of Canada 1989, 23–24). However much of this ground has been well covered in research by others (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 1992; Patten 1999; Laycock 2002).

Even if they could not put an end to "hyphenated Canadianism" which they felt divided rather than united the country's population, in the 1990s Canada's political right was in many ways successful in helping to drive a neoliberal shift in immigration policy. In assessing the achievements of the Reform Party in the immigration field in *Waiting for the Wave*, Flanagan cites a November 1994 announcement by then-Immigration Minister Sergio Marchi reducing annual immigrant admissions intake and tighter rules around family reunification as a great victory by the Reform Party. Flanagan credited Reform's immigration critic with waging a "dogged battle" against then Liberal Immigration Minister Sergio Marchi that helped to push

policy directions rightward and in a more restrictive direction (Flanagan 2009b, 194).¹³ And indeed, it would be difficult to argue that by the end of the 1990s Canada's immigration system was not being guided by the general principle that immigration policy be "essentially economic in nature" as had been demanded by Reform in its first policy documents (Reform Party of Canada 1989, 23), even if the country continued to increasingly receive immigrants from non-European countries.

Of greater interest here are the *shifts* in public pronouncements, points of emphasis and party positions over time as the Reform Party and its successors became more pragmatic vehicles for neoconservatism in the late 1990s and 2000s, as well as the *continuities* that remain. As the party soon learned, invading from the margin had its limits. The Western Canada-based party was hampered electorally by its negative reputation in other regions and segments of the population and by the vocal intolerance of some of its members (Harrison 1995, 174–75; Flecker 2008, 167–68). Its supporters remained "overwhelmingly members of dominant ethnic and cultural (Western European) groups" (Laycock 2002, 132), which left the party far from power, even if it helped drive the centre of Canadian politics significantly to the right. Thus early in its history the need for discursive shifts quickly became apparent. The party would evolve significantly from its founding, when the party frequently exhibited its less politically palatable 'rough edges,' through to its Alliance and Conservative incarnations.

¹³ Of course Reform's contributions to a rightward shift went far beyond immigration policy. Writing in 1998, Flanagan and Harper describe a Canada where "The impact the conservative movement has already had is shown in the growing conservatism of public opinion and public policy. Canada is not the same country it was ten years ago. Sound money, balanced budgets, tax reduction, free trade, deregulation, privatization of public enterprise, and targeting of social welfare programs now constitute a broad consensus within the Reform Party, the Progressive Conservatives, and the business Liberals, who currently dominate the party (1998, 170). More generally, both Stephen Harper and his former campaign chair and occasional co-author have taken credit for much of the rightward shift of public policy in Canada (1998; Flanagan 2009b).

Stage 2: Reconfiguring the Discourse, Rebranding and Disciplining the Party: From Late Reform to the Founding of the New Conservative Party (mid 1990s to 2004)

Longer, and perhaps more interesting than the clear phase of “Invasion from the Margin” is the period of the sanitizing of the party’s discourse by high party figures. These included most prominently Tom Flanagan, once the Reform Party’s Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications, and Harper, the Party’s former Policy Chief and MP, both of whom subsequently brought much greater discipline to the Alliance and Conservative Parties. This is perhaps best captured by Flanagan’s description of the Conservatives as having evolved into a top-down “garrison party” on a permanent campaign footing in the 2000s (Flanagan 2013). It was during the 1990s and first years of the 2000s however when the work of reconfiguring these parties’ ideologies in a manner reflective of global shifts in the political right’s discourse in a post-Cold War world would take place.

By the end of the Reform Party period one can already see platforms that ring familiar to observers of the present Conservative Party, though there was clearly a need to pass through the Alliance and into the early Conservative phases while conducting aggressive outreach in order to detoxify its reputation amongst some segments of the Canadian population. On its own for example, the Alliance Party failed to advance much in the capture of the “ethnic vote” than its Reform predecessor (Laycock 2002, 19).

It must be acknowledged that the stages outlined here are of course not fully self-contained. For example by the early 1990s the party decided, at the urging of party elites, that it “stands for the acceptance and integration of immigrants into the mainstream of Canadian life” (Reform Party of Canada 1992, Reason 52) rather than to continue to focus on what it perceived to be negative demographic changes. This “integrationist” impulse and seeming need to assert a dominant vision of “Canadian culture” represents a strand of continuity in Conservative policy

and rhetoric to the present- part of their vision and practice of a form of what I term *neoconservative multiculturalism*, which will be discussed in chapter five. By 1995 Reform “remain[ed] convinced that immigration has been, and can be again, a positive source of economic growth, cultural diversity, and social renewal” (Reform Party of Canada 1995) – a problematic statement for what it implies about more contemporary immigration trends but an improvement on its earlier discourses.

Over the course of the 1990s the leadership of the party, particularly Harper and Flanagan worked to cleanse the party’s platform of its most offensive statements (Kirkham 1998). By 1997, the Multiculturalism Ministry was no longer slated for abolition in party platforms, nor would the notion of abolishing the ministry re-emerge in subsequent platforms, though some observers see the ministry as having been marginalized through a process of “Reform by Stealth” after the Conservatives assumed power (Abu-Laban 2014).

Nonetheless, as Kirkham noted late in the life of the Reform Party, although “the tone . . . bec[a]me less vitriolic, the perception of an immigration system out of control is still a theme party officials perpetuate” (1998, 253). This was particularly the case with respect to refugees. While the party dropped the idea of constitutional amendment and use of the notwithstanding clause “to ensure that Parliament can ultimately control entry into Canada,” (Reform Party of Canada 1989, 23) the notion of “queue-jumping” and system integrity have remained a consistent preoccupation through the Alliance and Conservative incarnations of the party.

By 2000 the Alliance version of the party recognized Canada as having “always been enriched by new arrivals to our shores” and stated that “[a] Canadian Alliance government will maintain the current level of immigration” (Canadian Alliance 2000, 22) - a promise and policy that helped obscure other significant policy shifts that were never advertised in the party’s platforms and that helps to inoculate them from criticisms of being ‘anti-immigrant,’ despite the

negative impacts of many of their policies on immigrants and migrants.¹⁴ This was a significant shift from prior platforms and statements of principle by the Reform Party stating that immigration “amount[s] to the local nomination busing phenomenon on a national scale” in favour of the then-governing Liberals, and a great contrast with prior calls for immigration levels to be capped at 150,000 per year (Reform Party of Canada 1995, 5).

However the Alliance platform’s harder edges stated that “Canadians are also angered by policies which have let dangerous criminals into this country, and with unscrupulous human smugglers who bring in illegal migrants, jumping the queue and hurting the integrity of the system,” reflecting the assertions of a system “out of control” as noted above.

In words that are strongly echoed in Conservative Party discourses, the Alliance Party’s immigration platform purported to “accommodate legitimate immigrants and their families who seek to contribute to Canada, while locking it tight to those who would abuse the system” (Canadian Alliance 2000, 22). This maintained an authoritarian populist law and order discourse, though cleansing it of its most openly xenophobic elements. The party also dropped – declarations by 2017 Conservative Party Leadership Candidates aside- references to using the notwithstanding clause to ensure Canada can deport undesirable immigrants as described in their first statement of principles (Reform Party of Canada 1989, 25). These are themes that were reflected in Stephen Harper’s candidacy for the leadership of the Canadian Alliance- itself a prior effort to rebrand the Reform Party and shed it of some of its baggage. In that context Harper portrayed himself as ‘pro-immigration,’ albeit troubled by Canada’s refugee determination

¹⁴ This was evidenced in Jason Kenney’s replies to simplistic assertions of a Reform-rooted anti-immigrant bias by then Liberal MP Bob Rae in response to controversies over the temporary foreign worker program- replies which cited the maintenance if not slight increase in permanent immigration levels (Vincent 2014).

system, which he linked to security concerns¹⁵ in a manner echoing the work of the conservative Fraser Institute at the time and foreshadowing his future government's harsh changes to the refugee determination system.

As the Conservatives' own "Harper Quotations database" reveals, however, Harper himself had made statements that are less than receptive to many racialized Canadians and had not yet fully absorbed the need for careful party messaging on such questions. When asked about comments then Prime Minister Jean Chretien had made that implied that many Western Canadian voters may be parochial in their interests because they did not vote Liberal in the 2000 Federal Election, then National Citizens Coalition head Harper asserted "I think Chretien just doesn't care. You've got to remember that west of Winnipeg the ridings the Liberals hold are dominated people who are either recent Asian immigrants or recent migrants from eastern Canada: people who live in ghettos and who are not interested in integrating into western Canadian society" (Grace 2001, 10)- words that would be inconceivable to hear from him as party leader and Prime Minister. In the ensuing years the Conservatives moved far beyond such simple and insulting rhetoric in their general discourses around immigration and sought to construct a more attractive neoconservative discourse suited to Canada's demographic realities.

The Roots of Neoconservative Multiculturalism: A Moralistic, Civilizational Bent to Canadian Identity and Nationalism

As will be seen subsequently, particularly in chapters five and six, of great significance for contemporary citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism policy have been the party's efforts to redefine Canadian nationalism and Canada itself along neoconservative lines.

¹⁵ "I'm pro-immigration in principle. I think the biggest concern in the immigration system right now is the refugee determination process, which has become such a boondoggle. It not only threatens the integrity of the immigration system, it threatens national security. I've been saying for years that the most important thing is that this country makes its own immigration selection and that this policy be consistent with Canadians' views. A refugee determination system that has effectively created a backdoor immigration stream that bypasses legal channels is unacceptable. And we need to tighten that system. But I want to make it very clear--I don't want it to be said that I'm anti-immigration. I'm very supportive of [a] significant [level of] immigration and always have been" (Harper 2002).

Then on the route to becoming leader of the Canadian Alliance, in the early 2000s Stephen Harper expressed his frustration and distaste for the “moral nihilism” of contemporary liberals and the left, and asserted the need for conservatives to “give greater place to social values and social conservatism, broadly defined and properly understood,” even if it meant a reconfiguration of their electoral coalition. When considering the question of having one “‘conservative’ party or two,” the very real danger Harper identified was Canada’s right having “no conservative party at all.” Thus, while not lamenting the loss of what he described as “some old ‘conservatives,’ Red Tories like the David Orchards or the Joe Clarks” and backing the invasion of Iraq and war in Afghanistan, Harper argued that Canadian conservatives needed to build a “a more coherent coalition.” That coalition, Harper urged, would fight debates on foreign affairs on “moral grounds” and required a revival of a more organic, Burkean (neo)conservatism in terms of “preserving historic values and moral insights” against asserted leftist frameworks of “moral neutrality, moral relativism and moral equivalency” (Harper 2003) that he associated with contemporary (L)iberalism and social democracy.

The period of “invasion from the margin” and ultimately the victory of Reform over Progressive Conservative elements in the parties’ eventual 2004 merger saw an unambiguous rejection of Progressive Conservatism, which Harper had referred to as an “oxymoron” (Jeffrey 2015, 36) and a defeat of Red Toryism. Red Toryism was a form of conservatism that at least acknowledged a paternalistic need for modest wealth redistribution out of a duty of the wealthy to the poor, a “willingness to place some limits on the free market, which left to its own, results in unacceptable levels of deprivation,” as Farney and Rayside note. It is was a version of conservatism far less hostile to the welfare state and a more inclusive societal model than modern neoconservatism with its mix of intensified neoliberalism and social conservatism. However this has been a declining strain of Canadian conservatism since the 1970s (Farney and Rayside

2013b, 6) with the rise of neoconservatism in the West. It was a more centrist vision of Canada as a multicultural country and whose remnants in the 1980s meant the Mulroney Progressive Conservatives were somewhat restrained in their attacks on the welfare state, at least in their first term (Patten 2013, 65). In 1988, during their second term they also passed Canada's first Multiculturalism Act, an act for the "preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada" (*Canadian Multiculturalism Act* 1988).

In the context of this dissertation, in considering the evolution of Canadian conservatism it is also notable, for example, that the Order in Council governing the modern Interim Federal Health Plan that provided health benefits to all refugee claimants and acknowledged the plight of the vulnerable seeking safety in Canada was introduced by the Red Tory Diefenbaker Conservative government in 1957 and had remained in place without controversy until 2012. In that year Canada's newer, more neoconservative party employed divisive rhetoric concerning refugees as "bogus" outsiders and gutted the program for many refugee claimants (Voices-Voix 2014), a development highly indicative of the eradication of Red Tory ideology and the ascension of punitive and exclusionary law and order discourses, some of which will be discussed in chapters five and six.

The new Conservative Party under Harper would push for a deepening of neoliberalism well beyond the levels that had been embraced by the Mulroney government, which Reform supporters such as Stephen Harper had felt fell far short in its neoconservative credentials, leading him to help found the Reform Party. As Patten has chronicled, neoliberalism and its ideology of limited state involvement and individual self-reliance has emerged as the dominant economic ideology of the party since its founding convention. Prior influences of "red tory ideological commitments and milder market liberal influences" have been purged (Patten 2013, 70–73). The Party has also witnessed a stronger embrace of expensive punitive law and order

policies and social conservatism, although the latter has been tempered by electoral considerations.

As the party evolved from its Reform to Alliance to Conservative Party iterations the party developed a more assertive national identity along civilizational lines and a more vociferous form of nationalism as will be seen in chapter five. It was to be a uniquely Canadian form of nationalism, which I term neoconservative multiculturalism, which would see the party selectively appropriate aspects of the Progressive Conservative legacy with respect to immigration and multiculturalism in an effort to moderate its image.

Overall, however, the vision espoused by Harper and subsequently by the party of Canada belonging to the Anglo-sphere of nations can be juxtaposed with nationalist welfare-state and multicultural vision of Canada as starkly different common sense notions of what constitute the “mainstream of Canadian life.” Visions of Canada as a social democratic state have been contested aggressively by neoconservative forces. The roots of these efforts can be seen in the early 2000s, as Harper bluntly expressed his rejection of Pierre Trudeau’s “Just Society” vision of Canada. He argued that it “defies the nature of our culture, our economy and our geography and is inexorably failing as our history unfolds” (Harper 2000). As Lawrence Martin found interviewing those around him, Stephen Harper hated Trudeau’s “hippie b.s.” and was determined to undo the damage he perceived to had been done as he “believed Canada was a better place before the 1960s when Quebec, the most leftish province, took over the agenda and a series of prime ministers from that province set the country on a welfare state course” (L. Martin 2010, 269). Instead, as he outlined in a speech in 2000, Harper saw more Conservative Alberta as a model, having “opted for the best of Canada’s heritage — a combination of American enterprise and individualism with the British traditions of order and co-operation . . . an open, dynamic and prosperous society in spite of a continuously hostile federal government.”

Expressing his frustration with Liberal Party majority rule he argued that, in contradistinction, “Canada appears content to become a second-tier socialistic country, boasting ever more loudly about its economy and social services to mask its second-rate status” while “Albertans would be fatally ill-advised to view this situation as amusing or benign” (Harper 2000 in Wherry 2011).

However as Abu-Laban and Gabriel have noted, whatever its limitations, part of that vision of Canada saw the recognition of collective demands of underserved and underrepresented groups, including those outside the dominant Anglophone and Francophone culture (2002, 170–71). It represented both a more inclusive vision and definition of Canadian citizenship than the norms of Anglo-conformity that had preceded it (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 1992, 365). For Harper, however, Canada needed “to reassert the fundamentals of its true nationhood” based on the Anglo-American experience and “no longer be obsessed by a narrow statism at home or an insecure neutralism abroad” (Harper 2000). Harper’s Conservatives have since sought to firmly place Canada within a community of English speaking nations, emphasizing traditional ties to Britain and the United States rather than a larger or more diverse global community that would reflect the demographic shifts Canada has undergone.

Aggressively reasserting such a lost heritage was a key theme of Conservative governance and is consistent with nativist imperial visions of Canada as the heir to a distinct Anglo nationalism or culture that both harkens back to nostalgia for the British Empire and sees the United States as a model (Harrison 1995, 165–66). And for his part Jason Kenney would cite the merits of a “liberal British Imperialism” as playing a positive role in Canadian nation-building while Stephen Harper would publicly describe Canada as “a country with no history of colonialism” (Ljunggren 2009), demonstrating a remarkable level of historical amnesia concerning Canadian history, particularly its dispossession of First Nations peoples and exclusionary immigration history.

These formulations, are part of what Arat-Koç has described as a “re-whitening” of Canadian identity, particularly after September 11, 2001 and influenced by “clash of civilizations” discourses popularized by Samuel Huntington after the end of the Cold War that pit “the West” against “the rest” (Arat-Koç 2005), maligns other cultures and downplay dissent within countries. These formulations, rooted in the worldview of Canada’s most aggressive mainstream “exalted subjects” (Thobani 2007) would be paired with flattering invitations for immigrant and “ethnic” Canadians to join their political project, though harsh measures were instituted towards those that reject that invitation or challenge Canada’s symbolic order, as this and chapter five will discuss.

Such a stance saw Harper and the Alliance strongly back the US push to invade Iraq in 2003 and to harshly criticize the Liberals for failing to stand side by side with their Anglo-American allies, for example. Harper, as well as Kenney, sought to firmly place Canada within the Anglosphere, of traditional ties to Britain and the United States rather than a larger or more diverse global community. In this light, the vocal stand the Conservatives later took against Iraq War resisters claiming refugee status in Canada (Elein 2009) becomes easier to grasp, as it marked a significant departure from Canada’s treatment of Vietnam War resisters in an analogous case as the Conservatives sought to assert a form of “solidarity” between two settler colonial states.

In attempting to achieve power, the Conservative Party also learned from painful experience that it needed to learn to construct its own more positive and nationalist vision of Canada to compete politically rather than just loudly lament the changes in Canadian society since the 1950s. They needed to move beyond simply being angry neoconservatives critical of the country to espousing a more attractive vision of the country. As Paul Wells notes, with the vitriol Canada’s political right had expressed about Canada, the first question that Stephen Harper faced

on the campaign trail in 2005 concerned whether he “hated Canada?” In that political context Harper would also be strongly influenced by a piece entitled “A Self-Hating Nation” by *Alberta Report* contributor Kevin Michael Grace which questioned Canadian conservatives’ approach to patriotism in the wake of 9/11 as being entirely too negative (Wells 2013, 67–69). A form of positive rather than simply negative nationalism was called for. A more confident neoconservative nationalism would be needed to replace neoconservative critique of the country. As Marland and Flanagan note, citing interviews with party insiders, Harper was working on a patriotic branding of the Canadian Alliance and intensified those efforts with the new Conservative Party (Marland and Flanagan 2013).

Also operating in the Conservatives’ favour, as Martin has noted, were some of the “broad trendlines of the times- the post-9/11 effect, the fracturing of the left, the conservative turn of an aging population, the media trend to the right, the economic ascendancy of the western provinces, the loss of leverage of Quebec” – all conjunctural elements working in Harper’s preferred direction (L. Martin 2010, 269). Just such a form of neoconservative nationalism aided by those trends is clearly observable in the next chapter as well as in their citizenship and multiculturalism policies.

Asking whether Harper and the Conservatives “hated Canada” was an understandable question as much of the Reform and Alliance Party’s platforms had been a consistent cataloguing of societal shifts that made these parties and their supporters upset about the state of the country. However the Conservative Party needed to expand on its base of support. They needed a type of positive rhetoric that might inspire some- and at least not repel too many other potential Conservative voters. And while highly regressive, it can be seen that big and small “c” conservative nationalist appeals feature much more prominently in Conservative Party Platforms than its Reform Party predecessors, and are today a staple of contemporary Conservative speech-

making and symbolic politics. Anticipating both partisan and media criticisms, Lawrence Martin notes that in 2005 Harper had his then chief-strategist Patrick Muttart work on patriotic strategies, from which arose their slogan “Stand up for Canada” which “was the backdrop for most every subsequent event in the campaign” (L. Martin 2010, 52). In that vein in 2008 their platform invoked the national anthem and was titled “*True North Strong and Free.*” In 2011, their “*Here for Canada*” platform struck similar tones (Conservative Party of Canada 2008; 2011, 32). In power the party also asserted a proactive duty to reframe Canadian identity (Conservative Party of Canada 2011, 32) - albeit in a manner that emphasizes a highly Anglicized and militaristic reading of Canadian history, echoing Harper’s earlier speeches and writings.

Table 3.1: National Vision of Canada Expressed with respect to Citizenship and Immigration by the Reform, Canadian Alliance and Conservative Parties of Canada

Theme/ Policy Area	Early Reform “Invasion from the Margin” (late 1980s to early 1990s)	“The Cleanse”: Later Reform/ Canadian Alliance (mid-1990s to early 2000s)	Kenneyism and the ‘Minimum Winning Coalition’ (Conservative Party of Canada 2004-2011)	Relevant Contemporary Policies and discourses of the Conservative Government (2006-2015)
National Vision	Hostility to immigrants and demographic change Return to Anglo- Conformity Fear of demographic change	Canadian Alliance: “Immigration: welcoming new Canadians, keeping out criminals.” “Canada is a nation of immigrants. We have always been enriched by new arrivals to our shores.”	Implicit Anglo- conformity Confident, Neoconservative Multicultural Society “Immigration has enriched Canada” Anti-terrorism and civilizational discourses expressed in policies and speeches.	Nationalism of a “Warrior Nation” (McKay and Swift 2012) Militarized citizenship guide, ceremonies and Citizenship Act (Bill C-24) Authoritarian populist legislation titles. Anti-terrorism rhetoric Anti-Muslim discourse and treatment of those taking citizenship oath wearing face coving (Niqab) Citizenship fraud discourse
Contents based on Reform, Canadian Alliance and Conservative Party platforms, legislation, speeches unless otherwise noted				

A pragmatic calculus

In terms of purely pragmatic, practical politics, with Canada’s political right divided into Reform/Alliance and Progressive Conservative factions, Harper was arguing by the late 1990s that the “three sisters” of Canadian conservatism that had historically provided the opportunity to achieve a majority government needed to be reunited: Western Populists, traditional Tories of Central and Eastern Canada and Quebec nationalists- albeit ideally on more stable terms than

under previous incarnations of the party, whose coalitions had fallen apart (Flanagan 2011a, 104). However even after forming the new Conservative Party in 2003 their efforts in more social democratic and nationalist Quebec foundered as a result of their own statements regarding cuts to cultural spending during the 2008 election and frustrations with the province's then-Liberal- but former Progressive Conservative- Premier Jean Charest (Wells 2013, 96–97) . Flanagan describes a change in focus to the “ethnic vote” in these terms:

In 2008, Quebec ceased to be pivotal in Conservative electoral calculations. Increasingly, the role of a third and essential pillar to complement the western populists and traditional Tories would be played by ethnic voters, new Canadians, mostly in Ontario rather than Quebec. This would involve a direct assault on the Liberals' ethnic fortress of Toronto rather than on the BQ's hegemonic hold over francophones in Quebec. (Flanagan 2011b).

Flanagan remarked that ultimately “[t]his increase in ethnic support released a treasure trove of seats for the Conservatives” (Flanagan 2011a). These were not the calculations of consensus or brokerage politics however. Nor – will it be seen- do they necessarily indicate a clear moderating influence by Canada's First-Past-the-Post electoral system as Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White have suggested (2013).

A key proponent of the Conservatives “ethnic outreach” strategy was Jason Kenney, whose rise within the party parallels its development. Kenney rose through the neoconservative ranks as an anti-abortionist conservative Catholic Christian and tax-fighter with close ties to US and Canadian right-wing think tanks and advocacy groups, particularly heading the Canadian Taxpayer's Federation before being elected as a Reform MP (M. McDonald 2014). Kenney reportedly identified the need for the Reform Party to appeal to newer Canadians as early as 1996 (L. Martin 2010, 227) or 1994 (M. McDonald 2014).

Kenneyism - the Conservatives approach to questions of political outreach as well as citizenship immigration and multiculturalism which will be explored in the next two chapters - is

in part the story of the creative building of this third “pillar.” By the end of this stage the Conservatives developed an authoritarian populist discourse that made sympathetic appeals to “hard working” immigrants and that was no longer openly antagonistic to significant sectors of the voting population, though their discourses still operated within an authoritarian populist imaginary that demonized refugees and raised social anxieties about the security of Canada’s borders. The party was moving to a higher stage of politics and level of sophistication with respect to its outreach efforts, albeit with very negative substantive impacts for many (im)migrants in terms of policy and discourse while they held power, which will be discussed in greater depth in subsequent chapters. This can be seen in the charts below, that considers some contemporary policies alongside the parties’ evolving discourses.

Table 3.2: Statements and Policies Concerning Immigration by Reform, Canadian Alliance and Conservative Parties of Canada

Theme/ Policy Area	Early Reform “Invasion from the Margin” (late 1980s to early 1990s)	“The Cleanse”: Later Reform/ Canadian Alliance (mid-1990s to early 2000s)	<i>Kenneyism</i> and the ‘Minimum Winning Coalition’ (Conservative Party of Canada since 2004)	Relevant Policies and discourses of the Conservative Government (2006-2015)
Immigration Levels and disposition towards immigration and citizenship (permanent residents)	<p>Advocated steep cuts to immigration</p> <p>Express opposition to the altering of Canadian demography through immigration (1989)</p> <p>End birthright citizenship</p> <p>Self-sufficiency of immigrants</p>	<p>Advocated cuts during Reform period, maintain permanent immigration levels by Alliance period.</p> <p>By latter, Canada as “a nation of immigrants”</p>	<p>Maintain current immigration levels</p> <p>Appeal to self-image of immigrants & link to Conservative patriotism</p>	<p>Maintained immigration levels in terms of permanent resident status granted each year, but vast increases to temporary foreign worker program.</p> <p><i>Policies implemented:</i></p> <p>More difficult and expensive to sponsor family members, access restricted re: youth and elderly (Bragg and Wong 2016). Tougher and more expensive language requirements.</p> <p>Delayed and more difficult access to citizenship, disproportionately affecting vulnerable immigrants (Bill C-24, 2014).</p> <p>Privatization of immigrant selection through “expression of interest” system.</p> <p>Increased prominence of “two-step” immigration rather than arriving as permanent residents.</p> <p>Public musing about “birth tourism” and “anchor babies,” potentially ending birthright citizenship.</p>
<p>Contents based on Reform, Canadian Alliance and Conservative Party platforms, legislation, speeches unless otherwise noted</p>				

Table 3.3: Signature Policies for Immigrant Voters in Party Platforms

Theme/ Policy Area	Early Reform “Invasion from the Margin” (late 1980s to early 1990s)	“The Cleanse”: Later Reform/ Canadian Alliance (mid-1990s to early 2000s)	Kenneyism and the ‘Minimum Winning Coalition’ (Conservative Party of Canada since 2004)	Relevant Contemporary Policies and discourses of the Conservative Government (2006-2015)
Signature Policies for “ethnic” or “immigrant” voters present in party platforms	None/hostility	None.	Cut “landing fee” (fee to become a permanent resident) by 50%. Improve credential recognition; Regulation of immigration consultants. Increase settlement funding in early years of government (early Conservative platforms). Foreign credentials loans.	
Contents based on Reform, Canadian Alliance and Conservative Party platforms, legislation, speeches unless otherwise noted				

Fertile terrain: The limits and openings created by neo(L)iberalism in Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism

The Conservatives were helped in this effort by some of the real shortcomings of the Liberal government in the field of immigration in the eyes of many immigrant Canadians. For example in addition to general Conservative moralistic assertions that the Liberals “tolerate queue-jumping, [and] set up special programs for foreign strippers,” the party’s 2006 platform pointed to grievances that would ring true with many immigrants. These included long processing times and “sky high immigration fees to pay for their wasteful and corrupt spending on other departments of government” promising, in contrast, to “stand up for a fair and sensible immigration plan that works for Canada” (Conservative Party of Canada 2006, 38). Clearly the party had been listening to immigrants about some of their frustrations, though concerns expressed about wait times are somewhat ironic given the major increases in wait times and delays experienced by many

applicants as a result of Conservative Party's "system integrity" measures. Similar to the rest of their platform, in the 2006 election, the Conservatives stuck to a strategy of a low number of modest but highly visible policy changes in immigration, in particular offering to cut the right of landing fee in half and to improve credential recognition (Conservative Party of Canada 2006, 38), though the latter is primarily a provincial jurisdiction. In 2008, their platform would emphasize the importance of protecting immigrants from "unscrupulous consultants" (Conservative Party of Canada 2008, 18) and avoid expressions of outward hostility towards official multiculturalism .

Somewhat ironically, the Conservatives both deepened and benefitted politically from the neoliberal direction and limitations of immigration and multiculturalism policies under their Liberal predecessors that they helped to drive while in opposition. The Liberals had refused to apologize or offer any financial compensation for historic wrongs for decades, (Griffith 2013, 60–61), while they were also the party that introduced the unpopular \$975 "head tax" - or "right of landing fee" - in official terms. As a result the Conservatives then had room to cut it in a highly visible manner that fit both their tax-cutting mantras and desire to improve their image amongst immigrants. Perhaps worse, the Liberals had been spending less on settlement funding than they were collecting in processing fees (Li as cited in Abu-Laban 2004, 137). Such shortcomings by the Liberals enabled the Conservatives to compete with the Liberals at relatively low cost. They also placed the Conservatives on relatively equal footing within a form of multiculturalism that had been hollowed out to the point it could be derisively described by some authors as "Selling Diversity" (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002) given the reduction in public funding of the ministry and for public advocacy groups and neoliberal policy directions of the 1990s. Under the prior Progressive Conservatives and the Liberals multiculturalism had reached a status as one of "smallest common denominator" rather than a more substantive, progressive

vision (Winter 2014a). This malleability of the discourses and practices of multiculturalism in Canada would prove highly useful to the Conservatives, making Canadian multiculturalism discourses subject to appropriation on even more conservative terms, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

The limits to multiculturalism as practiced in Canada, and the sociological function it plays ideologically has not been overlooked by critical scholars. Even in its somewhat progressive iterations, which can be seen for example in the pre-Conservative, though rather historically hollow iterations of Canada's citizenship guide, discourses of diversity lacking social content in terms of analyses of class, ethnicity/race and gender, provide modes of description and analysis that obscure as much as they reveal.¹⁶ Years before the ascent of the Conservatives to political power federally in Canada, dominant economic policies and ideologies left much to be desired both politically and socio-economically- though the role of the Reform Party in that realm should not be underestimated in that transformation (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 1992). And, as will be seen throughout this dissertation the Conservatives have taken an aggressive, disciplinary approach to reconfiguring the established symbolic order, in a manner that highlights the shallowness of the approaches they inherited and their aggressive approach against those they identify as ideological or political opponents. While there have long been disciplinary mechanisms linked to Canadian nationalism (Arat-Koç 2005), under the Conservatives the greater coerciveness of their approach meant one must *accept* or *acquiesce* to the colonial

¹⁶ Thus, while recognizing the “symbolic importance” of multiculturalism challenging a history of Anglo-conformity or, at best, English-French “cultural dualism,” Abu-Laban and Gabriel succinctly list key critiques revolving around multiculturalism’s “‘song and dance’ aspect,” that fails to challenge unequal power relations. Primary shortcomings have been that the policy: 1) gave few resources to groups challenging racism and 2) that the policy “obscured both class and gender inequalities within minorities communities” by assuming an internal homogeneity within different ethnic groups, thus underplaying the significance of differences of class, gender and other relations of inequality (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002, 108–9).

identity and neocolonial practices the Conservatives sought to construct and implement or face serious consequences such as rhetorical attack or defunding.

After long rejecting notions of multiculturalism in its Reform Party incarnation, the Conservatives have aggressively shaped and embraced what will be argued is a neoconservative version of the concept that polices the bound of Canadian nationalism while providing only the most superficial nod(s) to the lived social relations of class, ethnicity/race, and gender in Canada. Thus, while acknowledging the symbolic advancement of multiculturalism as a societal vision as an improvement of that of an image of Canada as simply a “white settler colony” (Abel and Stasiulus 1989; Stasiulus and Jhappan 1995, 96–99), it is useful to highlight Bannerji’s critique on the role discourses of multiculturalism and diversity can and have played in the Canadian context:

. . . diversity discourse portrays society as a horizontal space, in which there is no theoretical or economic contradictions that construct and regulate Canadian political economy and its ideological culture . . . it is derived from and is keeping with a language of plurality that has existed in liberal democracy. It relies . . . on reading the notion of difference in a socially abstract manner, which also wipes away its location in history, thus obscuring colonialism, capital and slavery. It displaces these political and historical readings by presenting a complex interpretive code which encapsulates a few particularities of people’s cultures, adding a touch of reality, and averts our gaze from power relations or differences which continue to organize the Canadian public life and culture. They assert themselves as perceptions of otherness encoding a hegemonic European-Canadianness (Bannerji 2000, 50–51)

Beyond the largely symbolic recognition that Canada is not, in fact simply a white settler colony, an abstract, uncritical conception of Canada as “multicultural” does little more than, as Abu-Laban and Gabriel argue, “sell diversity.” More troubling, however, is that it can do so in a manner that promotes a “way of thinking [that] accomplishes depoliticization at deeply conceptual and political levels” (Bannerji 2000, 51). This function is one that more savvy factions of Canada’s Conservative Party have been able to embrace, even if official

multiculturalism continues to have many conservative critics (Ryan 2010). As the Conservatives hegemonic attempts to shift Canadian common sense will demonstrate, it is a highly malleable ideology with great room for maneuver, as will be seen in greater detail in the next three chapters and are evident in former Minister Kenney's attempts to construct a neoconservative variant of multiculturalism compatible with post-imperial nostalgia for the British Empire.

Such trends in these fields were in addition to other well-documented and more general blunders by the Liberals that angered voters across the political spectrum and contributed to a desire to defeat the governing party,¹⁷ lowering voter turnout and leaving considerable space for the Conservatives to make a small number of distinctive policy offerings as described above to help grow their support. It is within this context that a self-aware neoconservative movement was able to complete the long march through civil society that culminated in majority government. With a careful and often cynical approach the Conservatives, with their base amongst the country's settler colonial "exalted subjects" -- to employ terms laid out with reference to Thobani (2007) in chapter two -- would work to make their brand of Canadian nationalism and political project more palatable to a sufficient number of "immigrant" others in an effort to achieve Flanagan's "minimum winning coalition." Thus the neoconservative view of society and the threats it faces saw the general notion of immigration reconfigured within this calculus. As will be seen in the next two chapters, it was rearticulated in a more uplifting manner within a neoconservative vision which generally "emphasizes the re-articulation of the traditional family, community, authority, social order and tradition" due to perceived threats to the social order since the 1960s (Porter 2012, 26). Rather than portray immigration per se as a threat, demographic or

¹⁷ For a brief synopsis of some of the trends leading to the Liberals loss in 2006, including "feckless party leadership" and the sponsorship scandal, see Gagnon and Tanguay (2007, 3-5) . For a summary and analysis of neoliberal trends concerning multiculturalism and immigration policy, see Abu-Laban and Gabriel's *Selling Diversity* (2002), Abu-Laban (2004) and Arat-Koç (1999).

otherwise, certain types of immigration and migration or threats to society would be spotlighted while the overall contributions of immigrants were praised.

Chapter 3 Conclusion

Examining long term shifts in party platforms and neoconservative elite discourses and writings, this chapter has traced the evolution of the approach of the Conservative Party and its neoconservative predecessors concerning citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. It has traced these shifts by examining the process of the Reform Party's "invasion from the margin" into Canadian politics to Canadian neoconservatism's relative political maturation through its Canadian Alliance and Conservative Party incarnations. This approach emerged from Stephen Harper and his compatriots distaste not only for the welfare state and Trudeau vision of Canada, but also frustrations with Red Toryism that had contributed to a more centrist mainstream societal consensus concerning social policy and national identity. Even in the Reform Party incarnation of the party, however, the practical limits of such an approach were recognized by Harper and Flanagan. Canadian neoconservatives' incarnation of authoritarian populism demanded a more creative and hegemonic rather than outright alienating version of their political project if they were to ever come to power. It is this neoconservative voyage that the notion of a pragmatic, creative and exclusionary authoritarian politics of Kenneyism is used to explore.

In assessing the shifts in the authoritarian populist approach practiced during the late Reform and Canadian Alliance periods, significant adjustments can be seen in the parties' platforms to cleanse what was a toxic image of the party in the eyes of many voters. In a significant shift from founding Reform Party documents that complained about demographic shifts, Canada would come to be praised as a "nation of immigrants" (Table 3.2). This long term process included moving beyond vociferous criticism to developing a more compelling version of Canadian nationalism and recognition of the importance of broader political outreach if Canada's

neoconservative movement hoped to achieve power. These shifts required some acquiescence to common sense ideas concerning immigration and multiculturalism in Canada. However as will be further seen, this still took place on creative neoconservative terms while the substantively regressive nature of these terms and social relations attached to them are explored in subsequent chapters.

By 2004, and with the founding of the new Conservative Party from the Canadian Alliance and the remnants of the Progressive Conservatives, one can clearly identify a recipe that would emerge as the Conservatives approached power. That recipe is the simultaneous outreach and exclusion of *Kenneyism*, including a divisive neoconservative form of multiculturalism that took advantage of the neoliberal orientations of its pre-existing variant. By 2004 the Conservatives had become even more publicly bullish on the benefits of immigrants' contribution to Canada and refined their discourse to a significant degree. By the time of that year's election, the party was one that declared it "recognizes Canadian society has been built by successive waves of immigration from all sectors of the globe, and that immigration tremendously enriches our economy and national life." As the party sought to more aggressively court immigrants and the "ethnic vote" their right populist discourse had shifted to target "special interests" that "prevent immigrants from contributing their best to Canadian society" (Conservative Party of Canada 2004b, 34). Thus their market populist discourse of special interests had shifted from those in favour of immigration in their early Reform days *to those who stand in the way of immigrants' success*. Potential Conservative voters were now invited to see themselves as "legitimate" and "hard working" immigrants and citizens, and to accept the scapegoating and marginalization of others. This marked a major change in tone from Reform's early days where immigration itself was a core concern, as can be seen in table 3.2.

By 2004, and particularly by 2006 the Conservatives would have a more sophisticated approach, crystallized into a more mature though still at times seemingly contradictory or paradoxical politics of *Kenneyism* and neoconservative multiculturalism. By then they had raised their approach to a higher plane of sophistication, which the government would practice through much of its time in office as it operated on a disciplined garrison footing concerning messaging that would help prevent politically challenging outbursts concerning immigration and multiculturalism. True to its neoconservative roots, however, the party would simultaneously practice exclusionary forms of politics, policy-making and policies in many areas. Chapter four will consider the pragmatic outreach of the Conservative project and its maturation into a strategy of pursuing an exclusionary “minimum winning coalition,” while chapter five will consider the creative and disciplinary politics of neoconservative multiculturalism and regressive societal vision of immigration and national belonging advanced through the politics of *Kenneyism*.

While an electorally important project, of more substantive import are the changes and shifts in government policy and the environment for discussion and deliberation that they have assiduously created, which will be explored in the fields of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4: *Kenneyism*, Neoconservative Pragmatism and “Ethnic” Outreach on the Path to a ‘Minimum Winning Coalition’

Introduction to Chapter 4

Thirty-five years of voting history established by a relationship! . . . And the light went off for me. How incredibly important relationships are. It’s blindingly obvious, but for newcomers those initial relationships that they establish are hugely important.

- Then Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney, quoted in Wells (2010)

Game theory predicts that, in in- person voting games, rational actors will seek to assemble a minimum winning coalition (MWC), that is, a coalition barely large enough to win. The theorem is counterintuitive, for politicians normally speak as if they would like to have everyone’s support. However, if the purpose of a coalition is to deliver benefits to the included at the expense of the excluded, it follows that the winning coalition should be as small as possible if it is to maximize benefits to the participants per capita.

In Canadian federal politics, the MWC for the House of Commons is 155 (50 percent + 1 of 308 seats). In the real world, of course, you want to have more than a bare majority of 155 to guard against the possibility of resignations, deaths or defections of caucus members to other parties. The MWC for the popular vote cannot be defined so precisely but seems to be slightly less than 40 percent, given the current state of Canada’s multiparty system. By both standards, the current Conservative coalition (166 seats, 39.6 percent popular vote) is ideal.

Larger-than-necessary coalitions tend to be unstable because of the difficulty of satisfying too many participants.

(Flanagan 2011a, 107)

In a 2010 interview with *Macleans*’ Paul Wells, then Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney recounted an encounter with an evangelical Korean businessman who had been a long term NDP supporter because an NDP MP had been supportive of his community from his early days in the country. Kenney felt that such a voter was a natural Conservative voter, and claimed to have achieved a revelatory insight from the meeting- that the

votes of newcomers to Canada were in large part determined by their early contact with politicians.

As was seen in the prior and will be seen in the next chapter, Canada's Conservatives created a compelling form of authoritarian populist politics that continued to be regressive in its overall character but was friendlier in tone to Canada's demographic realities than a Reform Party political heritage not generally seen as receptive to immigrants. Chapter three discussed the process underwent from an initial approach of “invasion from the margin” of Canada’s political system to the early years of the new Conservative Party of Canada. Over time, to quote Hall employing Gramsci, the Conservatives saw the need that “account be taken of those interests and tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised,’ so that ‘a certain compromise be formed” (Hall 1980, 168). For Canada’s Conservative Party that was to exercise hegemony within the country’s settler colonial terrain, the demographics of which have changed considerably in the past several decades.

This compromise- at least, but not only at the level of discourse- has been between the prerogatives of an at times nativist political base – composed of what Thobani terms Canada’s *exalted subjects* of white Anglo and French-Canadian settlers - with the hopes, dreams and expectations of many new or racialized Canadians who are expected to conform to their settler colonial prerogatives. This chapter and the next will show how these Canadians have been invited to participate in the Conservatives’ political project on highly regressive terms, an invitation that has been extended as the Conservatives have energetically and creatively sought to achieve what Tom Flanagan has referred to as a “minimum winning coalition” (Flanagan 2011a). As will be seen below, the Conservatives’ is a highly ideological and *disciplinary* approach to politics aimed at gaining a stable “minimum connected winning coalition”(Flanagan 2011b) large enough to win power and impose its vision of society rather than seeking social consensus. This creativity and

pragmatism marked a major political advance over earlier Reform Party doctrines and approaches, though maintained an overall regressive, often exclusionary approach.

Thus rather than serving as a positive model as conservative journalists and some academics would assert, the Conservatives are better viewed as having taken a creative yet cynical incremental approach to achieving a majority government and shifting the gravity of Canadian politics to the right. The Conservatives fostered new and in other ways maintained and even deepened exclusionary inclinations held over from their Reform (1987-2000) and Canadian Alliance (2000-2003) predecessors. This chapter will explore one of the key defining aspects of what I have termed the politics of *Kenneyism*, that of neoconservative pragmatism, and the creative hard work and political outreach required to have a realistic chance to reach a “minimum winning coalition” large enough to achieve governing power.

Neoconservative Pragmatism- Creative Hard Work and Outreach Designed to Achieve a “Minimum Winning Coalition”

The pragmatism yet divisiveness of the Conservatives’ political project is significant, as it does not represent an abandonment but rather an adaptation of neoconservative principles to Canada’s demographic context. As Jason Kenney had long argued for, the Conservatives decided to “show up” to this political contest after decades on the sidelines and sought to forge strong interpersonal relationships with diverse communities (M. McDonald 2014). Kenney would become famous for his work ethic in establishing such relationships through tireless attendance at events and community outreach. His successor as Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Chris Alexander has remarked that Kenney exhibits a “monk” like dedication to politics, as “part of him that has renounced other things to focus on his calling, and his calling is politics” (Markusoff 2018).

However a marketing and interpersonal outreach rather than a substantive mindset has often been apparent in their conservative populist approach. The dominance of an overall

centralized marketing approach to politics on the part of the Conservatives- to which other parties have subsequently conformed- has been chronicled by Delacourt, who has characterized the “fusion of marketing and politics” on the part of the Conservatives as “complete and pervasive” (Delacourt 2016b, xi; 2016a). The need to change their party’s “brand” was well recognized within the party. Based on interviews with thirty “Conservative Party elites” in 2011 and 2012 and a “strong” response rate, Marland and Flanagan (2013) confirm the centrality of marketing and quantitative data to the Conservatives’ overall approach. They also note that even after the merger of the Reform and Progressive Conservative Parties the Conservatives still faced an uphill battle in growing the party due to several problems with their brand:

The party's opinion research found that the merger had not sufficiently eroded the politically incorrect brand associations, leaving three reputational problems. First, it was perceived to be the party of rich, powerful, white Anglo-Saxon Protestants; second, voters believed that it was home to social extremists who opposed abortion and same-sex marriage and were hostile to the concerns of immigrants; and, third, it was seen as pro-American as opposed to pro-Canadian (W1).

(Marland and Flanagan 2013, 965)

“W1,” cited as the source for the diagnosis was categorized by the authors as a communications worker: “party staffers who liaised with leaders and consultants on marketing, opinion research and/or publicity” (Marland and Flanagan 2013, 957–58). The Conservatives needed to significantly “reposition their brand,” though as was apparent at the time with the volume of attack ads purchased by the Conservatives, “[t]o gain market share Conservative strategists determined that it was not enough to reposition their brand; they would also need to “de-brand” the Liberal party” (Marland and Flanagan 2013, 966).

To view Conservative documents and reflections on the need to reach out to immigrant and “ethnic” voters is to read an effort described in highly instrumentalist terms. A 2011 presentation by the party entitled *Breaking Through: Building the Conservative Brand* presents

the politically salient issue with respect to diversity being that it is “the new reality,” as if Canada had not been a diverse society for decades. Ridings targeted for a media buy are described as “Target Ridings- Very Ethnic” with a “Take-away” that “There Are Lots of Ethnic Voters,” that “There Will be Quite a Few More Soon” and that “They Live *Where We Need to Win*” (emphasis added). Therefore the key task has been the “Need to Positively Brand CPC [Conservative Party of Canada] in Target Communities” (6) which would be done through paid media advertising in the “ethnic press” (Nejatian 2011). Slides from a 2007 presentation indicated a need to “move approximately 5000 voters” in Thornhill, for example, where they might take the riding “if we target growth in the Jewish Community and those visible minorities *which are accessible*” (emphasis added). Such an approach reflects a project of grafting such support onto the party’s base rather than a fundamental change of principles. It belies a notion of “ethnic voters” as primarily units to be moved rather than citizens with genuine demands, although at least one slide does acknowledge a need “to develop mutual trust, respect and understanding” (Kenney 2007).

In the case of Indo-Canadians, for example, paternalistic sample scripts in their accidentally leaked 2011 presentation (O’Malley 2011) euphemistically acknowledge that “Things haven’t always been fair for us,” to be shown alongside a picture of the Komagata Maru, and followed up with the message “But the Conservatives have always recognized our history and our community’s sacrifice” (Nejatian 2011)- seemingly without knowledge that the second statement is therefore logically false. Such a message is particularly patronizing given the Komagata Maru was prevented from landing on Canadian shores in 1914 precisely to preserve “White Canada” immigration policies. The Conservatives had earned a hostile response three years earlier for refusing to apologize in parliament for this exclusion to the great frustration of many Sikh community leaders- many of whose audience members raised their hands to reject a public apology delivered outside of the legislature (CBC News 2008). Such an approach might help

explain how they occasionally found themselves in hot water, for instance for patronizing outreach efforts that asked people to come to campaign events “in costume” to ensure better photo-ops (Wallace 2011), or unwittingly inviting an anti-immigrant group whose discourse rings true to some of their most prejudiced constituents to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (New Democratic Party of Canada 2012; Ditchburn 2012).

The party’s long-term project of the 2000s has been painted in highly instrumental, top-down and even paternalistic terms. According to Flanagan, “Ethnic politics is clientalistic, because people coming to Canada from different cultures and whose English is imperfect naturally band together in ethnic communities. When they participate in politics, it is often through community leaders acting as intermediaries with the larger world of Canadian society . . . It is less a matter of a five-week campaign than of maintaining long-term relationships that can be mobilized at campaign time” (2009a, 281)- echoing Kenney’s earlier insight of the important of relationships above policies.

As one ponders Flanagan’s assertions concerning “ethnic politics,” it is worth considering reflections and analysis by Thobani and Bannerji that *denaturalize* such forms of political organization and their character, linking them long-standing state policies. Both scholars note from a critical lens how rather than being “naturally” organized as top-down and leader driven, that state multiculturalism, dominant society racism, sexism and immigration policies¹⁸ have contributed to the at times hierarchal and conservative forms of “ethnic politics” that Flanagan describes as so accessible to the Conservative recipe for political success.

¹⁸ Thobani argues that sponsorship regulations established under the 1976 Immigration Act contributed to the marginalization of immigrant women, as the sponsor-sponsored dynamic brought further power relations, whereby men, who were primarily the sponsors, saw their power reinforced through restricted access to social assistance making women at greater risk of economic insecurity and spousal abuse while spousal relationships between immigrants were much more highly scrutinized . Immigrant families became even more complex sites, for “patriarchal structures were strengthened as a direct result of state policy; on the other hand these families often became the only sites of support against the racism these women encountered (Thobani 2007, 137–38).

Considering the rise of multiculturalism historically, Thobani notes that the formal introduction of multiculturalism and liberalization of immigration policies contributed to a “changed cultural climate” that “enabled people of colour’s access to formal citizenship and its entitlements” (Thobani 2007, 175). Notwithstanding the attraction of multiculturalism for many people of colour that she acknowledges (172), Thobani in effect argues that acquiescence to a politics of multiculturalism was a Faustian bargain for some rather than one of greater social transformation. With policies geared to supporting cultural groups who supported nation-building projects and national unity, “multiculturalism was intended to further the nation’s unity, *not its transformation*” (Thobani 2007, 156) (emphasis added). State-sponsored multiculturalism was more a containment strategy at a time of social upheaval than one of transformation, she argues, referencing feminist studies of organizing by women of colour, for example, which show that state multiculturalism and its administration “enabled the containment of anti-racist organizing from below by the promotion of a middle-class elite leadership that focused more on issues of cultural identity than on socio-economic inequality (Thobani 2007, 159).

Thobani also points to multiculturalism’s properties to facilitate the public de-legitimization of material claims by Indigenous peoples by portraying them as just another cultural group,¹⁹ as well as allowing the dominant population of European descent to view themselves as enlightened and tolerant of othered peoples. In that context, she argues that

Increased inclusion was the reward for the race compromise forged by people of colour, and multiculturalism deepened integration into national fantasies and white domination

Immigrants who might have self-identified along any number and combination of possible identities, including those of class, gender and age, instead find themselves overdetermined culturally, over and

¹⁹ According to Thobani, “With its emphasis on tolerance and diversity, multiculturalism has discredited Aboriginal claims to special status as the original inhabitants of the land; Aboriginality is instead devalued as only one among several cultures that needs to be harnessed for the cultural enrichment of nationals” and their “resistance to such politics has been recast as evidence of their ethnocentrism and essentializing chauvinism” (Thobani 2007, 174).

above all other aspects of their identities. State-sponsored multiculturalism compels them to negotiate and comprehend their identities on very narrow grounds, discouraging and possibly foregrounding the possibility of alliances that might allow a systemic challenge to white dominance, patriarchy, and global corporate capitalism.

(Thobani 2007, 175)

Official multiculturalism, she argues, is thus representative of a “‘communalizing’ power of the state” in settler societies, “a power which constitutes communities as discrete racial, ethnic, and cultural groups existing within its territorial borders, yet outside the symbolic bounds of the nation (Thobani 2007, 149). Racialized and ethnicized minorities were included in society on disciplinary terms where power still remained in the hands of dominant and exalted white subjects.²⁰ Accompanying its *communalizing* power was official multiculturalism’s ability to assist in a “reconstitution of whiteness in its distinct (and historically new) version as a culturally ‘tolerant’ cosmopolitan whiteness . . . a more fashionable and politically acceptable form of white supremacy” with “greater currency within a neocolonial, neoliberal global order” (Thobani 2007, 148). These properties of liberal multiculturalism would leave it ripe for eventual appropriation into neoconservative politics. They would bolster claims to an enlightened and positive civilizational identity frequently evoked by the Conservatives, in contrast to the barbarity of others, and allow for electoral appeals based on meager promises and platitudes of inclusion which offered little substantive positive change.

Himani Bannerji (2000), for her part, notes that absent other avenues and resources, that “politically constructed homogenized communities, with their increasingly fundamentalist boundaries of cultures, traditions and religions” emerged from far more complex societies than such orientalist assumptions would presume. In Canada, communalized groups “developed

²⁰ Bannerji expresses the experiences of racialized (im)migrants she has met and the effects of the “machinery of the state” upon them in stark terms, as it “has us impaled against its spikes. In beds, in workplaces, in suicides committed over deportations, the state silently, steadily rules our loves with ‘regulations’” (Bannerji 2000, 89).

leaders or spokespersons, usually men, who liaised with the state on their behalf.” Such forms of organization encouraged by the state could have highly conservative effects, including to the detriment of women, Bannerji argues, as:

Hard headed businessmen, who had never thought of culture in their lives before, now, upon entering Canada, began using this notion and spoke to the powers that be in terms of culture and the welfare of their community. But this was the new and only political playing field for ‘others’ in Canada, a slim opportunity of mobility, so they were/are willing to run through the multicultural maze. What is more, this new cultural politics, leaving out problems of class and patriarchy, appealed to conservative elements in the immigrant population, since religion could be made to overdetermine these uncomfortable actualities, and concentrated on the so-called culture and morality of the community. Official multiculturalism . . . also empowered the same male leaders as patriarchs and enhanced their sexism and masculinism.” (Bannerji 2000, 48)

Thus Flanagan’s notion of “ethnic politics” has in fact been generated and assisted in important structural ways by liberal state multiculturalism and its lack of transformative politics. These were dynamics Kenney, Harper and others within the party came to use as they sought new ways to increase their levels of voting support.

It is in this long-term context and the Conservatives’ project of neoconservative multiculturalism that Flanagan could argue that the Conservative’s task was not to offer “a potpourri of new benefits,” or substantive social change to new Canadians – but rather “it was *to help them realize* that their convictions and interests would be better represented by the Conservatives than by any other party” (emphasis added) (Flanagan 2011b). Despite the party’s inherited baggage and policy stances that had alienated many “ethnic voters,” according to Flanagan the Conservatives’ electoral success was attributable to hard work rather than many fundamentally progressive shifts- a “few policy innovations” but mostly “the patient effort of establishing contact – visits . . . to ethnic events; recruiting multicultural candidates and political organizers; printing political materials in [other] languages.” These, Flanagan noted, were steps

“easy to enumerate” but that took years to achieve (Flanagan 2011a, 106). The political project on offer by the Conservatives is that of assimilation or acquiescence to neoconservative and social conservative thinking, albeit on a much more rhetorically friendly basis for some, with nods to diversity and multiculturalism.

As Lawrence Martin has noted, the challenge facing the Conservatives was led by the “inexhaustible” Jason Kenney- who learned greetings in “dozens” of languages- to wash the party of its “anti-immigrant and racist” reputation; “convince them that their values in fact coincided with the Tories’ entrepreneurial spirit;” and create “policy specific appeal,” through acts such as lifting visas, apologies and other forms of symbolic politics that appealed to particular groups (L. Martin 2010, 226).²¹ And indeed, such efforts led the *Toronto Star* to run a headline highlighting Kenney’s “Bieber-like” following in many communities due to his effective glad-handing (Keung and Black 2013) and witnessed an improvement in the party’s standing amongst “ethnic voters,” as has been described in laudatory profiles of the Minister by conservative periodicals such as *Maclean’s* (Castonguay 2013). Such support also led to financial benefit to Kenney’s riding through donations throughout the country and left him able to support other Conservative candidates and party efforts (O’Malley 2013), significantly raising his prestige and importance within the party. The Conservatives also reached out directly to “ethnic media” in an effort to reach diverse audiences in a less filtered manner. Overall, while there was debate over the definition of and the Conservatives’ success in winning the “ethnic vote,” there

²¹ As part of a consistent effort to increase their level of support in different communities, the Conservatives formally apologized for the Chinese Head Tax (Li 2008, 135–38), and permitted the recognition of historic wrongs such as the treatment of Ukrainian Canadians (James 2013, 35–36), and Italian, Jewish and Indo-Canadians (Griffith 2013, 62–63), all of which they campaigned on heavily and featured in their platforms, even if at times the results were less than meets the eye (Flecker 2008, 170). The dynamics of what James (2013) terms “neoliberal heritage redress” will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

was consensus that at the very least, as indicated within internal discussions, they “are losing less badly now” (Nejatian 2011, 7) .

Interestingly, the party’s new discourses were uncritically accepted even by mainstream journalists such as Martin who were otherwise highly critical of the Harper government and its “politics of control” (2010). Devoting very little attention to the party’s record in the fields of refugee protection, immigration and multiculturalism besides noting their basic conservative thrust, Martin defended the controversial former Immigration Minister, arguing that his opponents are “always at the ready to throw bigotry charges at him” due to his “lily white Reform Party background. But they could never find a basis for it” (2010, 229).

However rather than mutual adjustment and understanding on the part of Canada’s settler colonial “exalted subjects” (Thobani 2007) and more recently arrived groups, the political project on offer by the Conservatives is that of assimilation to neoconservative and social conservative thinking on terms which will be seen to have been aggressively established by the Conservatives during their time an office. And some conservatives are bullish about the prospects of this approach. Following the 2011 federal election, Tom Flanagan argued that

Many new Canadians are socially conservative, believing in stable traditional families rather than the lifestyle obsessions of Liberal elites. Most are religious; a surprising number, especially among Chinese, Vietnamese, Koreans and Filipinos, are Christian. Many are economically conservative and entrepreneurial, running small businesses and concerned about the tax burden. In other words, many immigrants look like Conservative core voters, except that they may have a different skin colour and mother tongue (2011a, 106).

More cynically, Flanagan argues, “[t]hey make no demands on government other than those that Conservatives generally make. They may have some racial or linguistic differences, but their location in policy space is very close to other Conservative voters. That makes the coalition ‘connected’” (Flanagan 2011a, 108). Kenney as well has asserted that many socially conservative

immigrants *should* see the Conservative party as a natural home and that a rethinking of the party's core values was unnecessary (Wells 2010). Thus, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, immigrants and "ethnic" Canadians are welcome to the extent that they conform to neoconservative politics and preferences and are to be disciplined if they offend such sensibilities.

The Substance of the Conservatives' "Minimum Winning Coalition"

These realities are reflected well in the shifting models and presumably political thought of leading neoconservative thinkers in Canada. After the 2011 election, as seen in the introductory quotes at the beginning of this chapter, Flanagan commented at length on the question of "ethnic voters" and the Conservative coalition within the Canadian system, arguing in favour of a "minimum winning coalition" approach, where the Conservatives near forty percent support was in many ways "ideal," as "[l]arger-than-necessary coalitions tend to be unstable because of the difficulty of satisfying too many participants" (Flanagan 2011a, 107).

Flanagan's updated preferred model can be contrasted with the notion of brokerage politics, whereby one would feel the need to reach out to most, or at least much more of the Canadian population to win votes by appealing to social consensus. However Flanagan describes a very different approach by the Conservatives, that their coalition is "to deliver *benefits to the included at the expense of the excluded*" (emphasis added). Rather than attempts at balance in complex policy areas, winners and losers must be chosen. Flanagan also remarked that "[t]his increase in ethnic support released a treasure trove of seats for the Conservatives" (Flanagan 2011a). These are not the calculations of consensus or brokerage politics but do reflect the maturation of the Reform Party's "invasion from the margin" approach to disrupt the political

system described in the last chapter to a more pragmatic neoconservatism better suited to achieve power.

The matured Conservative preference is for a winner-take-all coalition that rewards its members and excludes others is emblematic of their approach to the policy fields under discussion in this dissertation. Unfortunately, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, large numbers of immigrants and refugees (not to mention migrants) may be perceived as groups that can be excluded or marginalized. Their creative authoritarian populist approach had the effect of helping to generate a majority government “minimum winning coalition” following the 2011 election, but with detrimental results for many (im)migrants and refugees.

Given this targeting of relatively few ridings and doing so in such a matter, perhaps pause might be given concerning assertions that the first-past-the-post electoral system acts as a moderating influence (Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013, 96). In 2011 it was very specific ridings that were targeted- particularly ten “very ethnic ridings” around Toronto and Vancouver in the last election that the Conservatives fought to win. As Soroka et al note, nationally the Conservative base in 2011 “was not much broader- in terms of proportion of vote, or in where those votes came from- than it was in 2008,” despite “fundamentally different” results in terms of seats (Soroka et al. 2011, 77). “Narrow-casting” in specific ridings as described above made a significant difference in the Conservatives’ seat count, as did shifting significant financial resources for communications and polling from party figures such as Jason Kenney and Stephen Harper that are elected in safe Conservative ridings (Payton 2012).

The bar to minimum winning coalitions is certainly lower within an electoral system that translates minority support into majority governments. Rather the first-past-the-post electoral system has been a mechanism that has advanced Reform strategy throughout much of its history- for example by allowing it to capitalize so strongly on its Western base. Their entry strategy into

Canadian politics was to invade from right and from the West, where they capitalized on Western Canadian alienation (Flanagan 2009b, 208) that they helped to ferment.

Of course while the story is more nuanced than a simple or modest reformulation of Reform doctrines, perhaps the policy directions that will be described make some sense, given that to view Conservative documents and reflections on the need to reach out to the “ethnic voters” is to read an effort described in purely numeric, electoralist terms, where major efforts at outreach *began* on highly regressive terms by appealing to “conservative values” opposing marriage equality (Flanagan 2011a, 107). As Flanagan describes it, the

strategic shift [to focusing their efforts on the “ethnic vote” rather than Quebec voters] was not a totally new departure but rather an increased emphasis on what had been taking place since early 2005. At that time, when same-sex marriage was under heated debate in Parliament, Harper decided to use it as a wedge issue to approach ethnic voters. He ordered the party to spend about \$300,000 on print advertisements in Canadian ethnic newspapers, running in early 2005, to point out that the Conservatives were the only party opposed to same- sex marriage. From that point on, the party put more and more effort into courting ethnic voters (2011a, 106).

Given the Conservatives’ nature as a “Garrison Party” strongly controlled from the centre and top of the party (Flanagan 2013), it is difficult to assert the party’s core membership itself had a progressive change of heart, while many of its policies were to the detriment of immigrants and particularly to refugees. Thus a marketing mindset is much more than a minor aspect of the Conservative’s populist approach.

Of course with ever changing composition of immigrant groups by race, ethnicity, class and gender that feature their own relations of inequality (Satzewich and Wong 2003, 364), it should not be surprising that a less hostile and more politically savvy Conservative Party was able to improve its standing, particularly amidst frustration and dissatisfaction with the Liberal Party, as discussed in the last chapter. As is often remarked, in Canada governments are often thrown out of office out of frustration moreso than new governments being elected out of

enthusiasm for their platform. Detoxifying their platforms and discourses was an important step in being perceived as a palatable electoral option to a sufficient number of Canadians.

Conclusion to Chapter 4:

As was seen in the prior and will be seen in the next chapter, the evolution of the Conservative Party's platforms and discourses demonstrated a more accommodating tone for conservative "ethnic voters" which helped detoxify the party's image. The Conservatives demonstrated the discipline to maintain that message for several years, though this discipline certainly waned as the party more publicly succumbed to its more base instincts as its mandate went on, and its exclusionary authoritarian populist discourses and policies intensified after it achieved a majority government. The Conservative's overall preference for a winner-take-all coalition is emblematic of their divisive approach to the policy fields under discussion in this dissertation. Unfortunately the strategy also involved perceiving and treating large numbers of (im)migrants and refugees as groups that can be excluded and whose lives and existence were made more difficult and precarious.

Rather than being moderated by Canada's electoral system, as some would assert, this effort was in many ways artificially buoyed by Canada's first-past-the-post system as Conservatives were able to aspire to power while practicing a non-consensus based, at times brinkmanship brand of politics in their minority years and intensified exclusionary trends after winning a majority government with under forty percent support from the electorate.

Their more positive sounding aspects of their creative authoritarian populist project at least temporarily had the effect of drawing in a sufficient "new multicultural pillar" alongside "the older western populist and traditional Tory pillars" (Flanagan 2011a). Given their seeming satisfaction with a "minimum coalition" it is not a form of political project that necessarily needs

majority support amongst the Canadian population, but rather it aims to define the country's common sense and political direction in an authoritarian manner and neoconservative direction, regardless of its impacts on many (im)migrants, civil society opponents and othered members of society.

Overall, as will be seen in the next and subsequent chapters, the Conservatives engaged in a project of neoconservative multiculturalism, a creative ideological project enforcing and advancing a highly regressive form of politics and public policy. In part conceding to public opinion in favour of multiculturalism and Canada's demographics, it includes pragmatic nods to diversity, such as greetings in multiple languages and the wearing of diverse clothing, (Wallace 2011) but hollows out potentially more progressive interpretations of multiculturalism while demanding adherence to disturbing forms of nationalism and patriotism that police and weaken public debate. Substantively, as will be seen, its associated policies made decision making processes less democratic, intensifying unequal social relations and making life more difficult for many (im)migrants to Canada.

Chapter 5: The Rise of Neoconservative Multiculturalism

Introduction to Chapter 5

[There is] particular importance in giving substance to Gramsci's argument that, often, ideological shifts take place, not by substituting one, whole, new conception of the world for another, but by presenting a novel combination of old and new elements.

- Stuart Hall, "Authoritarian Populism- A Reply to Jessop et al" (1985, 122).

. . . 'Thatcherism' has found a powerful means of popularizing the principles of Monetarist philosophy: and in the image of the welfare 'scavenger' a well designed folk-devil. The elaboration of this populist discourse . . . represents the critical ideological work of constructing for 'Thatcherism' a populist common sense. It is a particularly rich mix because of the resonant traditional themes- nation, family, duty, authority, standards, self-reliance- which have been effectively condensed into it. Here elements from many traditional ideologies- some already secured at earlier times to the grant themes of popular Conservatism, many others with a wider popular connotation- have been inserted into and woven together to make a set of discourses which are then harnessed to the practices of the radical Right and the class forces they now aspire to represent.

- Stuart Hall, "The Great Moving Right Show," (1979, 17)

Friends, perhaps the most important development in this election was this: on May 2nd, it became clear that the Conservative Party is now the party of new Canadians! But I believe that this election has seen the creation of a new, durable and diverse Conservative electorate for a very simple reason.

Because conservative values are Canadian values.
Values like freedom, enterprise and hard work.
Personal responsibility, equal opportunity, and respect for law and order.
Family, faith and tradition.

Canadians of all backgrounds are drawn to our party, not in spite of our values, but because of them.
They see in our beliefs and priorities the highest aspirations of most Canadians . . .

We don't mistake relativism for tolerance, and we're not afraid to call a barbaric cultural practice what it is.

We seek unity in diversity, and we know it can flourish only when supported by our common values . . .

- Hon. Jason Kenney, then Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Speech at the Opening Ceremonies of the Conservative Party of Canada Convention, June 9, (2011)

The excerpts above and those discussed further below from then Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney's remarks at the victorious Conservatives' 2011 party convention provide an archetypal example of a novel form of creative, disciplinary neoconservative multicultural politics that this chapter seeks to grasp. The years 2006-2015 were the culmination of *Kenneyism* in the politics and policies of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism in Canada. As seen in the previous two chapters, this flexible form of politics took the Conservatives and their predecessor parties many years to formulate and pursue. This chapter further outlines and applies the concept of *Kenneyism*, its simultaneous forms of inclusion and exclusion and its creative ideological work to the evolution of the Conservative Party of Canada from its Reform and Alliance predecessors and time in office. It also explicates and illustrates the concept of *neoconservative multiculturalism*.

The concept of *Kenneyism* can be usefully employed to capture important elements of the Conservatives' political approach to "ethnic outreach" and the politics of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. As discussed in chapter two, it is a form of politics emblematic of what Hall coined *authoritarian populism*, which contains and combines the policies and practices of neoliberalism and neoconservatism with the manipulation and generation of 'moral panics,' law and order discourses and fears of social anarchy in the attempt to achieve a hegemonic form of electoral politics and societal dominance within a given country's social imaginary (Hall 1985, 116).

The concept helps to answer the question of how one reconciles the party's simultaneous outreach efforts to many new, ethnicized and racialized Canadians while at the same time implementing highly exclusionary policies in many realms of citizenship and immigration- particularly with respect to Muslims, refugees and temporary foreign workers- though also on the terrain of citizenship and family sponsorship. It addresses the regressive form of nationalism being promoted in these fields through a version of neoconservative multiculturalism in Canada's settler colonial social formation. Kenney was also front and centre in delivering the authoritarian populist discourses that demonized refugees while simultaneously trying to appeal to "ethnic" and racialized voters that did not typically vote for the Conservative Party.

The Assertion of *Neoconservative Multiculturalism*

a) *Asserting a (Neo)Conservative Common Sense Amidst the Reformulation of Party Discourses*

While the Conservatives for a time purged themselves of some of the most blatant, anti-immigration elements of their discourse, there remained and continue to remain significant continuities in its brand of authoritarian populism. A careful examination of some of their discursive efforts reveals an attempt to construct a highly regressive form of Canadian nationalism, which new Canadians are invited to share through the articulation of what I label *neoconservative multiculturalism*. While celebrating to some extent in its lowest common denominator, neoconservative multiculturalism involves both a hollowing out of the progressive potentials of multiculturalism discourses and policies as well as shifting the concept in (neo)conservative directions.

Concepts and terms employed by Bonnie Honig in her work *Democracy and the Foreigner* help to capture the creativity of the Conservatives' authoritarian populist approach to both political outreach and exclusion and their basis in immigration narratives, including those of

settler colonial states. Honig examines narratives of immigrants and foreignness told by regimes and also those present in many texts and political debates, including the contemporary United States (Honig 2001, 10). She outlines and explains how *xenophilia* and its negative counterpart, *xenophobia* operate and feed each off of each other. In both its liberal and conservative renderings, *xenophilia* -- or a love of the foreigner -- idealizes immigrants who serve the national imagination by boosting its legitimacy as well as through their material contributions. Immigrants boost a state or social order's self-image by being seen to *choose* to join a given society through rituals such as citizenship ceremonies,²² thereby testifying to its democratic credentials, as well as contributing to the economy and by demonstrating the values of hard work, family and community (Honig 2001, 76).

There are multiple potential conservative uses of *xenophilia* in addition to the more generally recognized forms of *xenophobia* mobilized on the right. For example the hard-working "capitalist immigrant keeps the American dream alive, upholding beliefs in a meritocratic economy," for "if he can do it, starting with nothing and not knowing the language, surely anyone can" (Honig 2001, 80). However in addition to boosting the myth of meritocracy, Honig argues that such an asserted mindset and its singular focus on work can lead to an expectation of de-politicization on the part of (im)migrants, or can be twisted into assertions that immigrants are only interested in material advancement either as *competitors* to those born within a country, or

²² Honig pays particular attention to the role of citizenship ceremony, which was an obsession of the Conservative government in the Canadian context. She notes, more generally, that "rites of renaturalization reenact the regime's ideologically approved origins, obscuring the non-consensual and ascriptive practices of American democracy. The broadcasting (on television, in the nation's newspapers) of this verbal, visible path to citizenship remarginalizes the varied, often violent, sources of the republic (slavery, conquest, appropriations, and constitutional conventions), and it recentres the regime on a voluntarism that most citizens and residents never experience directly" (Honig 2001, 95). However this reliance on the political choice of immigrants to participate in such formal rites can be problematic for a regime, for "It places the legitimacy of the regime (and its claimed universality as a republic or a democracy) in the hands of foreigners who may or may not close the gap of consent for 'us,'" by choosing not to become citizens, for example (Honig 2001, 95). Such vulnerabilities in the national psyche and popular investment in such rites may help explain the Conservatives and many others' moralistic outrage towards those challenging how the Conservative government sought to administer the citizenship oath, discussed later in this chapter.

solely as *takers* of societal resources. Characterizations of de-politicized or apolitical immigrants are worse than being misleading, according to Honig, for “they are often *enforced* in response to immigrants who become politicized” and challenge such myths of acquiescence. Such (im)migrants are targeted by being criminalized or delegitimized in attempts to undermine “the potential political power of the undocumented as political actors, labor organizers, and community activists” (Honig 2001, 82).

Honig also notes that conservative xenophilic myths can be employed against those that challenge patriarchal structures. This is because for “pro-immigration conservatives, immigrants import the roles and expectations that maintain traditional, patriarchal structures” and “are mobilized symbolically to renormalize the native born into traditional heterosexual gender roles while ‘we’ supposedly normalize ‘them’ into a new national citizenship” (Honig 2001, 86). Within such renderings there is asserted to be supportive -- and for the immigrant an asserted potentially ‘civilizing’ -- exchange between host society and immigrant.

Honig shows, however, that the idealization of the voluntary “super citizen immigrant” can also have the effect of feeding and being deployed in *xenophobic* politics that seek to demonize the asserted opposite to the positive end of such a binary. Such idealization “feeds the xenophobic backlash against the non-consenting immigrant – the illegal alien – to whom we supposedly do not consent and who does not consent to us” (Honig 2001, 97). Immigrants can thus be upheld as both evidence of the hospitality and positive morality of the host society, but also serve as useful scapegoats for xenophobic politics.

As will be seen, immigrant women might face both sides of such equations, for example, as “foreign women are figured as exemplary wives who can save the institution of romantic marriage” for those who seek to “import” a bride, but when “they inevitably fail” to save that social institution “they are also set up as betrayers of that and other ideals: the self-interrupted

corrupters of devalued institutions whose downfall can now be safely attributed to the institutions' abuse at the hands of untrustworthy outsiders who never really loved us but were only out to use us all along" (Honig 2001, 92). Such reactions can be seen with respect to the Conservatives authoritarian populism around questions of "marriage fraud" and the citizenship oath later in this chapter. The xenophilic invocation of foreignness in favour of "traditional" family structures can also generate xenophobic responses (91), as such families or gender relations posing a cultural threat, such as fragmenting politics or undermining a democratic culture (Honig 2001, 46).

Many of these articulations and conservative reformulations are epitomized in then Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney's speech to the 2011 Conservative Convention following their majority government win, cited at the beginning of this chapter. In that speech he claimed the Conservatives to be the "party of new Canadians!" (Kenney 2011). As can be seen in Kenney's words, conservative renderings of immigration myths and "clash of civilizations discourses" are highly useful politically.

Linking foreign policy to domestic ideological and political efforts, Kenney encouraged Canadians to, for example, ignore the fate of Afghan detainees that had been controversially handed over to Afghan security forces by the Canadian military without assurances that they would not be tortured (BCCLA 2012). He mocked that "our adversaries were focused on the obsessions of the chattering classes – like Taliban prisoners – rather than the practical bread and butter concerns of hard working families" (Kenney 2011). Neoconservative multiculturalism includes adhesion to a neoconservative worldview and "clash of civilizations" discourses. The public and potential Conservative supporters were invited to forego any critical appraisal of Canadian foreign policy and actions abroad in favour of blind neoconservative nationalism and

the protestant work ethic. The novelty of neoconservative multiculturalism is in creatively tying such rhetorical and ideological work with outreach to immigrants and “ethnic” voters.

In the same speech Kenney would dismiss “left wing elites” in favour of hard-working Canadians, an imaginary within which the Conservatives worked assiduously to incorporate new and “ethnic” Canadians. As with the citizenship guide the Conservatives re-wrote, Kenney indulged in orientalist discourses and the labeling of “the other” as barbaric as the party sought to create a Conservatism based on reconfigured exclusions and new ideological disciplinary mechanisms. Partially boasting, but also as part of an attempt to build a new form of neoconservative nationalism with more wide-ranging support and rooting it to imperial ties to Britain, Kenney asserted that “new Canadians”:

. . . see in our beliefs and priorities the highest aspirations of most Canadians . . . As conservatives we believe that the country comes first . . .

Canadians don’t love government. We love our Dominion.
We don’t depend on the bloated bureaucracies of the nanny state. We thrive on our freedom and are upheld by the rule of law.
We don’t believe that Canada’s history began in the Summer of Love.
We honour a tradition reaching back to the Magna Carta . . .

The transition from a party whose first predecessor once rejected immigration for its unwanted effects on Canada’s demographics is complete, for immigrants now join Canada’s list of heroes - along with the military:

As conservatives, as Canadians, our heroes are not protesters or Celebrity activists. Our heroes are the practical visionaries who united our country; the immigrants who have left everything to help build it; the brave soldiers, in every generation including our own, who have laid down their lives to defend it.

And our priorities as Conservatives are the real-world, everyday concerns of our fellow Canadians.
They’re raising a family in Brampton West.
They’re starting a small business in Vancouver South.
They are proudly taking the oath of citizenship in York Centre.

In the Conservative imaginary and discourse immigrants graduated from the demographic or political *threat* of early Reform Party platforms to *models* for their fellow Conservatives. As Kenney argued in a 2008 speech, “If we are honest, Canadians have much to learn from our newest arrivals. The foundation of strong families, the value of faith, the necessity of excellence in education. To the extent that those values need to be renewed in every generation if Canada is to remain strong and free, immigrants are our allies” (Wells 2010). Such formulations were a major ideological advance over the doubts that had lingered with respect to the party’s patriotism and in its tone towards potential supporters frustrated with the Liberal Party but uncertain about the Conservatives’ treatment of immigrants.

Also, as has been discussed concerning left critiques of multiculturalism in the last chapter, myths of an immigrant America [or Canada] can also obscure the actual history and social relations of the countries for which they are invoked, such as the histories and demands of First Nation’s peoples whose claims extend beyond mere recognition (Honig 2001, 85). All of these are powerful properties that have proven highly useful for conservative politics.

Significantly, as Honig notes, and will be apparent in this and subsequent chapters, “If left unchallenged, national imaginations (and the US national imagination in particular) are creative enough and well-funded enough to recuperate symbolic immigrant energies for national projects, while also often mistreating actual immigrants” (Honig 2001, 79)

As will be seen, the Conservatives considerably reconfigured their discourses and approach to multiculturalism as the party switched from a less overtly xenophobic to a more calculated and frequently xenophilic rhetorical approach. This can be seen in the evolution of their discourses -- if not fully in their substantive and more disciplinary treatment -- of multiculturalism in Canada.

Table 5.1: Reform, Canadian Alliance and Conservative Party Platform Positions and Platforms on Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity

	Early Reform “Invasion from the Margin” (late 1980s to early 1990s)	“The Cleansing of the Discourse” under later Reform/ Canadian Alliance (mid-1990s to early 2000s)	Kenneyism and the “Minimum Winning Coalition” (Conservative Party of Canada since 2004)	Relevant Policies and discourses of the Conservative Government (2006-2015)
Multi-culturalism	<p>Abolish the multiculturalism program and end funding</p> <p>Opposition to “hyphenated-Canadianism”</p>	No mention of multiculturalism policy in party platforms		<p>Willingness to make positive statements about multiculturalism, particularly at election time</p> <p>Employ Progressive Conservative Party legacy to improve and bolster the party’s image and credentials concerning multiculturalism</p> <p>“Integrationist, social cohesion” bent.</p> <p>Absorption of Multiculturalism into much larger Citizenship and Immigration Ministry, lack of own Ministerial Voice (Griffith 2013);</p> <p>Significant program underspending in the ministry;</p>
Racism and Anti-Racism	<p>Defensive stance against charges of racism against the party</p> <p>Support repeal of charter section 15(2) “which permits . . . affirmative action and other forms of ‘reverse discrimination’” (1996, 19)</p>	<p>Reform:</p> <p>Dismantling of employment equity.</p> <p>Alliance:</p> <p>“no more affirmative action quotas”</p>	<p>Campaigned on subsequently cancelled “Action Plan against Racism” but withdrew from UN process (Flecker 2008, 174–75).</p>	<p>Shift from broader anti-Racism policies to focus on anti-Semitism and anti-radicalization</p> <p>Vetoes of anti-racist programming by political staff (Griffith 2013)</p> <p>Public statements critical of employment equity and lowering of employment equity requirements for contractors in 2013 (Thompson 2013; Friesen 2010)</p>
<p>Contents based on Reform, Canadian Alliance and Conservative Party platforms, legislation, speeches unless otherwise noted.</p>				

The later Reform Party and its successors parties also stopped calling for the abolishment of multiculturalism programming as it had previously (Reform Party of Canada 1993), although multiculturalism programming had already been considerably defunded and dispersed under prior governments, thereby making it a smaller target (Kirkham 1998, 264; James 2013, 32–34).

b) Casting the Conservative Party as Defenders and Originators of Multiculturalism

By the 2011 election, with a majority government within reach the Harper Conservatives were even willing to cast themselves as *defenders* of multiculturalism on a national stage. In a 2011 leaders' debate, Harper defended multiculturalism as a Canadian value against the Bloc Quebecois' Gilles Duceppe, in language that would be have inconceivable to come from the Reform Party early in its history:

We favour multiculturalism.

What Canadians need to understand about multiculturalism is that people who make the hard decision to ... come here, they first and foremost want to belong to this country ... They also at the same time will change our country.

And we show through multiculturalism our willingness to accommodate their differences, so they are more comfortable.

That's why we're so successful integrating people as a country. I think we're probably the most successful country in the world in that regard.

(Then Prime Minister Stephen Harper, quoted in Siddiqui 2011)

However belying Harper's eloquent defence of multiculturalism against the Bloc's denunciations were other troubling trends. In essence, through its policies and discourses the Conservatives were demonstrating that the substance of any project or claims concerning multiculturalism lays in the adjectives used to describe the term and give it meaning- and the Conservatives were actively seeking to shape a neoconservative version. While the Conservatives eliminated overt

anti-multiculturalism from their platforms and discourses, and leading party figures such as Stephen Harper and Jason Kenney could invoke the term to appeal to voters, that did not mean they did not embark on significant ideological, discursive and policy changes to shift the terrain upon which the term is defined and its associated public policies operated. It is these transformations, disciplining of civil society groups and associated discourses that compose their form of neoconservative multiculturalism.

During this period Kenney and the Conservatives sought to construct “a novel combination of old and new elements” in their political project through the type of creative neoconservative authoritarian populism reminiscent of that remarked upon by Hall and cited at the beginning of this chapter (1985, 122), albeit tailored to Canadian social and demographic conditions. The Conservatives were concocting an anti-statist, militarist nationalism composed of a mix of rugged individualism, respect for authority and the military, and an asserted shared history centuries in the making, one that downplays and even legitimizes the historical and contemporary realities of settler colonialism. In doing so the Conservatives draw upon the existing state tactic whereby the asserted tolerance and cooperation of multiculturalism is something that can be projected backwards all the way to the founding of the country, “presented as shaping the relations of various Aboriginal nations with each other, while reformulating the colonial encounter as just another harmless, or even positive, encounter of cultural interaction and tolerance” (Thobani 2007, 174). In their revised narrative of Canada, Conservatives even sought to date Canadian history to the magna carta in an attempt to root its contemporary identity in that of Britain. The Conservatives sought to insert and fashion the story of Canada – even if awkwardly - into some form of a more organic, Burkean Anglo-Canadian neo-conservatism rooted in what are asserted to be “British” values. As Abu-Laban has noted, Kenney would even

credit British “liberal imperialism” for Canadian multiculturalism and its asserted tolerance (Abu-Laban 2014).

As will also be discussed in chapter six, these efforts were part of many where the Conservatives sought to assert what Sedef Arat-Koç (2005) has described as the “disciplinary bounds” of Canadian identity. There are ideological limits to the critiques and behaviours which the dominant society, particularly its political parties and media will accept from critics of colour or of minority religions in particular, as will be seen.²³ Overall, the Conservatives engaged in both a further *hollowing out* of and a contradiction-ridden hegemonic attempt to *redefine* multiculturalism in Canada in an effort to win both civil society dominance and electoral hegemony, benefitting in part from the openings left by the neoliberal variant of multiculturalism described at the end of chapter three.

One way in which they undertook this project was to cast multiculturalism as a uniquely *Conservative* invention. Simultaneous to asserting their *new* conservatism, and despite the fact that Harper had aggressively distanced himself from Progressive Conservatism as described in chapter three, for branding and image purposes the Conservative party would lay claim to more immigrant-friendly aspects of the Red Tory or old Progressive Conservative legacy when it suited them politically. As Griffith has noted, the Conservatives would even lay claim to multiculturalism as a *Conservative* creation rather than one of the Liberal Party, despite the latter introducing the policy to Canadian governance.

²³ Arat-Koç notes the relative benefits to being an *internal* critic of, or informant upon one’s own culture or faith in a manner that resonates with liberal or conservative social forces rather than acting a critic of Canadian and United States’ societies and foreign policies, for example. She illustrates this discussion with comparisons of the treatment received by Irshad Manji, the lauded author of the *Trouble with Islam* with the negative treatment accorded Sunera Thobani, who faced considerable harassment and outcry for her criticisms of US empire and anti-war remarks in the wake of September 11th 2001 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Centre and impending further Western intervention in Afghanistan (Arat-Koç 2005).

This can be seen, for example, with the Conservatives' creation of the "Paul Yuzyk Award for Multiculturalism" in 2012. The award was named after a former Progressive Conservative Senator appointed by John Diefenbaker in 1963, who had employed the term prior to the Multiculturalism Act and encouraged the recognition of non-French and British immigrants and their descendants' contributions to Canada (J. Smith 2017). In a pamphlet coincidentally published in Conservative blue, it is explained that the award was named after Yuzyk, "a teacher, professor, author and community organizer who wrote extensively on the Ukrainian immigrant experience." The pamphlet notes that it "commemorates the late Senator Yuzyk's pioneering legacy in establishing multiculturalism as one of the fundamental characteristics of Canadian heritage and identity." This was in part for a senate speech where "Mr. Yuzyk argued that Canada was a multicultural nation that included peoples from many different cultures, all of whom contributed to Canadian society. According to Mr. Yuzyk, Canada could succeed in building a strong nation through adherence to the principles of Confederation, compromise and "unity in diversity" (Government of Canada 2002). Griffith notes that the new award was "tailored to the integration theme, recognizing a Conservative pioneer of multiculturalism, and appropriating multiculturalism as a Conservative, rather than a Liberal, initiative" (2013, 41).

Through such initiatives the Conservatives would call upon Red Tory traditions in Canada to bolster their political prospects and image as a party that embraces immigration and multiculturalism despite strongly rejecting the Red Tory legacy in most fields, such as in their treatment of refugees. Such was the tremendous ideological and pragmatic distance traveled by Canada's leading neoconservatives since the Reform Party's founding in 1987 in part out of disgust with the Progressive Conservative Party to the creativity and pragmatism of the newer Conservative Party. It is also an effort emblematic of their attempt to achieve hegemony within Canada's social formation.

Jeffrey (2015) and Wells (2010) have also noted this selective borrowing of the Progressive Conservative legacy in rebranding of the party and claims to its legacy in their outreach work, reaching back to Diefenbaker. This appropriation of a predecessor party's political project despite rejecting much of its legacy provides further evidence of how the Conservative approach to multiculturalism has been a creative ideological project, however one whose hard edges would be felt by many.

In terms of the actual substance multiculturalism discourses and policies, for a time Kenney, who was named Secretary of State (in January 2007) and subsequently Minister responsible for Multiculturalism (October 2008 to October 2015) and the Conservatives pondered a formal shift from state multiculturalism to asserting pluralism as a defining value instead, before realizing that was not a politically realistic idea given the popularity of multiculturalism in Canada (Griffith 2015c). However while not replacing the term, notions of pluralism- the lowest common denominator of multiculturalism- would feature heavily in their discourses. As Bannerji notes, cited near the end of chapter three, ideologically the concept and societal model of pluralism has the benefit to neoliberal and conservative social forces of obscuring social inequalities and differences by erasing relations of colonialism and inequality. This she argues, permits the subtle- though in the case of the Conservatives not so subtle- assertion of a hegemonic "European-Canadianness" in the absence of more critical understandings of the Canadian settler colonial state (Bannerji 2000). This is a particularly powerful property for neoconservatism, and Kenney's formulations concerning citizenship and multiculturalism would be consistent with just such conservatizing tendencies.

c) *The Further Hollowing Out and Redefining of Multiculturalism on Neoconservative Terms Amidst Efforts to Form a Minimum Winning Coalition*

The redefining of Canadian identity and notions of citizenship and multiculturalism was an aggressive political project containing major contradictions. Nods to multiculturalism were required to gain and maintain sufficient political support on Canada's settler colonial terrain, but the neoconservative variant was meant to purge the concept of its progressive or anti-racist potential to both hollow it out and imbue it with new meanings, effectively constituting a backlash against the remnants of what James (2013) has called "social movement" multiculturalism. Such efforts also needed to be combined with or moderated by the parallel political pragmatism described above and illustrated through the party's creative and disciplinary approach to public policy and "ethnic" voters. More than just an attempt to reconcile a "populist paradox," this was an attempt to achieve societal hegemony and dominance while advancing a neoconservative imaginary.

While acknowledging multiculturalism as a societal strength, for example, then-Minister Kenney also expressed eccentric and conspiratorial views on the topic as he attempted to assert a neoconservative variant, framed in an invented juxtaposition of Canadian multiculturalism with the notion of "cultural Marxism," a concept that some observers have noted is reflective of Western neoconservative conspiracy theories consistent with white supremacist, anti-Semitic and far-right discourses (Berkowitz 2003). Kenney set out to distinguish and assert a distinctly Canadian variant of multiculturalism, apparently rooted in a purportedly liberal British imperialism (Press Progress 2015b), which he asserted to be in sharp contradistinction to what he asserted to be an "extreme kind of Frankfurt School Marxism that has unfortunately characterized the European idea of multiculturalism" (Press Progress 2015a; Bolen 2012). Kenney did not outline what such a European idea or practice happened to be, but instead highlighted a lowest-

common denominator vision of multiculturalism for Canada, whereby “In this country, to most Canadians, it just means a kind of positive, relaxed, organic approach to the better aspects of cultural diversity.” In the same interview from which the preceding quote was drawn he would also defend the language of the “barbaric cultural practices” inserted into the citizenship guide, which he juxtaposed against what he characterized as the position of Justin Trudeau and “the old small l liberal, politically-correct consensus on this” (Bolen 2012). In essence, on behalf of the Conservative Party and government Kenney was fashioning his own vision of Canada and multiculturalism, irrespective of prior legislation, public policy or social consensus.

These themes hold significant resonance in the contemporary neoconservative politics and policies of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism and seek to operate on the plane of the national social imaginary. Such trends were particularly observable under the Conservatives in relation to Canadian citizenship, immigration, and multiculturalism, and reflect what Hall described in the British case as a “steady and unremitting set of operations designed to bind or construct a popular consent into these new forms of statist authoritarianism” (Hall 1980, 161). The Conservatives’ old and new discourses are themselves designed to restructure the realm of debate, and include a mix of appeals to immigrants, divisive language and a reframing of Canadian identity along militaristic, neoliberal and neoconservative terms. As will be seen below, those who symbolically or ideologically challenged the (C)onservative vision of Canada would face serious consequences. Such themes and the Conservatives’ creative form of authoritarian populism are discussed further in chapter six. They are visible in the “Discover Canada” citizenship guide, changes to citizenship ceremonies and changes to the Citizenship Act to further militarize Canadian identity while drawing stark ideological lines. Expressed in terms used by Stephen Harper, the ideological battle being waged has been against “moral nihilism,” and a “modern left that has moved beyond old socialistic morality or even moral relativism to

something much darker . . . the rejection of any tradition or convention of morality, a post-Marxism with deep resentments, even hatreds, of the norms of free and democratic western civilization” (Harper 2003). These types of formulations, particularly the desire to assert a dominant Canadian identity from an idealized past strongly permeated the Conservatives’ political imaginary and immigration and citizenship policies, as will be seen in the next chapter.

In addition to reasserting watered-down notions of pluralism as multiculturalism’s dominant model, the neoconservative variant of multiculturalism in Canada was also to lessen any acceptance of social scientific knowledge concerning racism and to focus on setting the disciplinary terms of civil society participation in political life and discourse in Canada.

Redefining Canadian Multiculturalism: From Poorly Resourced Anti-Racism to “Social Cohesion”

In his book, subtitled *Resettling Citizenship and Multiculturalism*, Andrew Griffith- a former Director General for Citizenship and Multiculturalism under Kenney- chronicled how under the Conservatives the government’s approach to multiculturalism involved a downplaying of racism and dismissal of social science research related to the topic (Griffith 2013, 44). As Griffith notes, then-Minister Kenney was dismissive of conventional social scientific research on racism and preferred his own anecdotal evidence of societal trends based upon his interactions with new and “ethnic” Canadians. Instead of fighting dominant societal racism, the Conservatives placed far greater attention to asserted “Canadian values” and conflicts between immigrant groups (Griffith 2013, 48–51) .

During a speech to a Multiculturalism National Meeting in June 2010 Kenney would, perhaps grudgingly, “acknowledge the ongoing reality of racism in our society” which he “suspect[ed] that is something that will never be eliminated.” His “primary concern” was that “as Canada maintains the highest relative levels of immigration in the world, . . . “we find

increasingly that the most virulent and sometimes violent forms of xenophobia raises intolerance and prejudice come and are experienced between new Canadians who come from the same country or region of origin” (Griffith 2013, 49). Overall, Griffith notes, citing multiple multiculturalism officials, that the Conservatives had abandoned a traditional focus on dominant-minority relations as well as the Multiculturalism Act’s provisions to remove barriers to societal participation (Griffith 2013, 51). While intergroup conflict is worth addressing, these reformulations of the concept and approach to government and how they informed relations with civil society were highly significant in de-emphasizing the dynamics of Canada as a settler colonial state and undermining efforts to combat dominant society racism. Hegemonic whiteness was not to be challenged.

Overall, the Conservative government replaced a poorly resourced anti-racist approach inherited from their Liberal predecessors (James 2013, 34; Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002) with a vision of multiculturalism dominated by discourses of ‘social cohesion’ while disciplining civil society groups to acquiesce to their priorities. In his book Griffith employed policy documents of the Liberal and Conservative governments to compare their respective priorities for the multiculturalism file, as seen in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2: Multiculturalism Priorities Under Liberal and Conservative Governments

LIBERALS: 2004-05	CONSERVATIVES: 2010-11
Fostering cross-cultural understanding	Building an integrated, socially cohesive society
Combatting racism and discrimination	Engaging in international discussions on multiculturalism and diversity
Civic participation	
Making Canadian institutions more reflective of Canadian diversity	Making institutions more responsive to the needs of Canada’s diverse population

Source: (Griffith 2013, 27)

Clear substantive differences are observable from the language employed by the two governments. The Conservatives shifted priorities from mutual understanding and combatting

racism and discrimination to merely “discussing” diversity. Rather than pushing for institutions to reflect the country’s demographic diversity, institutions were to be merely “responsive” to Canada’s diverse population. A clearer example of the potential for government practices concerning multiculturalism to embed existing inequalities and forestall challenges to what Bannerji calls “encoding a hegemonic European-Canadianness (Bannerji 2000, 50–51) can scarcely be imagined. Such discursive shifts are significant in showing how such hegemonic understandings are embedded in public policy. While the Liberals’ at least offered superficial understanding of the need for cross-cultural understanding, to combat racism and for institutions to reflect the country’s demographics, Conservative priorities demonstrated a shift to a more overt project of settler colonial hegemony. Priorities shifted from a multicultural one based on cross-cultural understanding to a “socially cohesive” one which, as has been seen, is to be positively associated with Britain and Canada’s colonial history. Such has been the shift from a more substantive approach to multiculturalism on the part of social movements in the 1980s in particular that had some state support, to a neoliberal multiculturalism under the Liberals to an assertive and politically pragmatic, yet disciplinary neoconservative form of multiculturalism characterized by regressive politics and pragmatic outreach under the Conservative Party.

In their multiculturalism policies the Conservatives effectively offered a denial of dominant society racism with the exception of anti-Semitism- which they equated with the criticism of the policies of Israel- and a rejection of substantive multiculturalism to address it. In its treatment of diaspora communities who made substantive criticisms of the government and its approach to foreign policy Kenney and the government would also engage in orientalist, clash of civilizations discourses and a withdrawal of funding, particularly concerning conflicts in the Middle East and Canadian foreign policy (Hasan 2013).

As observers have noted, the Conservatives only selectively paid attention to evidence, ignoring the influence of racism of employers for example in identifying needs for reform to the economic class of immigration (Woroby 2015, 445). When faced with charges of racism when critics examined the substantive impacts of Conservative policies and the nature of their discourses, Kenney would aggressively fight back against critics of his government and its policies, labeling critics “racial grievance mongers” in a letter to the Guardian newspaper, for example (Kenney 2012). Such language is reminiscent of and echoes the Reform Party’s early defensiveness, when it forsook structural analyses and in its first statement of principles and admonished critics that “the vested interest of bad immigration policy should not be so quick to label Canadians ‘racist’ for desiring positive changes and should be more humble and honest about their own motives” (Reform Party of Canada 1989, 24). Immigrants, critics of government policy, and members of “ethnic” communities were invited to participate in public space only within certain ideological limits, while many (im)migrants and prospective (im)migrants were disadvantaged by the social relations being advanced, as evidenced by reforms passed to refugee determination system and temporary foreign worker policies, for example, which will be discussed in chapter seven.

Griffith chronicles the shift away from any anti-racism focus due to Conservative skepticism, particularly by Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney. The government rejected employment equity policies and held an observable “aversion to any terms like ‘white power,’ ‘racialized communities’ or equivalent language, particularly among organizations applying for grants and contributions” (Griffith 2013, 39) . Such an ideological and disciplinary approach by the Conservatives reinforces a prior anti-racist insight that “the least tolerable immigrant . . . is not someone whose ‘culture’ or ‘values’ differ radically from the claimed identities and ‘values’ of the dominant group, but an anti-imperialist immigrant who exposes the hypocrisy of the

dominant group” (Arat-Koç 2005, 46). This is perhaps even more the case under neoconservative multiculturalism than its neoliberal counterpart and applies to anti-racist activism as well.

As Griffith observed, the Conservative government refused to approve multiculturalism grants that would have been previously approved under announced criteria. Ministerial staff would police groups’ background and use of anti-racist language through google searches, resulting in less than half of allocated program funding in grants and contributions being spent in 2009-10 and 2010-11. This was despite the fact no change in program objectives had been communicated to potential applicants. This approach by the Conservatives, Griffith notes, led program staff to experience a state of “denial and depression” (2013, 27–28). Though the Conservatives referred to the plan in public and employed references to it in their training materials on “ethnic outreach,” the Conservatives subsequently allowed the Canadian Action Plan Against Racism to expire and withdrew from UN processes related to racism despite using the Action Plan in its early years in office as a convenient reference point in Question Period to reply to inquiries about what the government was doing to combat racism (Griffith 2013, 43, note 81).

What can be seen here is a shift from a relatively feeble but discursively anti-racist approach on the part of the Liberal government to one that in its willful ignorance of social scientific knowledge was clearly meant to preserve what Bannerji termed hegemonic Europeanness and settler colonial priorities. “New Canadians” and their allies, lest they wish to face backlash, government defunding or sanction were left to conform as neocolonial subjects. Rather than advancing inclusive policies and facilitating access to citizenship, for example, the Conservatives supported divisive projects in seeking to construct a more neoconservative imaginary of Canada. These include a high-profile and controversially placed monument to the “victims of communism” (Iverson 2015a), funding cuts to organizations supporting Arab and

Palestinian rights (Siddiqui 2012; Voices-Voix n.d.), the invocation of “barbaric cultural practices” in Canada’s citizenship guide (Jhappan 2010) and in legislation, as will be discussed in chapter six.

The emergent dialectical relationship between multiculturalism from below and the Conservatives’ political project of political outreach and neoconservative multiculturalism from above, along with its predilection for squeezing out the progressive potentials of multiculturalism were on strong display in the case of what Matt James (2013) has described as “neoliberal heritage redress.” Neoliberal heritage redress was one of the Conservatives most creative and ministerial hands-on ideological and policy formulations.

Neoconservative Creativity and Pragmatism Encounters Canada’s History of Exclusion on the Path to Government: Neoliberal Heritage Redress and the Disciplining of Civil Society

Despite Stephen Harper’s 2009 statement that Canada has “no history of colonialism” (Ljunggren 2009), Canada’s settler colonial history is riddled with exemplary structures and cases of social exclusion and discrimination, most notably towards its Indigenous peoples, but also towards many other racialized groups. For decades the Liberal Party had resisted formal apologies for policies such as the Chinese head tax and the exclusion of Jewish refugees during the second world war (Griffith 2013, 60–61) . However in response to demands from groups such as the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association- who pragmatically lessened their demands from apologies and compensation for world war one internment to “acknowledgement” and financial support for commemorative projects- the Conservative Party sought to grow their support amongst “ethnic voters” by pursuing the notion of such limited redress through private members bills and, in 2004, by announcing an overall party policy of such acknowledgement and commemoration (James 2013, 35–36).

The eventual policy that emerged as a response to what became a Liberal-Conservative bi-partisan approach to such issues after the Liberals almost lost the 2004 election was a formula of “no compensation and no apology,” which was highly circumscribed in terms of what forms of injustices could qualify- specifically only “wartime measures or immigration restrictions” (James 2013, 36–37). James notes the realities and general approach of the ACE and subsequently renamed Community Historical Recognition Programs (CRHP) were well captured in the ACE acronym: *Acknowledgment*, but not apology; *Commemoration and Education*, but never compensation. This was an approach from above by the Conservatives and Liberals that was, he argues, “from the outset a deliberate and quite explicit departure from more activist and reparatory approaches” on the part of groups engaged in long term struggles for redress such as the Chinese Canadian National Council, who would be excluded and intentionally marginalized by the Conservative government from any federal monies or redress consideration even after the Conservatives made a formal apology for the Chinese Head Tax in 2006. Conversely, James notes, the Conservatives would reward the Ukrainian Canadian Congress in whose approach the Conservatives saw an excellent chance to reach potential new voters without offending their right wing base with the opportunity to administer \$10 million in grants “for pioneering and remaining true to the no-apology, no-compensation approach,” “twice the amount given to any other single redress issue” (2013, 36–40).

James (2013) notes that the “heritage redress” offered to several groups in the 2000s through this model pioneered in Conservative private members’ bills was in some ways highly disciplining, as it forsook formal apologies and compensation for those who suffered historic wrongs and their descendants in favour of commemorative and educational projects that downplayed or ignored the dominant society’s role in harming particular groups (36). This approach was in line with the reduced emphasis on dominant society racism discussed above.

These projects, James convincingly argues, served to supplant a potentially anti-racist multiculturalism discourse with a neoliberal one centred on communities' "contributions" to Canada in a formulaic manner (41). This recurring theme of downplaying dominant society racism did little to challenge contemporary injustices. As James argues, this Canadian redress culture was characterized by "a tendency to bypass questions of causal responsibility, ignore specific agents and mechanisms of injustice, and duck contemporary reform and accountability issues" (James 2015, 37).

Because of this approach, James notes that "[a]cademic assessments have not been kind" towards the Conservatives' Community Historical Recognition Program (CHRP) whose final determinations rested with then-Minister Jason Kenney. The program, James summarizes, "stipulated which injustices could be recognized," "forbade 'political activities' and 'advocacy'" and "aimed to steer public attention away from the wrongs themselves by emphasizing the experiences and contributions of the relevant communities. Citing the CHRP Applicant's Guide James describes how the program's "primary objective" was to "recognize and/or commemorate the historical experiences of [the] ethnocultural communities affected" while its secondary expressed goal was to "promote the respective contributions of these communities to the shaping of Canada" (James 2015, 39). Neither of these was to make connections between prior and current forms of exclusion or to challenge the status quo. Overall, he argues that communities pursuing such redress were also subjected to different "degrees of freedom" in their efforts and that overall,

The picture is not encouraging. The programme's insistence on downplaying Canadian injustices in favour of redemptive tales of multiculturalist success mocks the very idea of examining historical wrongs in the spirit of introspection and political learning. Much the same can be said about promoting the equal opportunity to influence political outcomes; it appears that the CHRP excluded precisely those voices most engaged in fighting exclusion. The problem for democratic citizenship is this: when equal voice and historical learning are

systematically impeded, the prospects for renegotiating relationships of domination and exclusion would appear correspondingly to suffer.

(James 2015, 47)

This was evidenced in what James describes as the program's "dogged" refusal to use the word racism or identify specific agents of discrimination, with the exception of remarks Kenney would make about anti-Semitism (2015, 43–44), which James notes – while in no way questioning its significance- is relatively "cost free" in the contemporary context when compared to Indigenous claims in Canada, for example, which involve land and sovereignty and did not receive the same bluntly accurate characterizations by the Conservative government (38). Overall in its pragmatism, ideological creativity and disciplinary nature the case of neoliberal heritage redress illustrates some of the defining characteristics of *Kenneyism* and neoconservative multiculturalism in that it represents a highly creative form of outreach to obtain support amongst "ethnic" voters while simultaneously disciplining project recipients and organizations to reinforce status quo social relations, if indeed not celebrate the nature of contemporary Canada. This approach to the multiculturalism portfolio was also accompanied by major staff and funding reductions as the multiculturalism department "had withered and gotten lost" when merged with the citizenship portfolio by the Conservative government.²⁴

The disciplinary politics of *Kenneyism* and neoconservative multiculturalism could be even more overtly exclusionary when national rituals and symbols were challenged, shifting from a policy within the multiculturalism portfolio to discourses of citizenship and belonging. The type

²⁴ In a story written after the Liberals were elected in 2015, based upon Griffith's reflections and data he had accessed, it was noted that "Griffith, who moved multiculturalism to CIC in 2008, long argued it had withered and gotten lost at Citizenship, a highly operational department that focused on the process side of immigration, refugees and citizenship. Griffith said it will be difficult to tease out the jobs and funding at CIC that should be returned to Canadian Heritage because they were dispersed throughout Citizenship and Immigration. The two departments will have to duke it out over which resources will move. Multiculturalism also faced a significant cut under the Conservatives. When Griffith moved it to CIC, the program had a \$13-million budget: \$12 million for grants and contributions and 73 full-time positions. The last departmental performance report showed 29 full-time positions with a \$9.8-million budget. Money for grants and contributions fell to \$7.9 million" (May 2015).

of vision of societal belonging and Canadian patriotism being offered by the Conservative government and the nature of its politics can be seen in its treatment of Zunera Ishaq and others who sought to both maintain their faith and become formally recognized members of Canadian society by becoming citizens.

“Not how we do things here” and “Stay the hell where you came from”: Islamophobia and Gender in Neoconservative Politics

Much more important for notions of Canadian identity and social belonging than the relatively modest funding administered through the multiculturalism program are the more public pronouncements and leadership on the part of political leaders, particularly when they hold the reins and bully pulpit of government. The harder edges of *Kenneyism*, neoconservative multiculturalism and the Conservatives disciplinary approach can be seen in the Harper government’s approach to Islam and the wearing of the niqab in the context of citizenship oath-taking. According to Flanagan large segments of Canada’s Muslim population were considered not accessible to the Conservatives due to “foreign policy issues,” as he remarked following the 2011 election (2011a, 106). Their domestic treatment would seem to confirm such calculations. The dog-whistle politics of coded language (and occasionally more vocal prejudice) appealing to the worst instincts of Canadians and type of “social cohesion” on offer are clear in their treatment of this segment of Canada’s population.

This can be seen in the Conservative government’s treatment of Zunera Ishaq, then a Muslim permanent resident who invoked the principle of religious freedom to wear a niqab in 2014 while taking the citizenship oath. Ishaq was willing to confirm her identity in private before taking the oath to avoid any uncertainty that it was in fact her sweating the oath. However this assertion of her religious freedom and challenge to the patriotic ritual embodied in the citizenship oath sparked outrage amongst some, in large part intentionally stoked by the Conservative Party

in response to the issue. Denied her citizenship by the Conservative government's insistence she expose her face in public while taking the oath, Ishaq legally asserted her right to do so in court, and ultimately won her case but faced persistence and high profile opposition from the Conservative government.

Prior to Ishaq's case Kenney changed regulations in 2011 that had guided the taking of the oath. Offering his own interpretation of Islam, the self-professed devout Catholic Kenney argued that women did not have any religious obligation to wear face coverings (CBC News 2011). However Kenney's moralism and his intention to remove discretion on the part of citizenship judges in administering the oath was cited in the judgment overturning the government's treatment of Ishaq and awarding her costs:

The Minister stated in this interview that taking the citizenship oath "is a public act of testimony in front of your fellow citizens, it's a legal requirement, and it's ridiculous that you should be doing so with your face covered"; and also that: "[y]ou're standing up in front of your fellow citizens making a solemn commitment to respect Canada's laws, to be loyal to the country, and I just think it's not possible to do that with your face covered." (Boswell 2015 at 49)

To match the taking of the oath to his patriotic sensibilities Kenney had earlier had the regulations interpreting the Citizenship Act amended to not only require those taking the oath to swear it, but also that citizenship judges must see and not only hear prospective citizens do so, though he did so without the legislative authority to insist on such a change (Boswell 2015 at 60). Twice in 2015 courts ruled against Kenney's regulations- described here as such because they were not subject to parliamentary debate or authority in being issued- as being against Canada's citizenship law, which directs those overseeing oaths to allow for the greatest amount of religious freedom possible. The second court decision, issued shortly before the 2015 election saw a rare ruling from the bench. The judge's ruling stated there was no need to reconsider the earlier ruling and that it was ruling from the bench in order that Ishaq would be able to become a citizen in

time to vote in the October 19th 2015 election. However the government unsuccessfully sought yet another stay of the decision, pending yet another appeal. The Conservatives' political strategies on the issue were at the direct expense of Ishaq and other women's right to vote and participate in Canada's political system, despite there being few cases of people covering their face while taking the oath.

In the aftermath of Ishaq's first successful court case Conservative MP Larry Miller stated on the radio that Muslim women who wish to wear a niqab should "stay the hell where you came from" (O'Malley 2015). While Miller would apologize for the remarks, in previous years such outbursts were far rarer under Harper's centralized message control than under their Reform predecessors. But such an outburst was perhaps emblematic of the attitudes of many in the party's base and backbenches given the party's messaging on the issue. The Prime Minister's spokesperson employed the trope of the "Canadian family" to reinforce the government's belief that Ishaq was being disrespectful of the country in her actions, stating that "most Canadians, including new Canadians, would find it offensive that someone would cover their face at the very moment they want to join the Canadian family" (O'Malley 2015). Neoconservative multiculturalism meant in part, ideologically policing the boundaries and limits to multiculturalism in Canada.

Despite the second emphatic court defeat the government continued to promise new legislation banishing any face covering during the oath were they to continue in office after the 2015 election and employed it as a wedge issue against the NDP and the Liberals. With no hope of passing the legislation they even introduced legislation banning face coverings in citizenship ceremonies only seventy-five minutes before the end of the final parliamentary session before the 2015 election (Fitz-Morris 2015). On the campaign trail Stephen Harper also mused publicly about forbidding public servants from wearing the niqab as well, while the government and

Conservative Party's rhetoric on the issue led to increased negative reactions towards Ishaq and left her feeling unsafe (CBC News 2015a).

In these court defeats the Conservatives saw opportunities to score political points among their core constituency, fundraise, and play to the prejudices of others. Often their rhetoric was misleading about the facts of the case, failing to acknowledge her willingness to be identified in private and to recite the oath. Former Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander, who replaced Kenney in the portfolio 2013, played to the worst stereotypes, arguing that despite the fact it was former Minister Jason Kenney that had changed the rules governing the oath without legislative change that his party's government was "strengthening" Canadian citizenship and that "People take pride in that. They don't want their co-citizens to be terrorists . . . They don't want people to become citizens who haven't respected the rules" (Ling 2015). The party also built a website entitled "Not the way we do things here" (Conservative Party of Canada n.d.) to help capitalize politically on the controversy, echoing the words of Prime Minister Stephen Harper in Parliament who described the wearing of niqabs as "rooted in a culture that is anti-women" (Chase 2015a). However it is difficult to fathom how prohibiting women from becoming citizens would make a positive contribution to their ability to exercise their rights.

The Conservatives rhetoric concerning Ishaq's dress, culture and gender rang particularly hollow in light of several policy changes the party made that would predictably impact women in a negative manner and thus bolster negative aspects of Canada's own "anti-woman" culture. These included cuts to refugee health care, structural dynamics in the expanded temporary foreign worker program that increased the likelihood of human trafficking, physical and sexual abuse and perhaps most obviously their policy of "conditional permanent residence" (Canadian Council for Refugees 2013a). The latter policy, which the Conservatives imposed by regulation in October of 2012 introduced a two year wait period of conditional permanent residence for

sponsored spouses without joint children who had been in a relationship for under two years at the time the sponsorship application was made. The sponsored permanent resident could see their permanent residence revoked and face deportation in the event of relationship breakdown. An impractical exemption for women in abusive relationships meant they had to somehow prove such abuse in order to qualify was added only after outcry from civil society. The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) argued that the measure increased the risk of spousal abuse and power imbalances by empowering sponsors at the expense of their spouses, potentially trapping people in abusive relationships. The CCR also argued that the regulation was redundant given pre-existing provisions to combat misrepresentation in immigration proceedings that the government could apply if the government wanted to challenge the veracity of a given relationship (Canadian Council for Refugees 2015b, 3). Through such policies the gendered and racialized aspects of the Conservatives' "minimum winning coalition" and limits of inclusion within the party's vision of the "Canadian family," whose punitive and exclusionary natures were disproportionately borne by (im)migrants, particularly immigrant women, were on full display.

These dynamics were compounded by the Conservatives' 2015 election strategy, which seemed to be designed to emphasize such themes and othering processes. Doubling down on their earlier "Barbaric Cultural Practices Act" and language of barbarism in the citizenship guide the Conservatives campaigned on a "barbaric cultural practices tip line," for example, that later leadership candidate Kellie Leitch would tearfully apologize for, as discussed in the introduction to this dissertation. Some polling demonstrates that the Canadian population's views on immigration did shift negatively, correlating with the Conservatives' time in office as there were significant increases in the number of Canadians who felt there was too much immigration to Canada being permitted and too many visible minorities amongst those immigrants, rising significantly since the party came to power in 2006, after a long decline in such sentiments

between 1994 and 2005 (Graves 2015). As will be seen in the next section, the government engaged in ongoing demonization and fear-mongering concerning refugees whose prospective inclusion in the “Canadian family” was also made much more difficult.

Authoritarian Populist Demonization and Social Exclusion of Refugees and Other Vulnerable (Im)migrants

As indicated in the Stuart Hall quote at the beginning of this chapter, part of the Thatcherite authoritarian populist recipe was the scapegoating of the vulnerable: in her case the “welfare scavenger.” This recipe was effectively adopted within *Kenneyist* politics with respect to refugees and other vulnerable migrants. As has been noted, one major continuity in Reform, Canadian Alliance, and now Conservative discourse has remained the language of “special interests” and “bogus refugees.” The Conservative government even conducted focus groups at taxpayer expense to test the effectiveness of the latter label in advancing their legislative agenda concerning refugees (Berthiaume 2010). Today those “interests” are those of the ‘refugee lobby,’ as well as “cheaters,” “fraudsters” and “queue jumpers,” despite, as Alboim and Cohl have noted, little evidence of major abuse of the immigration system (2012). This discourse was and continues to be designed to undermine potential support for refugees and other vulnerable migrants from the “hard working” immigrants whose support the Conservatives have sought to win. This can be seen in comments that Stephen Harper made on the election trail in 2011, where he argued that human smuggling is “not fair to those hundreds of thousands of immigrants who respect the rules, and it's important that we have laws to deal with that problem,” juxtaposing his position with those of “[t]he Bloc and Liberals [who] want to transform our border into a real sieve, which shows a total lack of respect for the immigrants who respect the rules” (Gurzu 2011). Sophist appeals to those who “respect the rules” were a consistent and key

Conservative talking point in undermining a sense of solidarity or support for migrants with less secure status.

Table 5.3: Excluded from the “Minimum Winning Coalition” – Refugees in Authoritarian Populist Discourses of Canadian Neoconservative Political Parties

Theme/ Policy Area	Early Reform “Invasion from the Margin” (late 1980s to early 1990s)	“The Cleanse”: Later Reform/ Canadian Alliance (mid-1990s to early 2000s)	Kenneyism and the ‘Minimum Winning Coalition’ (Conservative Party of Canada since 2004)	Some Relevant Policies and Discourses of the Conservative Government (2006-2015)
Refugee Policy and discourse	<p>Potential constitutional amendment to avoid having to process refugees in Canada (vs. Singh decision).</p> <p>Immediate deportation of “bogus refugees.”</p> <p>Punishment of those helping refugees come to Canada</p>	<p>No mention in 1997 Reform Platform.</p> <p>2000 Alliance Platform: Included within justice system discussion, raising spectre of people smuggling, raise prospect of detention.</p>	<p>Campaign against supposed Liberal inattention, portray refugees as security threats, against human smuggling., “false refugees” (2004)</p> <p>Brag of “generous refugee resettlement programs and against smugglers and “bogus claimants” (2011)</p>	<p>Major decline in claims & arrivals to Canada over time in office in part due to visa policies (Hungary and Mexico in particular) and harsh policies, though also linked to the Liberal-signed Safe Third Country Agreement with the United States</p> <p>Highly punitive policies towards refugees and alarmist tone towards refugees, particularly those arriving by boat.</p> <p>Implemented Bill C-31, including the Immigration Minister’s ability to controversially designate “Safe” countries of origin with negative implications for refugee claimants from those countries.</p> <p>Discourse of “bogus refugees” and “queue jumpers” while invoking Canadian self-image as generous to refugees</p> <p>Cuts to Interim Federal Health Plan that had existed untouched since 1956; described by a Judge as “cruel and unusual punishment”</p> <p>Overall reforms created to a more adversarial refugee determination system.</p>
Based on Reform, Canadian Alliance and Conservative Party platforms, legislation, speeches unless otherwise noted				

As Reitz notes, Conservative supporters are less supportive of immigration than Canada's other major political parties, and "show less enthusiasm for multiculturalism, express more strongly the view that immigrants should blend into mainstream society and worry more often that immigrants are not adopting Canadian values" (Reitz 2011, 20). Within such a context one may seriously ponder to what extent the Conservatives' harsh rhetoric about "bogus refugees" and critiques of the immigration system alongside praise of "hard working" immigrants are a form of "dog whistle politics" (Haney López 2014) designed to appeal to multiple constituencies, even if their policies impact them in highly differentiated ways. As Harrison noted concerning the Reform Party's policies and discourses, the party seems to operate with an "inner code" that offers comfort to those uncomfortable with Canada's immigration trends and possesses a notion of "the people" that for "at least to some supporters, is code for the exclusion of certain groups and individuals" (1995, 175). Conservative authoritarian populist immigration discourses signal to the party's base of "exalted subjects" that purportedly illegitimate and troubling racialized persons will not take advantage of their asserted generosity.

The Conservatives' renovated discourse continued to function within the realm of right populism while maintaining and even deepening a security risk vision of "criminals and false refugees who are abusing the system" (Conservative Party of Canada 2004b, 38) – harkening to the image of the "good" and "bad" immigrant or refugee that is so prevalent in their contemporary discourses. As discussed earlier, these have been coupled with aggressive, more confident sounding assertions of Canadian nationalism. The case of Tamils and Tamil-Canadians provides a clear case of the Conservatives' mix of two of the defining instincts of *Kenneyism*: refugee exclusion and electoral pragmatism.

Excluding Tamils as Refugees, Wooing Tamil-Canadians as Voters

The at times crude calculus and juxtaposition of the party's disposition when it comes to "ethnic outreach" and the treatment of refugees can be seen in its treatment of Tamils as refugee claimants and established Tamil-Canadians as prospective voters for the party. With an eye on the growing Tamil population in Canada, particularly in the Greater Toronto Area, the Conservatives' discourse concerning Tamils and Tamil Tigers shifted from anti-terrorist rhetoric earlier in their mandate to vocal criticism of the Sri Lankan government for its rights violations, with the party even boycotting the 2013 Commonwealth Summit (Bascaramurty and Ibbitson 2013). Yet when hundreds of Tamils made their ways to the shores of British Columbia in 2009 and 2010 aboard the *Ocean Lady* and *Sun Sea* vessels looking to claim refugee status they were reflexively greeted by a government-led discourse invoking terrorist threats. Next came ministerial opposition to their claims at refugee hearings, extended periods of detention and intense interrogation of refugee claimants, followed by draconian legislation to reform the refugee system. The risk that many of the ships' passengers faced in Sri Lanka was borne out; since landing, nearly two-thirds of those who applied were recognized as refugees in need of protection by August of 2015 (Canadian Council for Refugees 2015a). Such crudely political treatment was exemplary of a government whose instincts were not those of inclusion but would shift to pragmatic political appeals and cynical foreign policy to achieve its domestic political ends.

Conclusion to Chapter 5:

In an effort to grasp the nature of the Conservative Party, its discourses and its policies, the last three chapters have sought to trace the shifts of the Conservative Party from its origins in its Reform Party incarnation to 2015, discussing some of the symbolic and real changes it has gone

through with respect to its discourses as well as public policy stances on citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism as they relate to their overall political approach.

While working towards and eventually achieving a “minimum winning coalition,” through a politics of *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism*, prior to the 2015 election the Conservatives had in many ways effectively renovated their discourses concerning immigration and multiculturalism while employing an authoritarian populist recipe to deepen neoliberalism and shift the terms of citizenship, immigration, multiculturalism and Canadian identity in highly conservative directions.

Through a combination of ideological work and extremely hands-on approach to public policy and civil society the Conservatives significantly shifted the making of and substance of immigration and multiculturalism policy in Canada. With respect to multiculturalism discourses and policy, this was done in part by seeking to evacuate the concept and policy field of its progressive content and potential, and making it compatible with neoconservatism. They had found significant room to creatively manoeuvre to rebrand themselves and to differentiate themselves politically with gestures of modest expense within the prior neoliberal policy directions of the Liberal Party itself. Given the exclusionary nature of their policy approach it is perhaps unsurprising that those policy directions, which will be explored in greater depth in the next two chapters would help contribute to eventual exhaustion with the Harper government and an eventual Liberal return to power.

The Conservatives sought to satisfy their at times nativist base with policies and discourses that drew stark lines between “Canadians,” “good” immigrants and often racialized others as they parties sought to earn the votes of many immigrant and “ethnic” voters while proving incapable of moving beyond their base exclusionary instincts. This was their balance between dynamics of what Honig has discussed as the interplay between xenophilia and

xenophobia. The balance tilting so far towards xenophobia did not serve the government well, however, when refugee policy and a public outpouring of support for Syrian refugees became an election issue in 2015.

Chapter six explores the Conservatives' authoritarian populist approach to government and their use of spectacles and disciplinary discourses in their approach to citizenship and immigration. Chapter seven is concerned with questions of democracy and policy making in citizenship and immigration. It explores the decline of democracy in policy making under the Conservatives, including the concentration of power in ministerial hands and some shifts in the state observable during their time in office. It also considers regressive shifts in social relations on Canada's settler colonial terrain, particularly the increased use of migrant workers coming to Canada with precarious temporary statuses as well as the reduced security of tenure for (im)migrants and refugees on Canadian soil.

As will be seen the Conservatives heavily concentrated power in the hands of the Immigration Minister and associated ministries of Human Resources and Public Safety. It will also be seen that the Conservative government wielded that power to the detriment of those (im)migrants and refugees they saw as undesirable and to the benefit of employers who benefited from the social relations of unfree labour in the (im)migration context. This meant major, negative consequences for social relations under which many (im)migrants to Canada live their lives. Thus rather than just witnessing short term lapses in judgement related to the 2015 Federal election, as can be seen in this and subsequent chapters the exclusionary basis for the Conservatives' approach lay much deeper and was more frequently manifested than outlets such as the *Globe and Mail* and some authors most focused on their electoral successes have seemed to recognize.

Chapter 6: Authoritarian Populism and Canadian Citizenship

Introduction to Chapter 6

“Thatcherite politics are ‘hegemonic’ in their conception and project: the *aim* is to struggle on several fronts at once, not on the economic-corporate one alone; and this is based on the knowledge that, in order really to dominate and restructure a social formation, political, moral and intellectual leadership must be coupled to economic dominance. The Thatcherites know they must ‘win’ in civil society as well as in the state. They understand, as the left generally does not, the consequences of the generalization of the class struggle to new arenas and the need to have a strategy for them too. They mean, if possible, to reconstruct the terrain of what is ‘taken for granted’ in social and political thought---- and so to form a new common sense.”

- Stuart Hall (1985, 119)

“the real enemy is no longer socialism . . . [t]he real challenge is therefore not economic, but the social agenda of the modern Left. Its system of moral relativism, moral neutrality and moral equivalency is beginning to dominate its intellectual debate and public-policy objectives. The clearest recent evidence of this phenomenon is seen in international affairs in the emerging post-Cold-War world--most obviously in the response of modern liberals to the war on terrorism. There is no doubt about the technical capacity of our society to fight this war. What is evident is the lack of desire of the modern liberals to fight, and even more, the striking hope on the Left that we actually lose.”

- Stephen Harper (2003).

“. . . Canada seems to be in the process of adopting policies and practices that have been shown in other national contexts to be detrimental to naturalization and social cohesion. These include concrete changes to naturalization requirements (e.g. lengthening wait times and raising formal language requirements) and procedures (e.g. the introduction of more Ministerial discretion) as well as subtle symbolic changes to the climate in which naturalization takes place (e.g. the reassertion of white, Anglo-Saxon values as core national values in the citizenship study guide). International perspectives particularly from the United Kingdom and Germany show that these material and symbolic changes are detrimental and extremely hard to reverse once set in motion.”

(Korteweg and Elrick 2014, 2–3)

This chapter employs the concepts of Kenneyism and neoconservative multiculturalism to help grasp the creativity and exclusion of the Conservatives’ politics in the fields of citizenship,

immigration and public safety, alongside a regressive reconfiguring of Canadian identity and the impacts of their approach. In particular it illustrates some of the creativity, disciplinary politics and social exclusions of *Kenneyist* authoritarian populism in these policy fields. While in some ways their policies and their negative impact on many new or aspiring Canadians would seem contradictory to their electoral goals of gaining support within immigrant communities, these efforts were also part of the party's attempt to form a socially dominant, if not hegemonic conservative political project and to orient Canadian society along a more militarist and socially conservative path. These policies were consistent with Stephen Harper's earlier expressed desire-cited immediately above- to shift the country away from a direction of "moral relativism, moral neutrality and moral equivalency" that the Conservatives asserted were being advanced by their political adversaries. This form of politics and policies, while taking place alongside superficial appeals to immigrant and "ethnic" voters also reinforce the dominance of the party's core constituency of white settler colonial subjects in the country's social and political hierarchy. Thus in many ways, as will be seen below, the Conservatives' approach marked a "re-ethnicization" of Canadian politics foregrounding white settler colonial subjects as has been described by Winter (2014c), as well as Harder and Zhyznomirsksa (2012). Within the Conservatives' project of neoconservative multiculturalism the status of these "exalted subjects" was reinforced while its othered subject were invited to participate and conform to a conservative settler colonial subjectivity, or face discipline if not outright exclusion should they be unable or choose not to conform to such a vision.

This chapter first 1) describes the general tenor of the Conservatives' authoritarian populist discourses in the realms of citizenship, immigration and what they turned into a highly related portfolio of Public Safety during their time in office. It then 2) considers exemplary spectacles of authoritarian populist rule employed by the Conservative government in the Public

Safety portfolio, including the program *Border Security* and the Canadian Border Service Agency's (CBSA) hastily constructed *Most Wanted* list, before considering the tenor of Conservative governance in citizenship and immigration more generally. After briefly considering processes of ethnicization and racialization inherent in changes to citizenship under the Conservatives, I more closely examine Bill C-24, the *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act* as an exemplary piece of legislation from their time in office. It is exemplary of the government's approach in its concentration of power in the hands of the Immigration Minister, increased barriers to and greater inequalities in citizenship amongst those that possess it, and the disciplinary form of a conservative, militarist Canadian identity and nationalism it espouses.

A Consistent Recipe: (Neo)Conservative Authoritarian Populist Discourses

The politics of spectacle have long been a favorite of former Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney, and a tool of neoconservative governance more generally. Kenney partly gained notoriety in Canada as President of the Canadian Taxpayers Association in the early 1990s, where he notably had hundreds of plastic pigs placed on the lawn of Parliament Hill to protest the size of MPs' pensions (Wood 2017). Subsequently, he was labelled a member of the "snack pack" of young Reform Party members of parliament for the group's aggressive approach in parliament and appreciation for fast food (Wood 2017), the latter a trait that would also prove useful in his "ethnic outreach" efforts as he was dubbed Minister of "Curry in a Hurry" by colleagues and observers (Diebel 2011). As will be seen in the citizenship, immigration and public safety portfolios Kenney and other cabinet colleagues enacted a similar series of spectacles and implemented an aggressive authoritarian populist approach to government. These spectacles were not just for show, however. They were meant to help reinforce and further intensify shifts in

social relations that would exacerbate inequalities while reshaping public discourses, as could be seen in the previous and will be seen in the next two chapters.

In Gramscian terms, Hall describes that within immediate to medium-range contexts, attempts to achieve a hegemonic form of politics involve a series of polemics designed to help shift a society's balance of forces and common sense in a particular direction (1980, 165). The Conservatives' authoritarian populist series of polemics with such aims was constant, emanating from Jason Kenney and subsequently Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander's twitter feeds, speeches, CIC press releases and other initiatives. This would be coupled with more creative ideological attempts to fashion a more conservative narrative of Canada.

As discussed in chapter five, the Conservatives' old and new discourses were designed to restructure the realm of public debate, and included a mix of appeals to immigrants and "ethnic" Canadians, divisive language and a reframing of Canadian identity and perceptions of threats along militaristic, neoliberal and neoconservative terms. The mix of themes of abuse, criminality, patriotism and societal risk were constantly invoked by the Conservative government and prominent cabinet ministers. Not coincidentally, these themes were also included in the names of government legislation passed under the Conservative majority, These bills included:

- C-4: Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act²⁵
- C-31 Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act
- C-43 Faster Removal of Foreign Criminals Act
- C-24: Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act
- S-7 Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act

The government coupled repressive legislation and regulations towards groups such as refugees and religious minorities with a language of risk, criminality, barbarism, strength and protection to

²⁵ This replaced Bill C-11 from the prior parliament, whose name reflected that the Conservatives had not yet achieved a majority and were forced to make some compromises with the opposition, and was thus marketed as the "Balanced Refugee Reform Act."

project an image of safeguarding Canadian society from its dangerous others. And as the government enacted legislation that infringed upon the rights of (im)migrants, civil society groups and opposition, critics of government policy were dismissed as the “immigration industry” and “special interest groups” whose criticism he welcomed (Edmonton Journal 2010). Such responses were typical of right populist rhetoric that seeks to divide one’s political opponents from the legitimate body politique.

Spectacles of Authoritarian Populism

As evidenced by the accompanying legislation and practices, such behavior did not stop at the level of rhetoric. The creation of spectacles to brandish the government’s law and order credentials while stigmatizing vulnerable (im)migrants and refugees to shift common sense views concerning immigration to the right was an important tool of Conservative governance. The examples are in fact too many to adequately capture, so illustrative examples will have to suffice. Prominent examples included the Conservatives promoting the participation of the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) in the television program *Border Security* and the publication of a “Most Wanted” lists of persons the government wanted to detain and deport.

“Border Security”

First aired in 2013, *Border Security: Canada’s Front Line* was a program described as providing “a revealing look at life on the front lines of national security,” that followed border services employees asserted to be protecting the country from purportedly deceitful “suspicious characters and contraband from around the world” (“Border Security- About” n.d.)²⁶ The project of

²⁶ From the “about” section of the show’s National Geographic Webpage: “Welcome to Border Security - a revealing look at life on the front lines of national security. Follow Canadian border services officers as they intercept suspicious characters and contraband from around the world in an effort to keep us safe, and our health,

producing the *Border Security* program with heavy involvement of the department was approved by Public Safety Minister Vic Toews after the vetting of the proposal by staff in the Prime Minister's Office (CBC News 2013a), demonstrating the highest level of support for the initiative within the government. It was an initiative that involved the borrowing of ideas and spectacles from other settler colonial states.

According to civil servants who consulted with the creators of the Australian and American versions of the program and initially encouraged CBSA's involvement, the value of the show laid in "promot[ing] important messages about Canada's commitment to border security" and raising the profile of the Agency (Portelance 2011). This encouragement to proceed with the program- albeit without long term agreements but with on-going evaluation and "de facto executive production authorities" for the agency-- came despite a "perceived risk that CBSA could be cast in a negative light, depending on how a particular event would unfold before the cameras" (Portelance 2011).

Just such an event putting the CBSA in a negative light would in fact occur in March of 2013 when filming of the *Border Security* program saw the Force Four entertainment company record CBSA raids on undocumented workers at a construction site (Embassy 2013b). This action contributed to loud calls and petitions to cancel the program amidst statements such as "Deportation is not entertainment," and criticisms that the privacy rights of those seen in the program were being violated and that the program dehumanized those whose lives are so strongly

workforce, and ecosystem secure. Force Four Entertainment has gained exclusive access into the highly classified world of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). In every episode of *Border Security*, cameras shadow CBSA officers as they interrogate suspicious passengers who may or may not be hiding something. Passengers react in a variety of unpredictable ways - they lie, argue, play the victim, plead ignorance and even threaten legal action. But they are no match for the investigative tactics of the CBSA officers. After all, the law is on their side" ("Border Security- About" n.d.)

impacted by the actions and decisions of border officials (Lenard 2013; BCCLA 2016; Gros and van Groll 2015; BCCLA 2017, 42; 2013). However none of those protests would deter the Conservatives from continuing with the program.

In response to complaints and concerns raised in parliament then Public Safety Minister Vic Toews, whose department held responsibility for CBSA, defended the *Border Security* program by invoking common Conservative talking points juxtaposing what he asserted to be “illegal immigrants” and queue jumpers with “law abiding” Canadians and immigrants to justify the abuse of migrants’ rights and the resources involved in producing this spectacle:

This show is about the situations faced daily by our front-line border officers. The privacy of individuals is protected at all times; however, it is important to remember that illegal immigrants cost law-abiding Canadian taxpayers millions of dollars each year and thousands of jobs. We expect the CBSA to enforce Canada's immigration laws by removing individuals who take advantage of Canada's generous immigration system by jumping the queue.

(Toews 2013)

It is clear with Toews comments, coupled with those of Jason Kenney and Prime Minister Harper, that this authoritarian populist approach to citizenship and immigration was what some term a “whole of government” approach, as will be seen. The profile of border officials, who were portrayed exclusively as guardians of Canada was to be raised, while “illegal immigrants” were demonized and deemed a drain on the resources of “law abiding” and generous Canadians. Other immigrants were encouraged to be offended as the Conservatives sought to portray those they wished to target as having jumped ahead of them in an invented queue to enter the country.

With this controversy, after its second season then-CBSA President Luc Portelance advised the government in writing to cancel the program amidst complaints by civil society groups about the immigration raid and the risks of participating in the program to the department. Portelance questioned how,

Given that the project is not directly linked to either our key priorities or our

core business, the 'risk/reward ratio' for the project is questionable . . . While we believe that the show engenders pride among CBSA employees, and perhaps Canadians in general, there are no measurable outcomes that can be readily attributed to this show (cited in Quan 2014b).

While not a readily measurable outcome, it seems clear with the government's insistence on continuing to collaborate with the program that the primary benefit of the program in this context was the furthering of its authoritarian populist approach to government. Harsha Walia of No One is Illegal reasonably characterized the priorities illustrated through the government's participation in the program. She stated that it "is abhorrent that the federal government has adopted a private company to turn deportation into entertainment, including providing undisclosed financial support through staff time spent on this TV show. This US-style raid and US-style reality show only serves to promote fear." She contrasted this with other government priorities, where, it will be seen, "the government has instituted policies that make it harder for migrants and refugees to arrive and stay regularly" (BCCLA 2013).

Canada's Privacy Commissioner (2016) - in response to a complaint- and prominent civil society groups also expressed concerns with the filming of the raid and of the television program itself, which was discontinued under the Liberals only after the privacy commissioner's critical report. The Commissioner questioned the overall policy of a government televising its operations in such a manner (2016, 140), argued that the consent acquired for the program from those subjected to CBSA activities had been "problematic and certainly invalid in the circumstances" of the raid (2016, 127) and affirmed the complaints levied against it. Clearly the Conservatives saw value in the law and order mentality supported by such measures, however, as it continued to run throughout their time in office. As will be discussed below, the public relations on display were matching the government's approach to the social relations it was implementing in public policy.

“Most Wanted List”

Another prominent example of the Conservatives’ authoritarian populist approach involved the marriage of citizenship, immigration and border services with the false labeling of those on a highly publicized “most wanted” list to be deported as “war criminals” in 2013 (Keung 2013; Embassy 2013a). The creation of the “most wanted” list saw pressure exerted on civil servants to quickly develop a website with lists of suspected foreign war criminals to meet ministerial priorities and political expediency. The government sought to draw significant attention to the country’s dangerous *others*.

Accompanied by a press release entitled “Government will not tolerate war criminals in our communities,” the program was launched July 21, 2011 in a joint press conference by then Public Safety Minister, Vic Toews, then Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney and the CBSA President (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada 2013, 3).

As Quan chronicles in his newspaper article on the list- where he employed years long- Access to Information requests researching his story- Michael Patton, then Public Safety Minister Vic Toews’ former director of communications de-emphasized legal concerns over publishing peoples’ names on such a list. In doing so Patton noted that his role was to assemble “a communications plan, not a legal or policy piece” from civil servants. The documents Quan obtained included emails from then CBSA Director of Port of Operations Raymond Bedard and demonstrated that the process of publicizing the “Most Wanted List” was one that pushed privacy, human rights and concerns about wrongly labelling people aside in a rushed process. Bedard expressed frustrations in emails such as that “We [CBSA] have been given almost no time to do this” and that “this seemingly nothing item has quickly become the biggest thing around” despite the complexities of the issue and far greater priorities (Quan 2014a).

The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) and fifteen other civil organizations argued that the government's approach to the "Most Wanted" list avoided the government's responsibility to actually bring perpetrators of war crimes to justice rather than deport them. They also noted the potential dangers that could arise to people publicly and often misleadingly being labeled "suspected war criminals." They further criticized the government's attention to the initiative as being "all out of proportion" and for contributing to some people's negative perceptions of non-citizens through their approach to the issue (Canadian Council for Refugees 2011).

For their part, in a reply to the CCR and allies' complaints, Canada's Privacy commissioner found that the CBSA's failures posed "serious privacy risks" due to the potentially "severe" consequences for those listed on the government's Most Wanted lists and inaccurate information concerning some on the lists (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada 2014). While the Commissioner found that the use of some personal information was necessary to achieve the purpose of achieving removals, they were "not satisfied . . . that the CBSA is adequately limiting the disclosure of personal information under the program" (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada 2013, 9). Furthermore, CBSA references to "war crimes" or "war criminals" had not been "adequately justified" and were, in fact, "potentially misleading" (12-13).

Notably both the Most Wanted List and Border Security Program were continued throughout the Conservatives' time in office despite the misgivings civil servants expressed about both initiatives (Quan 2014a; 2014b), demonstrating that these programs and discourses were ministerial priorities. The Most Wanted list continues in a modified form. CBSA made some adjustments to the program at the behest of the Privacy Commissioner, including releasing less personal information on those listed, providing justifications for invasions of privacy to the

Privacy Commissioner as being in the public interest and “mak[ing] clear on the website the difference between a conviction under criminal law and a determination under immigration law” (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada 2014, 17). CBSA also subsequently added further categories of persons to the “most wanted” list (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada 2014, 2). These polemics, however, only marked the tip of the iceberg in terms of the government’s approach.

In Citizenship and Immigration

In the department of Citizenship and Immigration Jason Kenney loudly sounded authoritarian populist drums of fraud and deceit, including declaring that “citizenship is not for sale” while launching crackdowns on citizenship fraud. In this realm he employed one of the Conservatives’ seemingly favourite measures, a tip-line to target potential abusers of the system (Canadian Press 2011; Galloway 2012) . While some would defend the government’s preoccupation with immigration fraud and applaud them for addressing clear cases of abuse of the system, the NDP’s opposition critic for immigration at the time observed that Kenney’s 2011 version of such announcements was one in a line of many, which shared the same tenor but simply adjusted the numbers employed (Galloway 2012). Such was the consistency and persistence of their polemics.

In an article entitled “‘Fraud’ Overkill,” Andrew Griffith, former Director of Citizenship and Multiculturalism notes that the government’s own data seemed likely to be overstating the small extent of citizenship fraud. He asserted that the government’s overhaul of citizenship that made it harder to obtain had resulted in “government overreach” with the “cumulative effect” of all their many changes potentially leading to “enhanced integrity, but at the cost of an increased

burden on applicants”²⁷ (Griffith 2014a). At the beginning of 2013, the immigration department was forced to admit that only 286 of more than 10,000 alleged “fraudsters” had actually received a formal notification that their citizenship was being challenged, with 90 percent of them intending to appeal potential revocations of their citizenship (Canadian Press 2013 cited in Winter 2014b, 10).

Ultimately the government’s measures to strip Canadians of their citizenship for reasons of fraud under Bill C-24, discussed below, would be ruled unconstitutional for violating the Bill of Rights, particularly rights of due process such as the right to an oral hearing, to reasonably defend oneself and to have one’s case heard by independent decision makers (Gagné 2017). As will be seen, citizenship was a significant terrain of neoconservative assertions of common sense notions of Canadian identity and insecurity. Overall these tactics formed part of government’s approach of making citizenship “harder to get and easier to lose”

Questioning Birthright Citizenship and Combatting “Birth Tourism”

Kenney would also publicly decry and attempt to generate a moral panic concerning “birth tourism,” a term used to stereotype non-Canadian citizens and permanent residents that give birth in Canada. As was often the case Kenney invoked the impossible to measure platitude of outrage amongst “the vast majority of legal immigrants” and argued for the “need to send the message that Canadian citizenship isn’t just some kind of an access key to the Canadian welfare state by cynically misrepresenting yourself.” He sought to combat the asserted threat despite a lack of evidence of the extent of the matter to warrant a major public policy response (Yelaja 2012).

²⁷ According to Griffith, based on data released to early 2012, which the government had declined to update “Even assuming all investigations will confirm fraud (not a given), adding the number of withdrawn applications, and assuming that all fraud investigations pertain to the same year (improbable), one arrives at a potential maximum fraud rate of around three per cent. The low number of revocations resulting from the investigations, suggests that it is significantly less” (Griffith 2014a).

In this instance Kenney's efforts were hampered by a lack of cooperation from provinces, who are the level of government responsible for birth registration and who did not see the issue as a priority given the a lack of evidence to justify the high costs of provincial cooperation (Griffith 2014b). However as has and will be seen, in areas where they could act entirely in their own area of jurisdiction, the Conservatives continued to aggressively implement highly ideological projects.

As discussed in chapter five, when the Conservatives introduced the notion and policy of "conditional permanent residence," the government loudly sought to combat the asserted problem of marriage fraud. Again invoking the image of the deceptive foreigner and the disadvantaged Canadian in 2012 the Conservatives announced that "the jig is up on marriage fraud." In their announcement they employed quotes from seemingly short-lived organizations (whose websites no longer exist or are very outdated) such as the "Canadian Marriage Fraud Victims Society" and "Canadians Against Immigration Fraud (CAIF)" praising his initiative (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2012b). Nowhere was it mentioned, however, that those sponsored to come to Canada might themselves face spousal deceit or abuse, nor the exclusions of Canadian immigration policy that might lead one to circumvent regular immigration channels. Rather the government continued to propagate discourses of illegitimate outsiders and law abiding or patient, rules-respecting Canadians, new or old.

Race and Re-ethnicization in the Conservatives' Authoritarian Populist Approach to Citizenship

As was demonstrated by the party's contributions to Islamophobia through its discourses on the citizenship oath, and its 2015 election campaign promise to enact a "Barbaric Cultural Practices Tip Line" (Andrew-Gee 2015) described in chapter five, the Conservatives demonstrated a pattern of discourse, legislation and behavior that while not always explicitly racist, contained

such overtones and effects as to primarily impact racialized and ethnicized Canadians negatively and play to the anxieties of their white Canadian base. In contrast to their efforts at “ethnic outreach,” many of their discourses and policies were designed to reinforce the social membership and hierarchies of the country’s exalted subjects relative to its racialized and ethnicized others.

In addition to the politics of citizenship oath taking discussed in the last chapter, such dynamics also played out during the government’s evacuation of Canadians from Lebanon amidst the highly asymmetrical summer 2006 conflict between Israel and Lebanon,²⁸ which Flecker has described as a “colour coded” debate “fomented by the Conservatives” (2008, 170). The discourses and approaches privileging settlers and their descendants in the Canadian context while criticizing dual-citizens would lead to significant changes to citizenship policies. The Conservative government called the Israeli offensive, which would kill more than 1200 civilians, injure thousands more and displace over a million in response to a targeting of their soldiers along the border by a paramilitary group an approach that was “measured,” while its MPs criticized Canadians in Lebanon for not being sufficiently loyal (Abu-Laban and Bakan 2008, 642; Nuwayhid et al. 2011, 505–6). Rather than critically considering the nature of the conflict itself, then Citizenship and Immigration Minister Monte Solberg argued the case of Lebanese dual-citizen Canadians was an example that raised questions of the overall rights of dual citizens living abroad and their access to social programs.

²⁸ As described by Nuwayhid et al: “On 12 July 2006, fighters from Hezbollah (‘Party of God’, a paramilitary Shiite Islamic political movement advocating armed resistance against Israel) killed eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two others across the Lebanese-Israeli border, demanding the exchange of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners detained in Israeli jails. The incident escalated into a major Israeli air and land attack on Lebanese territory, accompanied by a sea and air blockade. On the Lebanese side, the 33-day war resulted in the deaths of over 1200 civilians and the injury of thousands more (The Daily Star 2006). Within one week, nearly one million people, out of a population of four million, were forced to flee their homes. Of these, about 250,000 left the country; approximately 500,000 moved in with relatives and friends in different parts of the country; and the remaining 250,000 took shelter in schools, open spaces and underground parking lots throughout Lebanon (IDMC 2006a)” (2011, 506–506).

Abu-Laban and Bakan credibly cite the government's response in support of Israel as exemplary of the Canadian settler state's normalized "racial contract" of solidarity amongst white settler colonial states that informs international relations more widely (Abu-Laban and Bakan 2008). Flecker juxtaposes this discursive treatment of those Lebanese Canadians whose lives were put at risk with the lack of critical discussion over celebrities or others living abroad without any questioning of their citizenship. Flecker notes that prior evacuees from other, albeit smaller crises had not seen their loyalties to Canada questioned in such a manner (Flecker 2008, 168–69). Post 9/11 anti-Middle Eastern animus was certainly part of this equation.

Thobani notes that to a significant extent, sympathies for the victims of 9/11 and exhortations and exaltations by elites of a shared, purportedly "civilized" western identity in the wake of the attacks against an enemy racially coded as non-western contributed to processes of white "racial bonding" amongst Western countries with the United States. Such bonding would further the exaltation of white subjects in the Canadian polity. Such processes of racialization simultaneously led to the dismissal of critiques of US foreign policy while also racializing Muslims – both abroad and at home- as enemies or potential enemies of the West (Thobani 2007, 230–35). Muslims would become a racialized enemy where "racially oriented surveillance from 'above'" would feed racism from below and "the relationship between nation and state" would be "reinforced on the basis of a shared vigilance against those who 'look' like Muslims" no matter their actual origins or citizenship status (Thobani 2007, 241). The impact of practices such as racial profiling could and in many cases did render one's actual citizenship status as irrelevant and served to "put[s] people of colour 'back' in 'their' place as outsiders-to-the-nation, stripping away pretensions of inclusion within the liberal-democratic order" (Thobani 2007, 242).

It is in this context of differentiated citizenship amongst Canadians where Harder and Zhyznomirska note that "the evacuees were defined against the backdrop of a post 9/11 security

environment and a generalized wariness of people of Middle Eastern origin.” Indeed, Canada’s minister of public safety openly speculated about the potential terrorist threat posed to Canada as a result of the country’s ‘permissive’ residency and immigration criteria” (Harder and Zhyznomirksa 2012, 297). For his part, then-Conservative MP Garth Turner invoked the question of deservingness of Canadian citizenship and helped to popularize the notion of “Canadians of convenience” to question the legitimacy of dual citizenship and access to protection and services from the Canadian government (Macklin and Crépeau 2010, 30 note 25). Thus the “racial contract” described by Abu-Laban and Bakan could be seen to operate internally to Canada as well as externally.

The treatment and discourses surrounding Lebanese Canadians has been contrasted greatly with that of Canada’s “Lost Canadians,”²⁹ a subset of the country’s primarily white “exalted subjects,” to again cite Thobani, believed to have accidentally lost their citizenship due to earlier legislative changes, particularly affecting those with ties to military personnel and mostly of Anglo-Canadian descent based in the United States (Winter 2014c, 53–54). As Winter notes, Bill C-37, which revised Canada’s Citizenship Act and was passed unanimously in 2008 to address this issue included that “retroactively restore or give Canadian citizenship to individuals who had lost or never acquired it due to stipulations of the 1947 Citizenship Act,” when Canada created its own citizenship regime independent of that of Britain. Stipulations in that 1947 Act

²⁹ Winter summarizes the various technical ways people could become “lost”: “Lost Canadians are individuals who were born in Canada, and/or have a Canadian parent, but who lack or have lost citizenship due to provisions of the 1947 Citizenship Act that were overhauled in the 1977 Citizenship Act, but not rectified retroactively. To be more precise, there are at least four distinct legal categories of Lost Canadians: (1) people naturalized to Canada who subsequently lived outside the country for more than 10 years prior to 1967. (2) People born abroad to a Canadian parent before the current Citizenship Act came into effect on 15 February 1977 and who were either not registered or not correctly registered at birth, who did not apply for the retention of Canadian citizenship by their 24th birthday and who were born abroad in wedlock by a Canadian mother (and foreign father) or out of wedlock by a Canadian father (and foreign mother). (3) People who lost their citizenship between 1 January 1947 and 14 February 1977 because they or their parent acquired the nationality or citizenship of another country. (4) Second- and subsequent-generation Canadians born abroad since the current Citizenship Act came into effect on 15 February 1977 and who failed to apply for the retention of Canadian citizenship by their 28th birthday (for specific provisions and exceptions, see Becklumb 2008 , pp. 1–5)” (Winter 2014c, 51)

later and rightfully recognized as problematic included determinations of citizenship based on parental marital status, inequalities between parents by gender in the ability to transmit citizenship through inheritance and inequalities between foreign and Canadian-born persons concerning the revocation of citizenship (Winter 2014c, 46). These inequalities had been addressed in the 1977 Act, but not retroactively, leading to what was identified as the problem of “the Lost Canadians” (Winter 2014c, 58 footnote 1), situations for which greater awareness arose when the United States began to require passports for Canadian visitors in 2007.

Linked to the positive granting of citizenship and to notify such “Lost Canadians” that they may fall into the category, the government proactively promoted the new law and availability of citizenship. This included the release of a “peppy YouTube video entitled ‘Waking up Canadian,’” that featured stereotypical images of Canadians as “a woman’s voice cheerfully announces that on 17 April 2009, ‘you or someone you know may wake up Canadian [...] even if you live outside Canada’” (Winter 2014c, 46–47). Proponents of the changes also spoke in a way to define the experience of those who had not been granted citizenship under previous laws as quintessential and meritorious Canadians. Don Chapman, a spokesperson for the “Lost Canadians Organization,” who considered himself a “lost Canadian” argued that “This law is a victory not just for those who lost their citizenship, but *for all Canadians* as well,” (emphasis added) while Melynda Jarratt, who served as a historian for “Canadian War Brides” asserted that “This bill is wonderful news for those war brides and their children who will become citizens when this bill comes into effect. After all these years, I am very relieved that the law has been changed” (Government of Canada 2008).

Such positive discourses directed at potential citizens both within and outside of Canada contrasted strongly with those that had been directed at purportedly disloyal and even potentially dangerous Lebanese dual citizens. In contrast, at the same time the Conservative government

introduced a one generation cut-off to citizenship for all citizens that would purportedly affect all citizens equally, but in practice would more readily affect those who had more recently immigrated to Canada with transnational ties and were more globally mobile. These were discursive and policy shift heavily influenced by the negative discourse of “Canadians of convenience” and the post 9/11 environment.

As Winter notes, the treatment of the “lost Canadians” and the measure designed to once again or even for the first time “find” them witnessed the legislation of

The repatriation clause [which] establishes a category of White and unmarked ‘possible’ citizens that Eva Mackey called ‘Canadian-Canadians’ (Mackey 1999, p. 168). This category, of which the Lost Canadians are part of, is situated at the centre of the nation. Its loyalty and commitment are without doubt. It is invited to partake in Canada’s ‘citizenship bonanza.’ Compared to this category, all others are at varying degrees deviant and/or suspicious. They become ‘impossible’ (at varying degrees) and have to redeem themselves by proving their loyalty to the country.

(Winter 2014c, 57)

As was seen in the previous chapter the Conservatives took performances very seriously, and were willing to deny citizenship to those who challenged their patriotic sensibilities. The debates and discourses around these sets of Canadians and would-be Canadians led to significant policy changes, which while not explicitly justified with racial or ethnic logics, could thus be seen as such when put into context. On the one hand, Conservative changes to the Citizenship Act bestowed or restored and granted citizenship to some, largely of “exalted” backgrounds whom the government felt had unjustly lost or failed to acquire their citizenship. At the same time, however, amidst the discourse of “Canadians of convenience” and insinuations and outright assertions of potential terrorist threats by othered *actual* citizens the government implemented its one generation cut-off rule to limit the citizenship of the descendants of those being othered (Harder and Zhyznomirksa 2012, 297).

Thus, as Harder and Zhyznomirksa argue:

While the Canadians evacuated from Lebanon were framed as ‘not quite Canadian enough,’ the Lost Canadians gained public and political support for their cause on the basis of their ‘super citizen’ status. The Lost Canadians positioned themselves as ‘exalted subjects’ (Thobani, 2007). They made their pitch for reinstatement on the grounds that their personal characteristics, including love of country, sacrifice and hard work, were the very traits that embodied the Canadian national identity, ‘thereby catapulting them into the sociocultural realm of the national symbolic’ (Thobani, 2007: 9). Tellingly, they also invoked hallowed ancestors. In making claims to lineage, the Lost Canadians invoked a myth of national descent.”

(Harder and Zhyznomirksa 2012, 297)

Thus rather than simply continuing to liberalize Canadian citizenship by correcting past discriminatory clauses to make it charter compliant and more progressive, Canadian citizenship was simultaneously undergoing what Winter refers to as a process of “re-ethnicization and securitization,” in part influenced by trends in Europe (Winter 2014c). Through this process, she argues, these policy changes, when considered together “conflate kinship and Whiteness,” with “the construction of possible citizens whose authenticity and loyalty to the nation are unquestioned.” Conversely, “non-White, non-Christian ‘impossible citizens’” also emerge, “whose lack of loyalty and instrumental use of their Canadian passport are said to be eroding the value of citizenship from within” (Winter 2014c, 46). These changes, she argues, which reversed decades-long trends of liberalization and expansion of access to citizenship cannot be understood without reference to Canada’s political context, particularly rise of the Conservative Party from its Reform Party and anti-immigrant roots (Winter 2014c, 47).

As will be seen, these trends and processes of more overtly authoritarian populist, racialized and ethnicized othering of some Canadians and potential Canadians can be seen to have been further and more overtly intensified with the government’s 2014 *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act*.

The Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act: Increased Inequality and Disciplinary Citizenship

Overall, changes to Canadian citizenship under the Conservatives epitomized the Conservatives fusion of neoconservatism and neoliberalism through its combination of settler colonial identity politics and increased individualized costs and procedures to become a citizen or achieve the right to be reunited with one's family members in Canada. Their changes also involved the further transfer of power to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and weakening of checks and balances on that power.

Invoking the War of 1812 and with a nod to Canada's armed forces, then-Immigration Minister Chris Alexander introduced major changes to Canada's *Citizenship Act* at Fort York, Toronto in February of 2014. Bill C-24, the "Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act" changed the terms of citizenship that had been relatively constant for more than thirty years. It further addressed the issue of "lost Canadians," who for technical legal reasons to do with prior legislation unexpectedly found themselves not to be Canadian citizens, as discussed above. As was also witnessed in chapter five, concerning the politics of the citizenship oath, the ability to acquire citizenship could readily be a realm of exclusion and disciplinary politics.

Overall Bill C-24 increased barriers to acquiring citizenship and formally introduced inequalities amongst those that possess it. It increased ministerial power to grant and strip citizenship and featured a symbolic attempt to marry Canadian citizenship to militarism and juxtapose it to terrorism and related acts in the popular imagination. Politically the goal of the legislation seemed to be to divide those who saw themselves as proud, "law abiding" Canadians from those who are or were asserted to sympathize with terrorists in order to polarize public debate. These measures were supported by a rhetoric of "strength" and Canadian values, though the bill's main attributes weakened access to citizenship and weakened procedural safeguards and

recourse for those whose citizenship the government would attempt to revoke. Its significance can be broadly grouped under the following headings:

Increased Ministerial Power and Reduced Ability to Challenge Government Decisions:

The Conservatives reduced the discretion and role of citizenship judges, who once were able to grant citizenship on a flexible basis to those demonstrating a practical understanding of English or on compassionate grounds. In place of that more flexible mechanism, expensive formal written tests were entrenched as the primary proof of language ability, to the disadvantage of those not educated primarily in English and affecting the most vulnerable due to the difficulty and expense of such testing. The primary beneficiary of the change seems to have been the private companies that administer the tests for profit. The cost elements of these changes will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Act also gave the Immigration Minister more power to revoke citizenship for reasons of fraud. Those affected by such revocations were given less recourse to dispute government decisions. Previously such decisions were taken by citizenship judges, and those the government sought to strip citizenship from had the right to have their case heard in Federal Court (Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers 2014, 6). The Act also granted the government the power to strip citizenship from dual citizens as outlined below. This concentration of power was significantly lessened under the subsequent Liberal government.³⁰

Inequality of Citizenship and Potential “Banishment” of Dual Citizens

³⁰ Under the Liberals’ passed Bill C-6 (2017), in addition to the government needing to provide clearer, more detailed explanations of their reasons to pursue the stripping of someone’s citizenship, all revocation decisions must be made by the Federal Court unless it is requested by the person affected that the Minister make such a decision. Furthermore, rather than rendering someone stripped of their citizenship a “foreign national,” such a declaration leads to the person whose citizenship has been revoked becoming a permanent resident (Béchar and Elgersma 2016, 6–7).

Additionally, the Conservatives introduced an “intent to reside in Canada” clause into citizenship applications that implied reduced mobility rights for Canadian citizens who would be granted citizenship through naturalization instead of inheriting it by birth. This move, subsequently repealed by the Trudeau Liberal government (Béchar and Elgersma 2016, 3), further reinforced the re-ethnicization of Canadian citizenship described citing Winter, above. In applying for citizenship, one would have to satisfy decision makers not only that they have resided in Canada, but that they *intend* to reside in Canada. As a result, new Canadian citizens could conceivably run the risk of later revocation if their career or life circumstances took them abroad. Those born in Canada would face no such requirement, and no such threat of revocation of citizenship due to residency abroad. Thus a tiering of citizenship was introduced implying more rights for those born in the settler colonial state- primarily those of European or ‘old-stock’ descent- than those that move to the country and naturalize their status.

The law also permitted the revocation of citizenship for dual citizens, including dual citizens who are Canadian by birth or parentage for serving as a member of a group in an armed conflict against Canadian forces. Those losing their citizenship in this way would be rendered a “foreign national” and face deportation from Canada. This would be subject to a judicial revocation process but no criminal conviction was required to assert such group membership. Bill C-24 also allowed the Immigration Minister to revoke citizenship for convictions of “treason or high treason,” a terrorism offence, or aiding the enemy in battle or espionage (Béchar, Becklumb, and Elgersma 2014, 16–17). Citizenship could be stripped if the Minister “has reasonable grounds” to believe that a person might have another citizenship, putting the onus – effectively a reverse onus- on the person whose citizenship is being removed to prove they do not have another citizenship. Through Bill C-6, passed by the Liberal government in 2017, and associated with their discourse of “A Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian,” the only way

citizenship can now be revoked is on the grounds of misrepresentation (Béchar and Elgersma 2016, 5).

Through these mechanisms the Conservatives were further creating and reinforcing tiers of citizenship based de-facto by birth, as one set of standards would exist for those with a single citizenship- mostly those born in Canada- and another for those with multiple nationalities. Prominent immigration scholar Audrey Machlin argued that this marked the retrieval of the medieval practice of “banishment.” The policy was both arbitrary and without a positive social purpose given that all citizens were already subject to criminal law and punishment for the offences outlined in the act. The act’s arbitrariness lay in selecting only a few crimes that “offend Canadian values” while excluding many others (Macklin 2013).

For his part, former Citizen and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney introduced the notion of “de facto renunciation of Canadian citizenship” in his rhetoric promoting and defending the changes, while his successor in Citizenship and Immigration, Chris Alexander declared citizenship to be a “privilege, not a right.” However, it was the rights of increasingly racialized and ethnicized dual citizens that were put most at risk and made questionable in the public’s imagination.

The act also made acquiring citizenship and its associated rights more difficult to obtain in a variety of ways. In two changes that have also since been reversed by the Liberals (Béchar and Elgersma 2016, 3), the Conservatives increased the length of time one must be legally residing and physically present in Canada to qualify to apply for citizenship to four out of the previous six years, rather than the three of the last four. They also increased the residency requirement by eliminating any credit for legal residency in Canada prior to being granted permanent resident status. Previously, up to one year of residency could be credited. With a rise in the number of (im)migrants coming to Canada first in a temporary status it is significant that

the Conservatives were refusing to recognize that time as a contribution to society worthy of credit towards their citizenship. Such social relations and dynamics will be explored further in the next chapter.

In another since reversed change (Béchar and Elgersma 2016, 3–4), the Conservatives also broadened the age of the population required to be tested on knowledge of Canada and language ability from persons aged 18-54 to those aged 14 to 64 years. They also made it a requirement to provide proof of language proficiency as part of the application for citizenship. Previously language proficiency was tested at the *end* of the process, allowing new immigrants to use the processing time (which averaged two to three years at the time of the Bill's passage) to continue to improve their language ability.

These changes compounded other regressive trends when it comes to citizenship acquisition for new Canadians. As Elke Winter has noted, prior changes by the Conservatives had already seen applicants spend hundreds of dollars to obtain expensive private sector certification of language skills up front for their applications. No longer would the government accept the passing of the citizenship exam or an interview with a citizenship judge as sufficient proof of language attainment. These provisions added years to processing times of some applicants' citizenship. In part, this was due to often arbitrarily distributed and complex residency questionnaires brought in as part of the Conservatives citizenship reforms around the theme of program integrity. The Conservatives also introduced a more complex citizenship guide and set of test questions while making the passing grade more difficult to achieve. Thus while Canada was still considered a world leader in naturalization of its citizens, these decisions predictably increased the failure rates amongst vulnerable populations and for groups for whom English is a second language (Winter 2014b). As Griffith chronicles, citizenship test pass rates fell from 96 per cent to 83 per cent in the wake of their 2010 changes, before rising to 90 per cent by 2014 as

the government sought to make the tests more comprehensible. Overall, the changes proved to have a disproportionately negative effect on pass rates for visible minorities in acquiring citizenship (Griffith 2016c, 20), while it is difficult to know how many were dissuaded from an overall less welcoming environment with greater barriers to citizenship acquisition. While the Conservatives were aggressively reaching out to immigrant and “ethnic” voters it was making it increasingly difficult for the next cohort of such voters to obtain citizenship and the franchise.

Militarism and Disciplinary Citizenship

Bill C-24 also continued a Conservative trend of attaching Canadian citizenship to the military. The government reduced the length of time to acquire citizenship by one year for those that serve in the armed forces, although citizenship is generally considered a prerequisite for such service (Government of Canada and National Defence 2014). This link, which would likely involve few cases is consistent with earlier changes to citizenship ceremonies. These ceremonies were designed to encourage the formal recognition of a member of the armed forces who are to be invited to attend, if not to formally oversee them. Militarism and notions of deservingness of citizenship were merged.

With the changes they made the Conservatives did not hesitate and in fact proactively used the Act’s provisions around citizenship-stripping as an ideological weapon against opposition parties. Even after having moved on to become Minister of Defence, in 2014 Jason Kenney’s ministerial staff generated and circulated simplistic graphics on Twitter attacking opposition leaders for their lack of support for citizenship stripping provisions and implying they are “soft” on terrorism (Raj 2014). The party also highlighted the legislation in their 2015 election platform under the heading “Combatting jihadi terrorism” and “Strengthening Canadian Citizenship” (Conservative Party of Canada 2015, 78, 152) while arguing that NDP and Liberal

promises to reverse such legislation put the Canadian economy “at risk” and exposed the country to instability (Conservative Party of Canada 2015, 155) while offering no evidence to that effect.

When considered in the context of the more militarist and monarchist vision of Canada promoted by the government more generally, it is clear that Bill C-24 was part of a symbolic reordering of the country. It was an authoritarian populist reordering that emphasized a more exclusionary vision of unquestioning conservative patriotism and illustrated the hard edges of Kenneyism and neoconservative multiculturalism rather than responding to genuine issues of public policy and social integration. In fact, it did the opposite. Citizenship became a more overtly ideological battleground and Canada a less welcoming place.

Conclusion to Chapter 6

Through their employment of authoritarian populist politics and policies, including the *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act*, the Conservatives displayed an immense desire to assert a dominant Canadian identity from an idealized past while marginalizing vulnerable members of society and presenting an image of Canada at risk from both external threats and its othered members of society- what Dhamoon and Abu-Laban have referred to as dangerous (internal) foreigners (2009). These tendencies illustrate some of the harsh edges of Kenneyism, in contrast to the more optimistic tone their project of neoconservative multiculturalism that the party sought to strike within its efforts at “ethnic outreach,” discussed in earlier chapters.

This world view is one rooted in the Conservative iteration of the country’s settler colonial identity which centre’s the nation’s most “exalted subjects,” Anglo-Canadians and those of European descent, and paints a world of internal and external threats from which such subjects must be protected. In substantial and policy terms their authoritarian populist set of discourses offers a superficial compromise with more recently arrived immigrants, but in practice this was

carried out alongside a (re)assertion of a white Canadian identity that (re)centres and refashions dominant societal narratives and asserts a more regressive form of public debate and social relations. As Winter notes, in some instances their reforms appeared as superficially neutral and having little to do with race or ethnicity- such as the case of the one generation cut-off rule for citizenship. However when considered in their social and political context a much clearer trend of the “re-ethnicization” of Canadian citizenship becomes clear (2014c) .

Concerning the Conservatives’ political project of achieving and maintaining majority governments, those whose citizenship would be delayed or denied were left unable to join any electoral “coalition,” Conservative or otherwise. The government’s political opponents were left to decide whether they wished to debate citizenship and associated policies on the government’s terrain, which the Conservatives explicitly sought to place in the realm of militarism and terrorism. Such was and has been the exclusionary side of neoconservative multiculturalism and Kenneyism, whose base instincts the party seemingly found irresistible while in office and during the 2015 election.

Thus the roots of the party’s problematic behaviour in these fields lay far more deeply rooted than a problematic tone or a party that simply “snapped” in the 2015 election, to cite the Globe and Mail editorialists and party politicians cited in the introduction to this dissertation. The harsh nature of their policies would contribute to their electoral loss in 2015 and at least a temporary embrace of the Liberals’ more optimistic tone. As has been seen, and will be cited in the conclusion, linked to a discourse and social imaginary of “A Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian,” the Liberals would reverse some of these reforms, demonstrating some differences in substance and social imaginary between neoliberal and neoconservative iterations of multiculturalism in Canada.

As will be seen in the next chapter, beneath their outreach efforts and authoritarian populist discourses there was a significant intensification of neoliberal policy directions and precarity for (im)migrants and refugees. These developments are reflective of the mutually reinforcing mix of neoliberalism and neoconservatism evident in the Conservatives' approach. These shifts -- which operated primarily to the detriment of the social inclusion of refugees, (im)migrants workers and their families -- were accomplished through a further decline of democracy and accountability in policy making in citizenship and immigration under the Conservative government. These dynamics will be explored through a critical analysis of the Conservatives' policy-making approach, immigration policy trends and dynamics concerning the temporary foreign worker program policies during the Conservatives' time in office.

Chapter 7: Diminished Democracy, Intensified Neoliberalism and Unfreedom(s) in Conservative (Im)migration Policy

Introduction to Chapter 7

“[W]hat characterizes contemporary societies is the growing distance between political democracy and socio-economic democracy . . . In short, we are talking of large sections of the population whose real economic, social and cultural conditions of life not only diverge more and more from legal-political representations of equality, but make increasingly fragile their participation in the institutions of political democracy.”

(Poulantzas 2000, 215)

What we have to explain is a move toward "authoritarian populism"—an exceptional form of the capitalist state—which, unlike classical fascism, has retained most (though not all) of the formal representative institution in place, and which at the same time has been able to construct around itself an active popular consent. This undoubtedly represents a decisive shift in the balance of hegemony . . . It has entailed a striking weakening of democratic forms and initiatives, but not their suspension.”

(Hall 1979, 15)

“ . . . citizenship has constructed complex and layered levels of inequalities. These inequalities are created in large part through national state categories of differential membership that accomplish, both materially and ideologically, the racialization of class in Canada. Whether people can feed, clothe, and shelter themselves or not, decide where to live or not, receive health care, educational services, and other social services or not, be protected or not by state forces: all these are significantly affected by their differential placement in various state categories of citizenship and non-citizenship. Notably, whether one is a citizen, a permanent resident, or a temporary migrant worker is the most important factor in determining if a person will be free or unfree in Canada.”

(Sharma 2006, 142)

Previous chapters have illustrated how the Conservative incarnation of Canada’s settler colonial project vociferously exalts and reaches out to some (read: white and “loyal” “ethnic” Canadian) subjects while marginalizing others. As noted in chapter two, foregrounding the realities of Canada as a settler colonial state enables one to see how what Thobani refers to as “exalted subjects” (2007) reassert their colonial and neocolonial prerogatives. It also helps in assessing

how immigrants, migrants and refugees are treated in a substantive way rather than simply accepting state categories such as “temporary,” “permanent,” “landed” or eventually citizens at face value. Such foregrounding helps one to critically evaluate rather than accept the discourses and boundaries of debate of Canada’s political parties and state officials and to better assess the nature of their political projects.

Employing the notions of Kenneyism and neoconservative multiculturalism, earlier chapters discussed the Conservatives’ attempted hegemonic and disciplinary political project in the realms of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism. The Conservatives sought to achieve an exclusionary “minimum winning coalition” of voters, with “ethnic” and immigrant voters being an important target to permit the party to gain sufficient support to win elections and govern in an authoritarian populist manner. Neoconservative multiculturalism involves both a further hollowing out of the anti-racist potentials of multiculturalism discourses and policies and shifting both its policies and pluralist discourses in (neo)conservative directions. Its novelty is in creatively employing disciplinary and militarist clash of civilizations discourses alongside xenophilic rhetoric and outreach efforts to immigrants and “ethnic” voters to invite them to join the Conservatives’ political coalition. Chapter five, it is worth recalling began with Jason Kenney’s claims of the Conservatives to be the “Party of New Canadians” who seek “unity in diversity.” However in exploring the social relations of immigration advanced by the Conservatives this chapter continues to show where xenophilic discourses often obscured exclusionary practices. Racialized and ethnicized others have been invited to participate and conform to a conservative settler colonial subjectivity or face discipline, if not outright exclusion should they be unable or choose not to conform to such a vision. Far from an inclusive project, refugees and other vulnerable (im)migrants have been targeted for exclusion as part of the Kenneyist project.

In the last chapter it was discussed how Bill C-24 was exemplary of the Conservative government's approach in its concentration of power in the hands of the Immigration Minister, increased barriers to -- and greater inequalities -- concerning citizenship amongst those that possess it, and the disciplinary form of a neoconservative, militarist Canadian identity and nationalism it espoused. This chapter will further explore how the party's settler colonial authoritarian populist project also entails a substantive decline in democracy and intensification of unequal social relations in the Canadian social formation.

Per Hall's insight, above, the Conservatives' Kenneyist approach "entailed a striking weakening of democratic forms and initiatives, but not their suspension" in granting themselves further powers through the abuse of -- rather than a suspension -- of parliamentary procedures in these fields. As Hall and Poulantzas respectively argue, the politics of authoritarian populism and statism witnesses a further distancing of the public from processes of parliamentary democracy. If justified at all, in the politics of Kenneyism this distancing is legitimized by tactics such as the demonization of refugees and other vulnerable (im)migrants and the employment of facile nationalism and assertions of national interests discussed in prior chapters. The Conservatives also sought to target and delegitimize the relative power of their opponents or other parts of government that might restrain them, such as the judiciary.

Neoconservatism and its interaction with neoliberalism is a major driver of the Conservatives' approach to citizenship and immigration in this context. In terms of continuity, the Conservatives entered office at a time where there had been at least decade and a half long shifts towards neoliberal approaches to immigration policy, including the expansion of the economic class and tightening and shrinking the family class alongside attempts to reduce refugee admissions (Arat-Koç 1999). The temporary foreign worker program was becoming more accessible to employers due to changes accompanying the Immigration and Refugee

Protection Act (IRPA). Thus to some extent these were bipartisan policy orientations shared with the Liberal Party and its prior governments. Simmons, for example, identifies a shared “utilitarian” neoliberal consensus amongst Canada’s governing parties from the 1990s through 2015 (Simmons 2017, 300; 2010). As will be seen, however, the Conservatives accelerated and intensified such dynamics considerably. A significant intensification of neoliberal trends and more regressive social relations are observable across all categories of permanent immigration and purportedly temporary migration programs under the Conservatives.

As Barass and Shields note, the “hyper-neoliberal” Conservatives under Stephen Harper shifted public discourses from one of “a language of nation-building” to a “‘just-in-time’ competitive immigration system” in the words of former Finance Minister Jim Flaherty (Barras and Shields 2017, 200). As seen in chapter three, the period of “invasion from the margin” and ultimately the triumph of Reform over Progressive Conservative elements in the parties’ eventual 2004 merger saw an unambiguous rejection of Red Toryism that might have had a greater moderating influence in their approach to citizenship, immigration and refugee protection. The new Conservative Party’s thoroughly neoconservative orientation and its eradication of a somewhat paternalist Red Tory ideology is particularly evidenced in the party’s treatment of refugees. The elimination of this strain of conservatism in the new Conservative Party can be seen in their attacks on the Interim Federal Health Program for refugees, which that had existed since the Diefenbaker Conservative government, and other developments discussed below.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the further distancing of decision making in the realms of immigration and refugee policy from the wider citizenry, and concomitant concentration of significant power in the hands of the executive in its long term context. Secondly, this chapter engages in a discussion of shifting social relations and priorities in immigration under the Conservatives. In addition to the decline of democratic decision-making,

another key characteristics of the politics of Kenneyism was the major growth in the use of socially constructed “temporary” workers and a decline in the security of tenure and access to full political rights and freedoms for many (im)migrants and refugees. The areas discussed below address the intensification of neoliberal policy priorities and precarity of immigration in Canada with classed, raced and gendered effects. These include 1) the growth of and significant shifts within the economic class, 2) a reduction of prospects to reunite immigrant families, 3) a diminishment of protection and security for refugees and refugee claimants, 4) the erosion of pathways to citizenship, building on the findings of chapter six and 5) the vast expansion and misleading politics of the expansion of Canada’s temporary foreign worker program under the Conservative government.

It will be seen that while under the Conservatives the total number of persons granted permanent residence remained relatively consistent on a yearly basis (as can be seen in table 7.2) -- which allowed them to campaign on maintaining previous immigration levels -- there were important qualitative shifts within those totals and overall (im)migration trends. Many of these will be discussed below. Consistent with the ideology of *Kenneyism* described in chapter two, and the tendency of neoconservative governance to shift the balance of power to employers from workers, Canada also witnessed the increase of private sector employer power relative to labour in general and to migrant workers in particular. Developments in this area led to significant political challenges for the Conservative government, however, as will be discussed below.

In this chapter it becomes clear that -- as long as was politically feasible -- those exalted and politically and economically favoured under the Conservatives authoritarian populist project included business and employer groups. On the other hand, it will be seen that those increasingly marginalized included many refugees, temporary foreign workers and new (im)migrants who faced greater barriers to citizenship, family reunification and to participation in Canadian society,

with troubling classed, gendered and raced dynamics. The Conservatives also sought to weaken oversight and accountability for their changes and target their political opponents.

Diminished Democracy and Regressive Social Relations in Citizenship and Immigration

As noted in chapter two, the theme of democracy and its further decline has been prominent in discussions of the Harper government. As will be seen in this chapter, while such developments need to be placed in longer term context, the social relations of citizenship and immigration under the Conservatives featured their own particular dynamics of inclusion and exclusion that merit sustained attention. Key aspects of the Conservatives authoritarian populism to be addressed include a decline in the rights, possibilities and security of (im)migrants in Canada's economic, political and social life, and their policy making approaches and policies themselves that made Canada's political system less democratic.

Overall, this chapter considers the question of democracy and immigration in terms of social relations- whether or not societal participation, labour and political rights and a sense of belonging are promoted for those more newly arrived to or reside precariously in the Canadian settler colonial state or whether they are delayed, if not denied. In the context of citizenship and immigration policy this is done with the admittedly rudimentary notion that democracy means- or should mean- giving both voice and societal membership and participation to all those residing within a given social formation. Thus the notion of democracy employed here is used to discuss whether the policies, discourses or sets of policies and discourses pursued in the areas under discussion tend towards more openness and societal participation – in the direction of participatory and procedural liberal democracy on its own expressed terms- or to towards the opposite pole of authoritarianism or a decline of democracy. Rather than accepting undemocratic processes as not being as abhorrent as those of potential comparison countries, as Abu-Laban has

noted one can also judge policy making and the country's ongoing story of immigration by comparing it to a more idealistic, imagined standard of a world with free movement in the face of global inequalities, or assess directions of change over time rather than selecting and focusing on more self-congratulatory, albeit at times significant accomplishments by Canada in these fields. (Abu-Laban 2004, 133–34).

As Sharma forcefully argues, quoted above, “whether one is a citizen, a permanent resident, or a temporary migrant worker is the most important factor in determining if a person will be free or unfree in Canada” (Sharma 2006, 142). While important, here the key questions are not simply those of the “horse race” of a particular party's ambitions for forming minority or majority governments and the forms of political outreach it undertakes, but the substance of policies and direction of social relations on offer. As Satzewich (1991) notes, building on the work of critical political economists and sociologists, there are a variety of ways in which newcomers to a social formation can be incorporated into a society and polity. These vary tremendously in their degree of inclusion, or inversely, degree of exclusion and precarity for migrant and immigrant workers. Significantly, they involve starkly different forms of integration, with significantly different levels of freedom in the labour, political and overall social context.

While a detailed description of the global political economy or sociology of labour is well beyond the scope of this dissertation, concerning the incorporation of foreign labour within a capitalist state such as Canada, Satzewich notes that one can conceptualize such inclusion as being characterized by particular *modes of incorporation*, in both political and economic terms. Such integration into Canadian society can be characterized as “migrant” or “immigrant,” and in the case of the former, whether it is “free” or “unfree” in term of the labour mobility within the temporal limits to its tenure. Immigrant labour can also be “free” or “unfree” depending on the political rights accorded. The term “free” notes whether one has the same rights in terms of

labour and employment of other members of a society that are generally associated with citizenship, while “unfree” labour denotes one’s *lack* of labour market freedom, such as the ability to change employers or work in any sector of the economy, and can also be extended to their ability to vote or run for office (Satzewich 1991, 38–39).³¹ These are helpful distinctions in terms of evaluating the nature of membership in Canadian society being offered to those who come, or indeed for many who have long been in or continued to come to Canada to work and live. Additionally, one can also consider the rights both being offered and *withheld* within a social formation. Those can include the right to family and family reunification, the right to permanent rights and citizenship, or to secure a safe existence fleeing conflict, inequality or exploitation.

Regardless of the names of the ministries at hand, citizenship and immigration policy is not just about those permitted to obtain permanent residence and become citizens. It is also about those that cannot make it to Canada, whether to seek refuge, to work or to reunite with their family and those within the country with diminished rights and protections. In the case of permanent residency, for example, rights accrued include freedom from fear of deportation or visa expiry, the right to live and work without being confined to a single employer or sector, and to access social services. Citizenship adds to that greater security of tenure, the right to vote or run for office, and to hold a Canadian passport. However for “temporary residents” -- even those that remain or return for many years -- many if not most of these freedoms and rights are denied. It will be seen that this was the category of new members of Canada’s social formation which grew the fastest under the Conservatives. In the aggregate, under the Conservatives relations of

³¹ Reiterating a classical proviso by critical political economists and sociologists, Satzewich (1991) notes that the question of freedom under capitalism is limited by the reality that nearly all people are compelled to sell their labour in order to survive given their lack of access to capital, and that this is not generally under the terms of one’s choosing (42).

unfreedom and marginalization for (im)migrants and refugees to Canada were greatly increased throughout Canada's immigration system.

Of significant importance as well is the manner in which such shifts are made. The means by which such shifts were carried out by the Conservatives were often far from transparent and often implemented very quickly. These changes were enacted through the concentration of power in ministerial hands and attacks on those that would constrain or challenge that power. Thus this chapter directly addresses the machinations of policy making and parliament within such a context, considering the more concrete "nuts and bolts" of policy making and social relations concerning (im)migration in Canada and the substantive intensification of neoliberal and settler colonial prerogatives through the Conservative Party's politics of citizenship, migration and immigration.

Policy Making in Canadian Immigration Policy

Due to Canada's comparatively isolated geography from other states as well as its resources and strategies to deter arrivals to Canada, the Canadian state exercises considerable control in the immigration field. As Tanya Basok (1996) has argued while examining refugee policy, as have Veuglers and Klassen (1994) in considering the Canadian state's ability to control immigration levels, even under globalization the Canadian government has been able to control immigration to a major extent. Basok goes so far as to assert that in the field of immigration, the Canadian state retains "full control" (159).³² While her argument is belied somewhat by the recent surge of refugee claimants from the United States in the wake of President Donald Trump's exclusionary

³² Basok's arguments are raised against those who would argue for a decline in the strength and role of the state as was popular in the 1980s and 1990s amidst debates about globalization, where many asserted there was a lack of state power in that context. Veuglers (2000) in particular pointed to state autonomy in this field- i.e. that of immigration officials and bureaucrats - unless the executive takes an interest in policy directions in the Canadian immigration context. As has been evident, executive interest was certainly the case under the Conservatives, where Kenney was widely been considered the most active Immigration Minister in decades.

executive orders and ends to temporary protections, Canada's unique geography certainly places it in a privileged position in terms of immigration control relative to other states and requires significant attention to those in position to exercise such power and under what rules it is exercised.

The policy fields of citizenship and immigration have also long been recognized as an area of governance where parliament plays a limited role. As in other policy areas, the complexities of the policies in these fields leave considerable room for demagoguery and manipulation, including in an authoritarian populist manner as seen in chapter six. Most Canadians are not familiar with the basic empirical realities of these policy fields. For example most Canadians, even those with strong opinions on what policies should be pursued by their government do not really know how many immigrants come to Canada each year nor what trends in immigration happen to be at any given time (Jedwab 2016).

As Thobani argues in a discussion of federal government-led policy discussions of citizenship and immigration in the 1990s, state guidance of such discussions are often highly structured to achieve desired ends. The Canadian settler colonial state plays a strong role in framing policy discussions and problems in ways that obscure social relations, reproduce inequalities and help arrive at predetermined outcomes that often disadvantage racialized immigrants and women in particular (Thobani 2000). The limited effects of civil society efforts and consultation in citizenship and immigration policy making have been discussed by prior authors, though Simmons and Keohane note at least a "quest for legitimacy" by the state. The state undertakes this by engaging stakeholders in such discussions in order to "retain legitimacy, deflect criticism and facilitate the accumulation process" in a manner heavily weighted towards its own perspective, though civil society actors are "by no means powerless" and such exercises are not without risks (Simmons and Keohane 1992, 446–47). For her part, Basok (1996) has

argued that progressive civil society voices have little effect on the direction of government policy.

In terms of procedural democracy and responsiveness to civil society, legislative processes perhaps reached a high point in the 1976 Immigration Act and consultations leading up to it. These are described by Kelley and Trebilock as part of a rise in “democracy and due process” concerning immigration policy in their book tracing Canada’s immigration history (2010, 378–79). While by no means a utopia of democratic decision making, they point to immigration debates featuring more wide-spread participation, greater responsiveness to civil society complaints over a pessimistic preliminary discussion paper and a relative consensus on the direction of policy moving towards less discretion for the executive and greater openness. These developments preceded the more fractious politics of the 1980s and 1990s and a significant rise in refugee claims which saw the settler state’s reaction be to work intensively to foreclose access to Canada. Notably, it would take the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Supreme Court Singh decision to achieve the right to an oral hearing for refugee claimants in Canada (Supreme Court of Canada 1985), leading to the creation of the Immigration and Refugee Board to adjudicate such claims.

Overall, Kelley and Trebilock have noted long term trends moving back to executive privilege and dominance in immigration and refugee policy in Canada since the mid-1990s (Kelley and Trebilock 2010, 425, 457). The rise of the Reform Party also helped drive the direction of immigration policy to the right and in neoliberal directions, a development for which the Reform Party and their former strategist Tom Flanagan have sought to take credit, as noted in chapter two. Recent decades had seen a relative elite consensus around a neoliberal human capital approach to immigrant selection (Simmons 2010), a decoupling of immigration levels from the yearly state of the economy and increased restrictions on refugee access to Canada. Considerable

and sophisticated means and resources have long been used to prevent refugees from coming to Canada, for example, no matter which party has been in power (Macklin 2005; Arbel and Brenner 2013).

Significantly, and notwithstanding recent criticisms of the Conservative government and those critiques levied and considered in this dissertation, not all measures granting ministerial discretion and powers to pursue them discussed below originated under the Conservatives. As Kelley and Trebilock have noted, many of the wide-ranging changes brought in or codified under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) legislation of 2002, occurred while the Liberal Party was in power, which planted for seeds or helped enable subsequent Conservative legislation. IRPA legislation was “largely skeletal, setting out in broad terms the framework of immigration policy while leaving the details to the executive to design and implement through regulation, with minimal parliamentary scrutiny” (425). This, they note, greatly increased powers of discretion under IRPA in contrast to the 1976 Immigration Act (Kelley and Trebilock 2010, 425). IRPA also made it easier to bring in temporary foreign workers to Canada (Kelley and Trebilock 2010, 425).

However, as tends to be the case under neoconservative rule, and as Hardcastle et al (1994) predicted in the early 1990s when considering the rise of the Reform Party and the prospect of it eventually coming to power, there would be significant change and an intensification of neoliberal trends with an explicitly neoconservative government coming to power. Canada’s Conservatives greatly accelerated neoliberal trends and made them more punitive. As observed in chapters five and six, these trends were accompanied by authoritarian populist discourses and a decline in the voice and role of parliament. Alboim and Cohl, for example, juxtapose the process leading to the new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in 2002 as one entailing significant consultation and debate with the Conservatives’ avoidance of

meaningful consultation and thorough parliamentary processes and debate while in power. Instead the Conservatives relied on “a tightly controlled political process without allowing for real engagement and discourse,” where constructive criticism was dismissed. Consistent with the party’s aggressive outreach strategies described in chapter three they note that former “Minister of Citizenship and Immigration [Jason Kenney] can be credited for travelling coast to coast, making speeches and issuing a multitude of press releases about new changes, [but] that is not a substitute for meaningful consultation and parliamentary processes” (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 68).

As described in chapter two, Poulantzas’ insights are helpful in capturing the general trend of parliamentary decline which he was observing in the West as early as the 1970s, while Hall’s insights greatly assist in grasping the discourses, ideology, and neoconservative acceleration of these trends. In the realms of citizenship and immigration there was a marked shift of power away from parliament witnessed in the interests of capital and strengthening exclusionary settler colonial prerogatives, consistent with Banack’s observations concerning the decline and delegitimization of parliament under the Harper government in favour of a more technocratic, neoliberal version of democracy where critics would be dismissed as “special interests” (chapter two), which can be seen particularly strongly in the government’s approach to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, discussed below.

Collectively, Hall and Poulantzas’ characterizations of weakened democracy applies particularly well to the nature of decision making in the realms of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism under the Conservatives. Notably, as Flanagan acknowledges, under the Conservatives the theme of democratic reform—which had been a populist fixture under the Reform Party—was largely abandoned (Flanagan 2009b, 209–11). In the fields under discussion, through minority and majority parliaments the Conservatives used massive omnibus bills and increased ministerial discretion to pass sweeping changes as the Conservative government

adopted and intensified anti-democratic tactics they had strongly criticized while in opposition (Mendes 2012). The party increased the dominance of executive decision making in the fields of citizenship and immigration while attempting to obscure their negative policy impacts on vulnerable newcomers to Canada (Forcier and Dufour 2016, 13–14).

As Alboim and Cohol note, the “unprecedented pace and scope of change” the Conservatives undertook was one that included new ways in which to make changes to the immigration system, including “a dramatic increase in ministerial powers and the use of omnibus legislation” (Alboim and Cohl 2012, iv). This was a contrast from prior approaches that featured “public consultation, task forces, discussion papers, committee hearings and parliamentary debate” including public consultations concerning regulations prior to Cabinet approval (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 9). While such forms of consultations can have their limits, and in some ways serve the state most by garnering legitimacy for the policies governments already intend to pursue, they also offer important spaces of contestation for civil society groups to at least make their voices heard and warn of negative impacts. In place of this the Conservatives offered authoritarian discursive shifts explored in earlier chapters along with an accelerated decline of permanent in favour of temporary migration and precarity for migrant workers, as will be discussed below, particularly concerning the temporary foreign worker program.

The Form of Policy Change: Strengthened Powers through Omnibus Bills, Regulations, and Ministerial Instructions

The Conservatives’ time in office marked a remarkable shift of unchecked authority to cabinet ministers, particularly the Immigration Minister, giving them powers to design and redesign important aspects of the immigration system with few restraints. Through budget bills the government also granted significant additional powers to the Human Resources Minister to

govern the temporary foreign worker program and to the Public Safety Minister through other bills which also significantly impact the fate of those inhabiting the country.

Both the 2008 and 2012 budget implementation bills greatly expanded the power of the immigration minister to issue less transparent or accountable ministerial instructions rather than regulations requiring greater transparency across a wide swath of programs, for example, including the power to limit immigration applications processed, speed up the processing of others, and to return applications without processing them at all (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 9).

Alboim and Cohl also note that beyond the expanded powers through Ministerial Instructions, the 2012 Budget Bill authorized the “*retroactive* application of regulations and eliminates the previous requirement to process eligible applications in the order in which they were received” (emphasis added). Inserting such changes into large omnibus bills was particularly concerning in the context of minority government rule, where to defeat a budget could bring down the government and force an election. The 2012 bill passed under the Conservative majority also saw the government “prevent[ed] focused, thoughtful discussion and debate by burying major immigration changes” in a budget bill over 400 pages long” (2012, 11–12) .

The requirement to process applications in order and the curbing of ministerial discretion had been a significant victory by civil society organizations in the 1970s in the context of a Canadian immigration history that saw the country historically curtail non-white immigration through a variety of means (Kelley and Trebilock 2010, 378–79). Such a concentration of power was remarked upon by multiple parliamentary witnesses invited to discuss these bills at the citizenship and immigration parliamentary committee.

Commenting on the 2008 changes, prominent immigration lawyer Lorne Waldman asserted that the powers to issue such wide-ranging ministerial instructions without oversight posed a problematic precedent that gave governments significant unchecked powers:

Ultimately, we can give all the different ministers the powers to issue instructions, and then we don't need to have a Parliament, we just have ministers who issue instructions. It's an extremely dangerous precedent that is a further centralization of the power of government, and I think it's something that should be carefully considered before it's passed into law (quoted in Berthiaume 2008b).

With the powers granted to these ministers the pace of change to regulations increased incredibly quickly. Immigration lawyer Steven Meurrens, for example, calculated that the number of Operational Bulletins issued concerning changes to rules, regulations and their interpretation in the realm of immigration rose dramatically from nine in the party's first full year in office in 2007. He notes that “[i]n 2012, it released 94!” (Meurrens 2013). Crucial changes were made furiously as (im)migrants, refugees and their allies sought to keep up. Amidst lengthy processing backlogs, with the powers they gave themselves the government returned thousands of applications for permanent residency under the skilled worker category. These shifts and their lack of parliamentary oversight, as Alboim and Cohl argue, represented a significant reduction in the security and confidence in the system for those engaging Canada for purposes of (im)migration (2012, 11, 67–68).

The Conservatives dizzying approach to governing in these fields has been reasonably characterized by Banting as a highly troubling pattern of “government by surprise” that needs to be retired (2016, 8). Given that Canada routinely elects majority governments with a minority of the electorate's support, Banting notes that transparent processes featuring openness and transparency with public debate are crucial if there is to be any pretense of democracy in policy making (Banting 2016, 9). The challenges of the nature of policy changes affecting migration and immigration to Canada were not simply procedural, however. As will and has been seen they also

greatly affected social relations that underpin claims to democracy and democratic legitimacy in Canada as well.

The form of making change is particularly unsettling when one considers the crucial content of many changes which made permanent residence, citizenship and personal security more difficult to obtain and protections to preserve them diminished. Moreover, in the realm of refugee policy, many of those changes held life and death significance as extraordinary powers were placed in the hands of the Immigration and Public Safety Ministers, as will be discussed further below. The Conservatives made those changes and granted such additional powers in the realm of refugee policy in 2012 in particular despite the fact the prior legislation they had passed within a minority government context had not even come into effect, and had been praised by then Immigration Minister Kenney at the time of its passage (Shane 2012a).

Not only did the Conservatives reduce opportunities for input at the front end of the policy-making processes, they also sought to weaken oversight and accountability for their changes and target their opponents. In terms of civil society, the government's desire to reduce the strength of opposition to its policies saw the government eliminate the Court Challenges Program, which assisted in the challenging of government legislation on Charter grounds, including in immigration (Court Challenges Program of Canada 2007, 25–26), and appeals by vulnerable migrants (Adeba 2006). Alboim and Cohl note the prevalence of “disturbing examples” of Conservatives’ discrediting of feedback meant to improve legislation, while feeling to the need to assert that “in a democratic country it is important for people to feel they can express their views without being attacked” (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 68).

The Conservatives also used their executive discretion to target organizations delivering settlement services whose beliefs on foreign policy did not match their own, particularly those opposing Israeli policies in the Middle East. They eliminated the language instruction budgets

(for both) and settlement services (in the case of the latter) funding of the Canadian Arab Federation and Palestine House- the latter which had provided such services without incident for 17 years (Voices-Voix n.d.; Siddiqui 2012; Collins 2009). It is perhaps not surprising that such a tendency to intervene within civil society also carried over to other branches of government, such as when then-Immigration Minister Jason Kenney criticized the judiciary for “not understanding the spirit of what we are trying to do” for overturning some decisions concerning refugee cases by his officials in a speech delivered to Western University’s law school, though he twisted the cases he chose as examples to a considerable degree to make his case (Embassy 2011; Macklin and Waldman 2011). The Conservatives’ authoritarian populist approach can be seen in both rhetoric and in practice.

Overall the Conservatives employed their powers to diminish the extent of input into policy making, to target civil society opponents and to significantly alter the social relations of citizenship and (im)migration in the Canadian context.

Shifting Social Relations and Priorities in Citizenship and Immigration Policy

Intensification of Neoliberal Priorities

Strengthened by the powers they granted themselves, overall under the Conservatives there was an adoption of “a very short term and one-dimensional consideration of the value of immigration that is focused on immigrants’ narrow economic benefit” (Barras and Shields 2017, 201). Such an orientation reflects early Reform Party principles dictating that “Immigration should be essentially economic in nature” (Reform Party of Canada 1989; 1995) and the importance placed on immigrant self-sufficiency. Given that it is perhaps not surprising that the Conservatives listed its immigration record and plans in that policy field in its 2015 election platform under the

category of “Our Conservative Plan for a Stronger Economy” (2015, 32–34) rather than as a distinct plan or platform section concerning immigration.

Positively, albeit apportioning such funding at times in the politically disciplinary way noted in the last section, as the Conservatives sought to grow their coalition they significantly increased settlement and integration funding in their first six years in office. They tripled such funding to \$966 million between 2006 and 2012. However they cut that funding to \$599 million in 2014-15 (Griffith 2016b) with Ontario organizations in particular experiencing those cuts as part of a pattern that “lacked transparency” and were “very top down and heavy handed,” where “the majority of organizations were not consulted or included in the decision making process around what programs to reduce or cut” (OCASI 2016, 4). As the Conservatives sought to balance their budget by the 2015 election, the sector saw significant reductions in funding, with “women and vulnerable clients . . . most affected” (OCASI 2016, 4).

As has been seen, the Conservatives’ discourses of neoliberal efficiency were frequently combined with the application of “law and order” and conservative nationalist rhetoric and approaches across the immigration system, reflecting a fusion of neoconservative and neoliberal policies and politics. To some extent the neoliberalization of immigration policy is a bipartisan policy orientation shared with the Liberal Party, but it is one which the Conservatives accelerated and intensified considerably. An intensification of neoliberal trends and more regressive social relations are observable across all categories of permanent immigration and purportedly temporary migration programs under the Conservatives.

Shifts within the Economic Class

Far from being merely statistical and categorical, the growth of and shifts within the economic class enacted by the Conservatives are of significant qualitative significance with respect to the

social relations of (im)migration in Canada. Rather than working to maximize the extent of relative economic, political and social freedom of those joining the Canadian social formation by facilitating quick access to permanent residence and citizenship, the Conservatives made many (im)migrants' statuses more probationary and precarious. Rejecting long-standing progressive civil society calls for status for all upon arrival to avoid human rights abuses and precarity, there was no concomitant increase in permanent immigration levels on an annual basis despite greatly increasing the number of people studying and working in Canada during their time in office.

In their earlier years in office, in addition to vastly expanding the temporary foreign worker program the Conservatives significantly intensified existing trends to a “two step” immigration system where immigrants do not arrive with the rights of permanent residency but must pass through uncertain, multi-step processes to acquire permanent resident status, such as labouring under the conditions of the temporary foreign worker program or completing a Canadian university degree.³³

In 2008, for example, in what could be considered in many ways to be a positive development, the Conservatives introduced the Canadian Experience Class, facilitating access to permanent residence for international students and “high skill” temporary foreign workers, though with few pathways for those whose work is constructed as “lower skilled” (Forcier and

³³ Goldring and Landolt (2012) chronicle that in the late 1990s, for select workers a new immigration model grew that “effectively creates bridges between temporary and permanent status, formalizing existing trends (such as the route to citizenship offered through the LCP [Live-in Caregive Program]), but selectively. Researchers have characterized this policy provision as ‘two-step migration’ (Hennebry 2012; Nakache and Kinoshita 2010; Valiani 2009). This type of migration currently takes place through two programs. The Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) allows territorial and provincial governments and employers to nominate selected temporary residents for permanent residence. Individuals in various skill designations (including “low skill”) as well as their spouses and dependants are eligible. The Canadian Experience Class (CEC), introduced in 2008, allows temporary workers in high-skilled occupations and international graduates with Canadian work experience to apply for permanent residence. As a share of the total number of permanent residents entering Canada in 2011, principal applicants plus spouses and dependants represented 15.4 percent for the PNP, 2.4 percent for the CEC and 4.5 percent for the LCP (CIC 2012a). The PNP program, in particular, is becoming an increasingly used pathway to permanent residence for temporary entrants. Moreover, with 22.3 percent of permanent residents classified under one of these three categories, two step migration has become an important element of immigration to Canada” (2012, 6–7) . Further conceptual discussion of Canadian immigration models by Goldring and Landolt in this cited piece are included later in this chapter.

Dufour 2016, 5). This would permit some students who pay exorbitant international fees (which to a significant degree subsidize the Canadian university system) to study in Canada to access a pathway to permanent residence. However without increasing total permanent immigration levels significantly such permanent immigration spots were not *in addition* to earlier practices of permanent residence upon arrival but further intensified trends towards “two-step” immigration where the rights of prospective permanent residents are much more precarious in the interim and most will never access permanent residency and citizenship. And, as noted in the last chapter, when the Conservatives changed the Citizenship Act they removed any credit towards citizenship for time already spent in Canada for students and workers. Also while the Provincial Nominee Program in some provinces have provided pathways to permanent residence for some “lower skilled” immigrants that might not have accessed it, the Federal government’s implementation of tougher language requirements reversed some of that progress.

While most Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP) began and grew quite slowly under the Liberals (Baglay 2012, 126), both Liberal and Conservative governments would agree with the “ultimate outcome” of the present PNP to “distributing the benefits of economic immigration across all provinces and territories,” which was repeated in the Liberal government’s 2016 immigration plan (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017c, 34, 10). The Conservatives’ Alberta base was likely a further incentive for them to grow the program to help increase immigration beyond British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. Consistent with such a goal, “The majority of PNs[provincial nominees] accepted from 2010 to 2015 intended to reside in Manitoba (24.2%), Alberta (22.4%) and Saskatchewan (19.0%)” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017c, 3). Overall, the Conservatives helped grow the program from “from a niche program to representing a significant proportion of economic immigration to Canada (10% in 2006 to 26% in 2015)” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017c, 7). Such

growth was not only a result of Conservative enthusiasm, as provinces pushed for and received higher PNP numbers even when told by former Immigration Minister Kenney that they would not be forthcoming on multiple occasions (Seidle 2013, 8). As Bagley notes, “[t]he intersection of domestic and international factors such as pressure from the provinces to have their needs better addressed, the general shift towards greater efficiency, and tough international competition faced by Canada in the immigration market solidify preconditions for PNPs to become a key part of the immigration system” (Bagley 2012, 135). Thus a greater stress on neoliberalism over neoconservatism is likely a stronger frame of analysis concerning the nominee programs. With a significant level of freedom in each province to set criteria for selection, there has also been provincial space to carve out for more beneficial programs for immigrants, though approaches and experiences vary greatly by province.

As can be seen in the data in table 7.1, increases in the Canadian Experience Class and Provincial Nominee Programs,³⁴ which grew significantly, largely came at the expense of admissions in the Skilled Worker Category, which does provide permanent residence upon arrival. While transitions to permanent residence are a positive development for those already living in Canada as a qualitative improvement in the social relations under which they work, as the Provincial Nominee Program and Canadian experience classes grew in size under the Conservatives, direct federal government permanent pathways shrunk.

The two-step nature of much of the Provincial nominee program is illustrated by the facts that although there were significant differences by province, 64 per cent of all Provincial

³⁴ An IRCC report assessing the program in 2017 explains that “PNP nomination allocations are determined by IRCC on an annual basis. The PNP is now the second largest economic immigration program; in 2014, 47,628 PNPs (including principal applicants, spouses and dependents) were admitted. When the PNP was introduced in 1996, 233 PNPs were admitted under this program, representing less than 0.2% of the total economic immigration. Since then, the proportion of PNPs admitted to Canada steadily increased. In 2014, this proportion reached 29% of the total economic immigration and almost one fifth of all admissions to Canada” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017c, 2).

Nominees accepted between 2010 and 2015 had a previous work permit in Canada, and 23% had a prior study permit (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017c, 20)

Table 7.1 Economic Class Immigration to Canada- Permanent Residents by Category

Economic Class Category	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Canadian Experience	0	0	0	2,545	3,918	6,026	9,359	7,209	23,783	20,059
Caregiver	6,895	6,118	10,511	12,459	13,912	11,248	9,013	8,799	17,689	27,230
Skilled Trade	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	139	1,972
Skilled Worker	106,027	97,876	103,774	95,999	119,397	88,785	91,457	83,230	67,596	70,145
Entrepreneur	3,093	2,157	1,701	1,313	1,088	706	475	426	499	259
Investor	8,033	7,447	10,202	10,307	11,717	10,587	9,362	8,407	7,450	5,460
Self-Employed	952	580	505	542	500	349	242	265	399	677
Start-up Business	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	62
Provincial Nominee Program	13,338	17,093	22,418	30,383	36,436	38,419	40,882	39,901	47,624	44,534
Total	138,338	131,271	149,111	153,548	186,968	156,120	160,790	148,254	165,188	170,398

Source: 2015 Facts and Figures (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016a)

Towards the end of their time in office, after intensifying trends of “two-step” immigration the Conservatives converted the economic stream towards one of “express entry,” which sought to shift immigration to a possibility only for those with a job offer in hand, essentially privatizing immigrant selection and empowering employers. This was part of an overall set of strategies that forewent less commodified nation-building priorities or possibilities that might prioritize the family unit, for example, as will be discussed in the next section (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 60–62; Forcier and Dufour 2016, 4–6).

While in part a response to genuine public policy challenges such as application backlogs, long processing times and challenges many immigrants faced in obtaining employment, under the Express Entry System they instituted there was an overwhelmingly emphasis on job offers early in the life of the program. At the system’s launch in 2015, out of a maximum of 1200 points, 600 points were awarded for a valid job offer, dwarfing all other considerations (Immigration,

Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017a; Hiebert 2019, 7) within an opaque system readily changed at the Minister's discretion through ministerial instruction with little public input or debate (Hiebert 2019, 13–14). This greatly increased the de facto privatization of the selection of immigrants and their commodification relative to other nation-building priorities. Some, such as Omidvar criticized the government for its “focus on the immediately employable” for coming “at a cost to international students, who many would argue are a better and safer long-term bet, given their Canadian education and credentials. But under the new system they are not able to compete with someone who has years of experience and a guaranteed job offer” (Omidvar 2016, 188).

The manner in which the Conservatives set up express entry also resulted in a shift in source countries towards Anglophone countries due to employer preferences, including vaulting the United States and United Kingdom into the top five source countries, though changes under the Liberals reverted the system to a re-prioritization of human capital over employment offers, which saw the top five shift to “a more globalized intake,” including dropping the US out of the top five source countries and dropping the UK to fifth place (Hiebert 2019, 8).

The Conservatives' approach to the economic class and the immigration system as a whole cannot be considered without the context of the massive expansion of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, however, discussed further below. For the Conservatives were bringing in thousands of new members of Canadian society each year without access to minimal social relations of economic and political freedom, standards by which liberal capitalist democracies base many of their claims to legitimacy. This further neoliberalization of immigration policy can also be seen in a relative decline in the size of family class and humanitarian categories of immigration relative to the economic class considering data from their first and final years in office, visible in table 7.2..

The family and refugee classes are discussed in sequence, below. Concerning refugee policy, I use 2014 rather than 2015 as a year of comparison as 2014 marked the last full year of Conservative rule and 2015 figures were impacted significantly by Liberal efforts following that year's October election to meet their electoral commitments to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada in short order (Mazereeuw 2017). This also impacted the total number of permanent residents admitted.

Table 7.2: New Permanent Residence Immigration Totals by Major Category- 2006 to 2015

Type of Immigration- (share of total)	2006	2010	2014	2006 vs. 2014 Change in Refugee Total & % change	2015	2006 vs. 2015 All other categories & % change
Economic Class	138,338 (55%)	186,968 (66.6%)	165,188 (63.5%)		170,398 (62.7%)	+32,060 (+23.2%)
Family Class	75,142 (29.9%)	65,565 (23.4%)	67,647 (26.0%)		65,490 (24.1%)	-9652 (-12.8%)
Other (vast majority humanitarian)	5659 (2.2%)	3498 (1.2%)	3,377 (1.3%)		3,844 (1.4%)	-1815 (-32.1%)
Refugees	32,510 (12.9%)	24,699 (11.2%)	24,040 (1.3%)	-8470 (-26.1%)	32,115 (1.4%)	
Total	251,649	280,730	260,282	+8633 (+3.4%)	271,847	+20,198 (-8.0%)

Source: Facts and Figures (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b)

“Cancelled Dreams” of Family Reunification and the Decline of Right to Family for Immigrants in Canada’s Settler Colonial Context

Demonstrating the intensification of neoliberal priorities under the Conservatives, while increasing the absolute size and overall share of the economic class within annual permanent resident levels – albeit far less than growth in the temporary foreign worker program - the Conservatives made it much more costly and restrictive to sponsor family members to immigrate to Canada (Walia 2015; Bragg and Wong 2016; Carlaw 2015b). As Bragg and Wong argue, the shifts within and shrinking of the family reunification category and policies such as those

favouring expensive and temporary “supervisas” over permanent parent and grandparent sponsorship constituted a policy set of “Cancelled Dreams” for its negative impacts on immigrant women, transnational families and nation-building, belonging and identity (2016, 60–61).

The Conservatives restricted access to parent and grandparent sponsorship as the government suspended new applications to this sponsorship program for two years in late 2012 amidst backlogs while introducing an easier-to-obtain “super-visa” for parents and grandparents. While in some ways positively innovative in that it allowed parents and grandparents to stay for up to two years at a time over a ten year period, the visa requires families to purchase expensive private-sector health insurance, putting the cost of family visits beyond the means of many – primarily immigrants from the Global South- without facilitating permanent sponsorship.

In the case of parent and grand-parent sponsorship, a tightening of the ability to preserve or reunite families was couched in terms of an “Action Plan for Faster Family Reunification” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2013). Within that plan the Conservatives substantially increased the period of financial support involved for this form of sponsorship (doubled from ten to twenty years) as well as the income needed (by 30 per cent). Sponsors were required to demonstrate their income for three consecutive years rather than one, and that could only be demonstrated through tax returns. General family sponsorship was also made much more difficult and inaccessible and the definition of a family also shrunk. The age limit for eligible children was lowered to 18 from 22, and the exception for full-time students to be classified as eligible children for sponsorship was removed.

Only 5,000 new applications for parents and grandparents were accepted by the Conservative government in each of 2014 and 2015, for an expected total of 20,000 new permanent residents in the parent and grandparent category in each of those years (the other 15,000 per year were to come from a backlog of applications). But ultimately only 18,203 and

15,489 parents and grandparents would be admitted as permanent residents in 2014 and 2015 respectively, as can be seen in table 7.2.³⁵ This marked a large reduction from 32,320 parents and grandparents admitted as permanent residents by the Conservatives at their peak year in 2013 as they sought to clear backlogs and a 22.6 per cent reduction from the number of parents and grandparents admitted in 2006, the year they assumed office. Overall family class sponsorship shrunk in both absolute and relative terms to the economic class.

Table 7.3: Family Class Sponsorship Categories and New Permanent Residents- 2006-2015

Family Class Sponsorship Category	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Sponsored Spouse or Partner	46,065	45,739	45,040	44,751	41,271	39,064	40,032	45,633	45,064	46,356
Sponsored Children	4,727	5,052	4,463	3,843	3,772	3,433	3,152	3,109	3,561	3,316
Sponsored Parent or Grandparent	20,015	15,823	16,608	17,184	15,336	14,093	21,810	32,320	18,203	15,489
Sponsored Extended Family Member	481	467	311	286	364	400	508	319	285	329
Sponsored Family Member - H&C Consideration	3,854	5,060	5,477	5,926	4,822	4,354	4,368	1,998	534	0
Sponsored Family	75,142	72,141	71,899	71,990	65,565	61,344	69,870	83,379	67,647	65,490

Source: Facts and Figures 2015 (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016a)

Within their 2013 “Action Plan,” the Conservative government left in place a necessity for many families to instead rely on the “Super Visa” program and its high insurance costs. Such changes made family reunification more costly, with obvious race, class and gender dimensions given known inequalities within Canadian society such as the economic disadvantages faced by women

³⁵ While the subsequent Liberal government would increase the number of new applications for parent and grandparent applications accepted each year, one media outlet found their claims of providing a much more generous and compassionate approach to such sponsorships to be “a lot of baloney” (Blatchford 2019)

and racialized Canadians. The Canadian Council for Refugees further noted that decades-long sponsorship responsibilities increase the risk of family hardship and deny immigrants taxpayer funded benefits to which they contribute, and increase the chance of abuse of parents and grandparents due to their financial dependency (Canadian Council for Refugees 2013b). None of those are changes around which the government campaigned, though they highlighted the “Super Visa” in their party platform in 2015.

Bragg and Wong highlight the differential impact of the Conservatives’ family reunification policies on racialized immigrant communities, as their

“findings indicate that limits to family reunification disproportionately impact racialized immigrant communities in Canada. These impacts are both numeric—immigrants from countries in the global south have historically been the heaviest users of Canada’s family reunification programs—and substantive—immigrants seeking meaningful reunification with family members report that not being able to sponsor their relatives reinforces feelings of nonbelonging and being an outsider in Canada.”

(Bragg and Wong 2016, 57–58)

The restrictions on parent and grandparent sponsorship also contribute to a lack of options for childcare which - given frequently gendered expectations concerning caregiving responsibilities and the high cost of childcare - can reduce women’s participation in the paid labour force and reduce language learning in the home (57-58). Changes under the Conservatives and “discussions that only value the monetary and economic contributions of various immigrants run the risk of further alienating Canada’s more vulnerable populations. These changes reinforce a tacit hierarchy between those who belong and those who do not, those who are allowed to be with family and those who are not,” they argue (Bragg and Wong 2016, 61) .

As can be seen in table 7.3, above, every category of family sponsorship except for spousal sponsorship saw a decline from 2006 to 2015, while Table 7.2 shows the overall 12.8 per cent decline in family class sponsorship as a whole during the Conservatives’ time in office. The

highly problematic policy of “conditional permanent residence,” which increased dependent relations experienced by sponsored spouses on their sponsors and the increased likelihood of abuse was discussed in chapter five. Three years after its implementation the policy was described by the Canadian Council for Refugees as a “failure in policy and in practice” and criticized for “increas[ing] the vulnerability of many sponsored newcomers, particularly victims of domestic and sexual violence and abuse” (2015b). It was subsequently eliminated by the Liberal government in late April of 2017 (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017b), but illustrated the harmful effects of the Conservatives approach to immigrant families and gender relations.

To return to the language of Jason Kenney’s hegemonic attempts to reach out to immigrant voters and incorporate their hopes within their political project, as explored in chapter five, discourses surrounding hard working immigrants “raising a family in Brampton West” ring somewhat hollow if that family wishes to bring a parent or grandparent to Canada and is struggling to make ends meet due to the high costs of childcare that might be alleviated by a parent immigrating to Canada, for example, or could not bring their young adult children to the country. As discussed in the last chapter, lengthening the time of permanent residence before becoming a citizen prolonged the period for which such immigrants cannot exercise political rights such as to vote or run in elections and have a say in such policies that strongly impact them. This meant longer periods of time living and labouring under conditions of unfreedom in terms of formal political freedoms.

Refugee and Humanitarian Classes: More Adversarial Social Relations and Reduced Protection

It was in the realm of refugee policy where the Conservatives launched their fiercest rhetorical and institutional assaults within Canada’s immigration system and sought to entrench global

inequalities by excluding othered foreigners fearing for their lives. Here the government both exercised its already existing powers- both formal and informal in the case of its discursive attacks - and gave itself new powers and resources to challenge the ability of refugee claimants to obtain and maintain a secure existence in Canada's settler colonial society. Whereas the prior governing Liberals had employed neoliberal discourses and logics of efficiency when they reached and implemented the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement implemented in 2004,³⁶ the Conservatives relied on moralistic appeals invoking outrage characteristic of neoconservatism to promote and justify their reforms, as seen in the last two chapters. This helped result in a significant decline in the number of refugees acquiring permanent residence in Canada during their time in office.

The Conservatives' authoritarian populist discourses concerning refugees were explored in chapter five and will not be repeated at length. Here it will suffice to note that, as Bates et al have chronicled, multiple studies have found that the Conservatives' discourses accompanying their refugee reforms involved attacking the legitimacy of refugee claimants' attempts to obtain safety and a secure existence in Canada. Those being stigmatized were accused of abusing Canada's procedures and "generosity," and described in terms such as "fraudulent," "phony," "bogus," "illegal" and "foreign terrorists," including in parliamentary debates and to the media. These delegitimizing discourses, Bates et al note, "created fertile ground on which to pass reforms that eroded both procedural and substantive access to justice" (Bates, Bond, and Wiseman 2016, 30-31).

³⁶ While controversial upon its passage due to the United States' poor human rights record with respect to refugees (Macklin 2005), and even moreso since the election, discourses and actions of the Trump administration, the publicly declared purpose of the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement was that rather than to exclude refugees from protection in Canada, "the Agreement helps both governments better manage access to the refugee system in each country for people crossing the Canada-U.S. land border" (Government of Canada 2003)."

These discourses were accompanied by significant policy changes, some of which were included in figure 5.2 in chapter five. The Conservatives' punitive mindset led the government to willfully ignore charter rights concerns and the negative impacts of their policies on refugee claimants for both reasons of ideology and political expediency (Bond 2014; Bates, Bond, and Wiseman 2016). This resulted in a significant number of their policies being ruled unconstitutional by the courts, and even "cruel and unusual" as noted in chapter three with respect to reduced access to refugee health care for some claimants.

Having achieved a majority government in the 2011 Federal election, the Conservatives granted cabinet Ministers powers of life and death significance through the *Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act*. These powers include giving the Immigration Minister the power to make decisions over what constitutes a "safe" designated country of origin (DCO) within certain numeric constraints for refugee claims (Government of Canada 2012). Under the 2012 legislation such powers were given to the Immigration Minister rather than a panel of human rights experts, as passed under previous minority government legislation that had entailed compromises in 2010. Claimants from designated countries of origin faced accelerated refugee hearing processes that particularly impacted the most vulnerable claimants (Canadian Council for Refugees 2013c),³⁷ and prevented access to the new refugee appeal division- an appeal bar subsequently struck down by the courts for being "discriminatory on its face."³⁸

³⁷ These faster timelines to fully submit their claims and have their cases heard represented a major impediment to securing a safe residence, finding adequate legal counsel, securing and potentially translating documents and accessing professional services such as psychiatric services where needed. This was despite the fact that the new timelines that a typical claimant was to face- only 60 days long- were considered by most observers as too fast for "regular" claimants. DCO claimant hearing timelines were set at between 30-45 days. DCO claimants were also denied a work permit until a successful claim, or going 180 days without a decision on their case (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2012c). Between December 15, 2012 and October 10, 2014 the Conservative government designated forty-three countries of origin (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2012a), including countries such as Hungary and Mexico where the status of minority groups and/or general human rights conditions are widely acknowledged to generate displacement and refugee claimants (Beaudoin, Danch, and Rehaag 2015, 6-8)Rehaag, Beaudoin, and Danch 2015, 6-8) . These changes came after what Villegas has described as a pre-reforms "public

Also passed under Bill C-31, was the decision to give the Minister of Public Safety the right to designate any group of two or more refugees as “irregular arrivals” (Shane 2012b) or “designated foreign nationals” (DFN). Such a designation is accompanied by the prospect of long term detention of such refugee claimants – with less frequent detention reviews than those afforded other refugee claimant detainees, as well as a bar to becoming a permanent resident of Canada for five years. The highly punitive designation prevents a refugee claimant receiving that designation the ability to sponsor family members for at least that amount of time, even if their refugee claim is successful. These are crucial powers given the nature of the DFN and DCO regimes within the context of the reformed refugee determination system and the limits such designations impose. Both designations would see those to which it is applied denied access to the IRB’s new appeal division. Thus, because of the government’s authoritarian populist mindset, even those changes that could be a major positive step forward – such as the long-awaited creation of a Refugee Appeal Division (RAD), for example- were undermined by punitive exceptions built into the new system.³⁹

relations campaign against refugee claimants from low-acceptance countries” that “specifically targeted Mexico” by then-Immigration Minister Kenney (Villegas 2013, 2207). The impracticality of the accelerated timelines and their prioritizing of new over old claims amidst a growing backlog ultimately led to them being abandoned by the Immigration and Refugee Board (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2018).

³⁸ In his ruling striking down the bar on access to the refugee appeal division for DCO claimants, Justice Keith Boswell argued that “[t]he distinction drawn between the procedural advantage now accorded to non-DCO refugee claimants and the disadvantage suffered by DCO refugee claimants . . . is discriminatory on its face.” Boswell asserted that the result of the DCO regime was that it “serves to further marginalize, prejudice, and stereotype refugee claimants from DCO countries which are generally considered safe and ‘non-refugee producing.’” Even further, “it perpetuates a stereotype that refugee claimants from DCO countries are somehow queue-jumpers or ‘bogus’ claimants who only come here to take advantage of Canada’s refugee system and its generosity.” Justice Boswell rejected the government’s attempts to justify the differential treatment of refugees under the DCO regime, concluding that “[t]his is a denial of substantive equality to claimants from DCO countries based upon the national origin of such claimants” and ordered that the three claims involved in the case be heard at the refugee appeal tribunal (decision quoted and summarized in Keung 2015).

³⁹ The implementation of a refugee appeal division- promised but never implemented by the prior Liberal government- would normally have been considered a great advance over their predecessors. However the Conservatives denied the right of appeal to many refugee claimants and implemented draconian timelines that reduced the utility of the division for those whose claims had been incorrectly rejected by first instance decision makers. Successful court challenges ultimately led to the appeal division becoming much more accessible.

The Conservative also brought in punitive changes forbidding refugee claimants from simultaneously filing Humanitarian and Compassionate Grounds claims alongside their refugee claim. Rejected refugee claimants were barred from submitting such an application for a full year after their refugee claim is decided upon, presumably so that such claimants could be deported before such a claim is filed or ruled upon. This is despite the fact that there may be compelling public policy and humanitarian reasons for allowing someone to stay/settle in Canada even if they do not meet the highly technical refugee definition. Rejected refugee claimants were also banned from a Pre-Removal Risk Assessment for one year after their claim's finalization, which determine if it is safe for them to be deported to the country from which they were claiming refuge. This means claimants may be deported to some countries before it is certified as safe to do so. All of these policies were departures from prior practices and societal compromises that were designed to make Canada's immigration system more compassionate and to better safeguard those being deported. Overall, the Humanitarian and Compassionate Grounds category of permanent residence witnessed a reduction from 5501 persons successfully obtaining permanent residence on those grounds in 2006 to 3844 in 2015, a 32 per cent drop (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b).

Not content with implementing accelerated timelines and restricting access to appeal mechanisms, the government also poured resources into having its staff challenge refugee claims at the Immigration and Refugee Board, part of overall shifts that saw refugee status determination become "more adversarial and 'anti-refugee,'" as civil society actors supporting refugees perceived the standards for Ministerial interventions to have been lowered and the negative

impacts on claimants in terms of stress and costs of preparations for hearings to have increased (Atak, Hudson, and Nakache 2017; Bates, Bond, and Wiseman 2016).⁴⁰

And not only did the government reduce access to refugee protection, it also attacked the security of permanent residents *already recognized* as refugees with permanent residence status. In the case of refugees and permanent residence, the Conservatives increased the ability of the government to take away permanent residency status in Canada for the commission of a relatively minor crime - no matter how long one has lived in Canada (Canadian Bar Association 2012, 8–9) or a change in country circumstances for refugees (Rehaag, Macklin, and Waldman 2012). The Conservatives also allocated \$15 million to CBSA over four years for cessation and vacation efforts targeting refugees that would remove their refugee status and permanent residence, with a target of 875 refugees, representing a four and a half-fold increase over the prior year's targets (Cohen 2014b; 2014a).⁴¹ According to some observers, the Conservatives approach

⁴⁰ Atak, Hudson and Nakache (2017) point out that “The Conservative Government’s rhetoric coincided with a drastic increase in ministerial interventions at the IRB hearings between 2012-2015. Some participants pointed to a striking rise in interventions from an average of 3% a year before 2012, to up to 20% of cases in 2012-2013, as well as to increased budget allocations for ministerial interventions. Whereas previously interventions were only performed by the CBSA and focused mainly on issues of serious criminality or security concerns, CIC (currently IRCC) has been increasingly involved in the interventions since 2012 before the IRB, focusing on cases involving program integrity and credibility issues” (28).

The same authors note that “Although it is difficult to draw inferences from the figures available, there seems to be a correlation between ministerial interventions and cases being rejected by RPD. In cases intervened into by either CIC or the CBSA, there was a higher proportion of negative RPD decisions than in cases where no intervention was made. An IRCC review found that the strongest effects were for the rate of positive RPD decisions, where positive decisions were 40% when no intervention was conducted, compared to 24% when an IRCC intervention was conducted and 26% in cases of a CBSA intervention (IRCC, 2015: 14). Drawing on the results of our own project and on previous research available, we hypothesize that the higher rejection rates are linked to the adversarial climate created by ministerial interventions, coupled with substantive and procedural limitations” (Atak, Hudson, and Nakache 2017, 27–28).

⁴¹ According to the legislative summary of Bill C-31, the 2012 Protecting Canada’s Immigration System Act, “Bill C-31 introduce[d] a new provision governing inadmissibility” and “ states that upon a final decision that refugee protection has ceased, the foreign national who was previously a Convention refugee is now inadmissible to Canada, and therefore cannot remain in or enter Canada. Cessation of refugee protection is described in section 108 of the IRPA and involves situations such as the individual returning to his or her country of origin, reacquiring his or her original citizenship or acquiring a new one, or simply that the conditions in the country of origin have changed and the person is no longer in need of protection. The RPD may make such a determination upon application by the

to cessation procedures was contrary to and far more punitive than that promised by former Immigration Minister Kenney at the time of the legislation's passage.⁴² It could also lead permanent residents to be fearful of applying for citizenship as it might raise the attention of immigration officials to trigger such proceedings, while those targeted were left without access to appeals or stay of removal.⁴³ Such fear thus significantly impact the ability of such members of society to fully integrate into society and acquire rights of citizenship and the political rights and sense of security such status could afford.

As then-President of the Canadian Council for Refugees Loly Rico noted after a 2016 court decision enforcing the law's provisions,

The law is clearly absurd: Canadians do not want to see law-abiding former refugees stripped of their status – even people who have Canadian children or spouses – simply because they no longer need Canada's protection . . . Refugee status is supposed to give people protection, but the Bermudez decision shows that permanent residents who came as refugees are actually more vulnerable to loss of status than other permanent residents. Former refugees now feel very insecure because of the threat of cessation: they thought

Minister.” Overall, “Bill C-31 makes the impact of cessation decisions more serious, providing in clause 19 that permanent resident status may be lost if refugee protection has ceased for reasons described in sections 108(a) to 108(d) of the IRPA” (Béchar and Elgersma 2012, 20). Vacation of a decision occurs when an original refugee status determination decision is obtained through omission or misrepresentation (IRPA, section 109).”

⁴² As Meurens describes, “[t]he approach to cessation applications has also been callous. When Jason Kenney in 2012 amended the laws around cessation so that that the loss of protected person status would also terminate permanent resident status and lead to removal from Canada, he reassured Parliament that cessation would only apply to “people who claim protection from a country, receive Canada’s protection and immediately go back to that country that was supposedly the source of persecution . . . and who fraudulently obtain a protected person status.” However, the government launched cessation proceedings against long-term permanent residents who had made one or two trips back to their countries of origin to visit dying parents. It initiated them against individuals who had simply applied for a passport despite never travelling on it. It even launched them against individuals who the government agreed would be persecuted if they were removed from Canada. And throughout it all, the government argued in court that when cessation proceedings were being initiated no procedural fairness was owed to those facing deportation” (Meurrens 2015).

⁴³ Atak et al (2017) note that “In addition to the pressure it has created on the system, the enforcement of cessation provisions also criminalizes migrants and results in violations of their human rights. Those who are affected by cessation provisions have no right of appeal and no statutory stay of removal pending their leave application for judicial review to the Federal Court. Moreover, the law can be applied retroactively to any conduct prior to the entry into force of the provision on December 15, 2012. On a positive note, some interviewees mentioned that the cessation applications have considerably decreased since the election of the Liberal Government” (31-2).

that having permanent residence meant that they were safe in Canada, but since 2012 that is no longer true.

In the same press release, then-President of the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers Mitch Goldberg noted the need for change to “a law that has no purpose other than to harass vulnerable refugees” (Canadian Council for Refugees 2016). Those existing within the racialized category of refugees were not to be granted the security of becoming “Canadian-Canadians.”

The material impact of the Conservatives’ refugee policies and discourses was certainly evident. Citizenship and Immigration Canada data, and that of the UNHCR show that while the Conservatives maintained immigration levels above 250,000 per year while in power there were major shifts, particularly a decline in protection offered to refugees. Some of the data resulting from these changes can be seen in table 7.2. They demonstrate a major decline in permanent residence in the refugee and other humanitarian categories in both absolute and relative terms. There was a drop of greater than 28 per cent from 2006 to 2014 in terms of refugees admitted as permanent residents, while the number of claims made within Canada per year declined more than 40 per cent from 2006 to 2014 (UNHCR 2015; 2011). Such a decline was not only due to the punitive provisions enacted, but also visa policies employed to target countries with serious human rights concerns such as Mexico, most notably, with the imposition of visas also reducing claims from Colombia, the Czech Republic, Haiti, and Hungary (Simmons 2017, 307–8).

In enacting their reforms the Conservatives willfully ignored predictions of the negative consequences of the reforms, particularly concerning access to justice, many of which came to pass (Bates, Bond, and Wiseman 2016, 67). In their look at the changes made to the refugee determination system Atak, Hudson and Nakashe argue that despite the high financial costs of reforms instituted by the Conservative government they did not improve the integrity of the refugee determination system and in fact led to human rights violations, weakened access to

justice given the fast timelines for claims imposed and the lack of an appeal mechanism for many claimants (Atak, Hudson, and Nakache 2017, 19–21). The Conservatives’ overall approach resulted in a criminalization of asylum seekers (26) more likely to increase rather than reduce irregular migration (35-38). Thus at a time when displacement of refugees was increasing globally every year, the Conservatives took extraordinary measures to make Canada’s system more punitive both towards arriving refugees, but also those that had already believed they had established themselves safely in Canada by winning their claims and acquiring permanent residence. They also created a climate of fear and increased difficulty in acquiring the full rights of political citizenship, preventing such immigrants and refugees from reaching even the differentially exalted status of Canadian citizen.

Political Unfreedom: Impeding the Path to Citizenship

As Satzewich, cited earlier in this chapter notes, one of the key elements of freedom and *unfreedom* in the incorporation of foreign labour into a capitalist social formation concern dynamics concerning political freedom. While permanent residence provides most labour market, social and Canadian Charter rights, it does not include full political membership into Canadian society, which is reserved for citizens (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017d). Key amongst political freedoms are the ability to vote and/or run for office, for example, as well as greater security of tenure, particularly with provisions affecting refugees implemented by the Conservatives discussed above. Without citizenship many present within Canada have a diminished voice and compose a much less recognized constituency concerning policies that greatly impact their lives.

In chapters five and six the intensified racialization and re-ethnicization of the politics and processes of citizenship were observed. In chapter six in particular it was noted that while the

Conservatives were aggressively reaching out to “ethnic” voters it was making it increasingly difficult for the next cohort of many such voters to obtain citizenship and the franchise in several ways. This was seen in how the citizenship of exalted subjects characterized as “lost Canadians” was being “restored,” while racialized and ethnicized members of society such as Zunera Ishaq (chapter five) saw their access to citizenship challenged or obstructed by new or heightened sets of hurdles to acquiring citizenship, or for others to pass it on to subsequent generations. These obstacles included increasing the length of time one must be legally residing and physically present in Canada to qualify to apply for citizenship and eliminating any credit for legal residency in Canada prior to being granted permanent resident status. They also included broadening the age of the population required to be tested on knowledge of Canada and language ability and making such tests more difficult and costly. The Conservatives also made it a requirement to provide formal proof of language proficiency up front as part of the application for citizenship while implementing a more complex citizenship guide and set of test questions and making the passing grade more difficult to achieve. For those who had come to Canada as refugees, it was seen in the previous section that the Conservatives fostered a climate of fear and intimidation that could reasonably prevent former refugee claimants from pursuing citizenship for fear of drawing scrutiny of their immigration record and fear losing their permanent residence status.

Thus through a mix of regulatory and legislative changes the Conservatives increased the costs, difficulty and time to become a Canadian citizen resulting in a significant drop in citizenship acquisition rates (Griffith 2016d). The Conservative government greatly increased the costs associated with becoming a citizen, putting it beyond the reach of many, with disproportionate impacts on racialized and ethnicized prospective Canadians. A lack of full citizenship rights that in many ways produces what one might term “permanent permanent

residency” and lack of access to full political rights is the product of state behaviour and policy choices.

While the Harper Conservatives had previously cut the permanent resident landing fee in an effort to court immigrant voters and their families in 2006, changes brought in 2014 saw fees for a grant of citizenship triple from \$100 to \$300. In January 2015 those fees rose yet again to \$530. They also implemented a \$100 “Right of Citizenship” tax on successful applicants (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2014a). In the case of a family with multiple members seeking to acquire citizenship, of course such costs would be multiplied. No waivers were offered for refugees or those in financial need. Combined these changes led to a decline in citizenship uptake with disproportionate effects on poor and racialized people (Griffith 2016d; 2015a; 2015b; 2016d; Keung 2017). As Griffith notes, the government made the fee increases while avoiding parliamentary scrutiny by seeking and receiving an exemption to the User Fee Act in the 2013 Omnibus Budget Bill to make the changes. The effects of the changes was a predictable and significant drop in citizenship applications (Griffith 2016d). Griffith notes that “with respect to applications, the impact of the fee increase to \$530 is clear. From an average of close to 200,000, the number of applicants dropped to 130,000 in 2015, and to 36,000 in the first half of 2016” (Griffith 2016c, 21).⁴⁴ Of further disadvantage to those educated outside of Canada, “A language-assessment charge of approximately \$200 to third party testing organizations was imposed on those applicants not having completed a secondary or postsecondary diploma in either English or French or not having met the requirement through government-funded language training” (Griffith 2016c, 17).

⁴⁴ While several other aspects of the Conservatives changes to citizenship were reversed, as noted in the last chapter, these fee changes have not been reversed under the Liberal government.

Thus not only did the Conservative government engaging in further neoliberalization and marginalization of the selection of those who could become permanent residents on the backs of families and refugees on the front end of immigration selection and admission, it further prevented the integration of those members of Canadian society that managed to achieve permanent resident status into the country's political institutions such as the franchise and ability to run for elected office.

Perhaps as or even more significant than these changes affecting those who were able to obtain permanent residence was the explosion in the size of the temporary foreign worker program, which further promoted the employment of unfree and not fully free labour to the benefit of employers and in a manner detrimental to the rights of those constructed as "temporary" and especially as "low-skilled" within that category.

Creating "The most flexible workforce in the world": Empowering Capital and Facilitating Unfree Labour through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program

Perhaps the greatest shift concerning Canada's immigration settlement model affecting the greatest number of those living and labouring in the Canadian social formation came with the massive increase in the size of the temporary foreign worker program (TFWP) during the Conservatives' time in office. While not formally considered "immigration" policy, the growth of "two-step" immigration paths from the TFWP to permanent residency, as well as the growing reliance of firms on such workforces demonstrate that this policy field cannot be conceptually or practically separated in terms of analysis, and that efforts to do so must be resisted in Canada's settler colonial context, where "exalted subjects" frequently rule with callous disregard of the rights and lived experiences of migrant and immigrant others.

Of particular interest to this chapter and dissertation are the forms of governance, party politics, discourses and notions of community involved in that transformation. The Conservatives

first attempted to both promote the interests of capital and to flexibilize labour relations overall in Canada. However in the face of public backlash to the growth of and dynamics of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program they sought to shift to a discourse of national interests and “Canadian workers” first. Such an approach complemented the ways they had sought to marginalize “outsiders” such as refugee claimants and undocumented workers, and engaged in authoritarian populist practices such as “Most Wanted” lists and television programming such as *Border Security*, as discussed in chapter six.

Building upon policy doors partially opened by the Liberals through the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) passed in 2001 and expanding upon earlier temporary migration programs, the Conservatives oversaw an explosion in the temporary categories of residents until a major backlash to their approach grew. The Conservatives expanded and complexified the immigration system considerably. Goldring and Landolt’s “chutes and ladders” conception of the current Canadian immigration model reflects the precarity and unpredictability faced by migrant workers navigating Canada’s settler colonial context and the potential to readily fall in and out of particular (im)migration statuses due to policy changes, status expirations and complex pathways and/or lack of pathways to permanent residence and citizenship. This perspective helps one to grasp the realities of a state that sets the terms and rights for those who arrive to its territory and to view immigration policy beyond narrow categories and in terms of societal membership and inequality. The “chutes and ladders” model, they argue, both encourages analysts and observers to “pay attention to the whole ‘board game’ or model” and “invites attention to the role of policies and institutional actors in precipitating movement along or across tracks” between more or less precarity and the nature of pathways in between the poles of non-status and full citizen. Looking at the actions of policy-makers is crucial, they argue. This is because “[p]olicy changes may redraw the boundaries of immigration categories and change the

rights associated with categories” (Goldring and Landolt 2012, 8). And as noted above and is discussed below, policy changes under the Conservatives were frequent and wide-reaching.

Local and Global Dynamics of Inequality: Strong State for Employer Access to Workers, Weak State for Migrant Worker Protection and a “Labour Shortage” Ideology

As has always been the case, (im)migration policy in Canada features both important local and global dimensions and social relations. Like acquiescence to neoconservative foreign policy discussed in chapter four, and can be seen in the case of refugee policies discussed earlier in this chapter, there are also global dimensions to what “ethnic,” immigrant and of course all voters are being asked to subscribe or acquiesce to as part of the Conservatives’ (or indeed any other) political project.

The Conservatives redrawing of (im)migration boundaries and categories towards temporariness and precarity form part of a shift in Western states that Dauvergne notes has been “most overt” in Canada, citing data since 2006. Dauvergne argues that such a shift marks the “end of settler societies” of permanent settlement as a dominant paradigm and includes a shift to temporary foreign worker programs that undermine the rights of migrants, particularly racialized persons from the Global South (2016, 126–30) in the Canadian context.

Migrants coming to Canada through these programs face severe structural limitations to asserting their labour rights in the form of precarious migration status, frequently poor working conditions, an inability to change employers and pressures to avoid challenging such structures in order to avoid facing potential job loss and deportation. As both the Canadian Council for Refugees and Fay Faraday have argued, Canadian law *constructs* these migrant workers’ insecurity by tying many migrant workers to one employer and bringing them in under temporary rather than permanent status. Such status substantially increases the chance for and actual cases of abuse and even human trafficking (2012; Canadian Council for Refugees 2012). Those

employed in the “low skill” categories of work often have no pathway to permanent residency and ultimately citizenship, while the pathways towards stable settlement are also precarious for those in “higher skilled” categories.

This growth in the TFWP represented a significant shift of power from labour to capital within Canada. Developments in this policy field reflected the realities of the Conservative political project and who it benefited. The Conservatives’ coalition was not just its neoconservative base, but also businesses that agitated for and who could exploit the expansion of the temporary foreign program. Such policies shifts reinforced and strengthened the power of capital relative to labour of all types, which is already strong in both a direct and structural sense (Gill and Law 2003)- the generally preferred type of power shift under neoconservative governance. From early in their term and office and as long as they could before generating unbearable public scrutiny the Conservatives conducted a “silent revolution” (Flecker 2015) with respect to the temporary foreign worker program, resulting in its massive expansion. These developments formed part of an overall low wage agenda in the Canadian context that saw tightening of employment insurance eligibility, raising of the retirement age and an increased ability for employers to be able to import those whose insecurity Canadian law constructs from all over the world. Citing the Conservatives’ 2007 budget plan, Flecker notes and cites that “After forming a minority government in 2006, Prime Minister Harper boasted his intention was ‘to create the best educated, most skilled, and most *flexible* workforce in the world’ (emphasis added)” (Flecker 2015, 130).

As part of this strategy growing numbers of people came to live in Canada with (im)migration statuses that offered them less than a secure existence despite contributing to Canada in homes, workplaces and communities. These general dynamics are certainly not completely unique to the Conservatives (see Sharma 2006, for example), but the Conservatives

entrenched and expanded them greatly while in office. In some categories- where workers experience the least security due to a prevalence of difficult working conditions and language barriers- the increases in those categorized as temporary foreign workers increased exponentially. Growth was particularly strong in purported “low-skill” categories that have no access to permanent residency (Hennebry 2011; 2012, 5), as seen in table 7.3.

Table 7.4: Data on Temporary Foreign Workers in Canada, 2006-2012

Temporary Foreign Workers	2006	2012	% change 2012 vs. 2006
Present on Canadian Soil December 1st	160,743	338,221	110.4%
Present Dec 1, “Low skill pilot program”	2,277	30,267	1229.2%
Present at some point during year	255,231	491,157	92.4%
Entries into Canada	138,450	213,573	54.3%

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada “Facts and Figures” 2012

Data from 2012 are used here for more ready historical comparison and for including a more inclusive definition of “temporary foreign worker.” Amidst controversies over the program the government changed its calculation and presentation data on the temporary foreign worker program in 2014, making it harder to provide program-wide totals. Many workers on temporary work permits are now listed under the newer umbrella category of “International Mobility Program” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2014b, 6). Flecker argues the newer presentation of figures, which came amidst public pressure to reform the program were designed to lower the numbers in the officially titled “Temporary Foreign Worker program” by taking thousands of people with temporary status out of the category. This effort, he argues, entails “sleight of hand and categorical nuance” which “allows the Conservative government to disingenuously sidestep the very real criticism of the size of the program” (2015, 139). Faraday notes the changes greatly complicate comparisons over time, underestimate yearly totals by shifting their base to a less

busy period in the calendar year and points out that there are vulnerable workers under *both* broad government categories of migration (Faraday 2016, 14–16). Mertins-Kirkwood (2015) notes that employment under the “International Mobility Program label created in June 2014” (150), which had been “deliberately and systematically expanded” (154) under the Harper government more than tripled from 2006, from 86,000 to 260,000 (156), part of an overall increase of migrant labour in Canada doubling from 1 to 2 per cent of the overall workforce in Canada from when Harper was first elected to 2015.

As Flecker notes, the government moved quickly in its first budget to expand the temporary foreign worker program and would continue to do so in the ensuing years. He highlights how “[w]ith a dozen key words, buried in the 477-page omnibus budget plan of 2007,” the Conservative government “gave the green light” to expand the program, as the government inserted into the omnibus bill language stating that “Employers may recruit workers for *any* legally recognized occupation from *any* country” (Flecker 2015, 130 emphasis added). Effectively, the Canadian labour market was being made a global one. The changes the Conservatives made represented a “profound merger of immigration and labour market policies” that “did send a clear message to employers and labour brokers that a friendly federal government was in town, willing to facilitate access to an international labour pool for every single job in the country under the TFWP” (Flecker 2015, 131).

In addition to the human rights and labour exploitation endemic to such forms of societal membership, particularly controversial were 2012 government regulations allowing employers to pay those constructed as “foreign workers” five percent less than domestic workers in high skill positions, and fifteen per cent less in lower skilled occupations compared to local labour markets, changes that the government would later be forced to reverse (Flecker 2015, 136). The government also committed itself to making the program respond rapidly to employers’ concerns

of asserted labour shortages, to expand the online application system for such workers and produce guides on how to easily use the system (Flecker 2015, 130). Few resources, in sharp contrast to the tens of millions of dollars devoted to expanding access for employers to the program went to enforcement of the rules of the program or labour standards.⁴⁵ This facilitative mindset greatly strengthened the hands of employers relative to workers.

Reflecting upon the 2008 Conservatives budget implementation bill, the lack of any caps on the temporary foreign worker program and a 122 per cent increase in employer demand for workers through the program, immigration specialist Jenna Hennebry noted in her parliamentary committee testimony that "Instead of working on the many problems in the program, the money has basically been allocated to assist Service Canada and to assist employers in obtaining foreign workers" (Berthiaume 2008a). She noted that such a commitment to serving employers and processing temporary foreign worker applications contrasted greatly with a comparatively weak commitment to addressing immigrant application backlogs and other systemic challenges. The sum of Conservatives' changes, she argued, "encourages a more employer-driven immigration system, putting, as I would say, nation building in the hands of the private sector, not

⁴⁵ Flecker argues that "Through the transformation, there was little concern on the government's part for workers' rights or employment standards. Not only were employers soon benefiting from a near doubling of the number of temporary permits that were granted between 2006 and 2013, they were also encouraged to use migrant labour in every occupational sector. Employers could offer lower wage rates, and this led to across-the-board wage suppression. Employers were also given unprecedented influence in determining who became a permanent resident and, ultimately, a citizen. The power granted to the corporate sector during this time frame was significant. By 2014, numerous cases of exploitation and widespread abuse of migrant workers had become increasingly commonplace and impossible to ignore" (Flecker 2015, 130).

He illustrates these points, noting that "In Budget 2007, the Conservative government allocated \$50.5 million to support the TFWP. A former director of the TFWP unit revealed that less than 2% of this money was earmarked for compliance measures. This meager percentage was allocated to the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to provide security clearance processing of temporary workers—not to monitor or enforce labour standards. No budget funds were allocated to ensure the veracity of employment contracts. In fact, no formal monitoring of employers using the TFWP occurred until 2009. Even then, these initiatives were voluntary and limited to employers who consented after their work permits had been issued" (Flecker 2015, 131).

governments and democratically elected officials" (Berthiaume 2008a). However warnings about the effects of their policies from civil society voices were ignored.

While employer groups such as the Canadian Federation for Independent Business and British Columbia Chamber of Commerce strongly favoured the changes in the budget implementation bill that saw the government spend more than a million dollars to advertise it in the "ethnic media" before it was even passed, members of the legal community expressed concern for the lack of popular input into potential policy changes. Canadian Bar Association treasurer Stephen Green described the government's changes being that "perhaps one of the most dangerous things is the ability of people to lobby the government in power at the time with respect to the manner of developing and issuing instructions" (Berthiaume 2008b).

The powers to make such changes were largely tucked away in omnibus budget bills, reflecting the decline of democracy and parliament cited earlier in this chapter. The Conservatives used their pre-existing and enhanced powers to greatly expand the temporary foreign worker program through budget bill changes made with little debate. Rather than doing so through bills with an announced purpose, as Karl Flecker has noted, the Harper Conservatives "purposefully expanded the [temporary foreign worker program] to epic proportions with incremental and silent administrative and policy changes," shifting Canada towards a program that favoured a "disposable workforce" (2015, 130).

Reflecting Poulantzas' notion of the strengthening-weakening of the state, whereby some elements and structures of the state are enhanced and others are weakened or left comparatively underdeveloped, the Conservatives expansion of the temporary foreign worker program saw miniscule resources devoted to the oversight of the program concerning working conditions, either before or after wide public backlash to the program beginning in 2009. This dynamic

remained despite rampant findings of non-compliance with labour and program regulations amongst companies which were demonstrated in provincial inspections (Flecker 2015, 136).

This represented a stark contrast with the resources allocated by the Conservatives to the realms of border security, for deportations, against asylum seekers and to fight the asserted problem of citizenship fraud (Alboim and Cohl 2012, 65–66; Faraday 2016, 27–28).

Until major controversies erupted, the Conservatives expressed little desire to implement changes to benefit workers coming to Canada through these programs. However the backlash to some of their measures associated with the temporary foreign worker program saw the need for discursive shifts and flexibility in their authoritarian populist project. Unfortunately, most of the “integrity” measures they implemented to respond to this backlash ended up being on the backs of (im)migrants and refugees rather than employers and obscured rather than clarified the realities of the social relations being advanced. As seen above, some limited pathways to permanent residence were opened to those entering in the “highly skilled” categories in place of those who could arrive directly as permanent residents in the economic class category, but there was nowhere near a matching commitment of effort to permit those coming to Canada as workers to ultimately become permanent residents and ultimately citizens. In fact, as has been seen, citizenship became more difficult to maintain.

Instead of policies and discourses to encourage integration and belonging, facile nationalism and Canadian “common sense” would play a significant role throughout the government’s approach to these programs. The Harper government’s first Immigration Minister, Monte Solberg invoked nostalgia for coffee giant Tim Hortons at the same time as raising alarm over unfilled positions in 2007 when he joked that “‘Help Wanted’ signs are everywhere. When it starts to affect our ability to go to Tim Hortons and get a double-double, it ceases to be a laughing matter” (Flecker 2015, 129).

This approach included then-Minister Kenney engaging in a joint twitter “chat” with his allies in the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), one of the most vociferous proponents of the temporary foreign worker program and critics of the work ethic of Canadian workers with respect to low paid positions (Goar 2014b). In their joint August 2013 “chat” they pressed for greater access to labour through the temporary foreign worker program while complaining about labour shortages whose existence multiple studies would question (Canadian Press 2013; CBC News 2013b; Alberta Federation of Labour 2013).

Changes were put forth by the Conservatives not with independent statistical evidence of labour shortages, but rather a labour shortage ideology and discourse on the part of the government and employer associations (Alberta Federation of Labour 2013; Collins 2008) that would be strongly criticized and subsequently debunked. Later in their mandate the Conservative government faced further criticism from civil society groups and contestation from the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) over their assertions of labour shortages due to their over-reliance on volatile data from online classified site Kijiji, an unreliable data set whose problematic inclusion the PBO stated could fully accounted for the government’s asserted increase in job vacancies (Curry and Grant 2014). The Conservatives had been working with business allies to both create alarm about a problem being greatly overstated, and to promote problematic social relations to resolve them.

Rejecting Reforms: Defending Exploitation and Impeding Progressive Policy Change

While under a Conservative minority government, the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration issued a major report and recommendations in 2009 on *Temporary Foreign Workers and Non-Status Workers* (Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration 2009). The all-party committee recommended significant structural changes to the program. The committee

proposed providing pathways to permanent residence for all temporary foreign workers (recommendations three and six). It also recommended the institution of an advisory board and a means for stakeholders to provide input to the program, including identifying labour market shortages in a more credible manner than basing them solely on employer input (recommendations two and nine to twelve). The report also called for workers to be able to be accompanied by their immediate family members while they worked in Canada, who should receive open work permits in order to avoid family separation. The goals of such reforms would be to put workers in “low skill” positions on more even footing with those in “high skill” occupations and reduce some of the clearest factors leading to migrant worker exploitation and insecurity. Overall, they were designed to make workers more economically and socially free and secure and to have a pathway to the freedoms professed to be inherent to liberal democracies

However Conservative members of the committee’s dissenting report and the government’s official response either rejected these and other recommendations or avoided dealing with them substantively (Government of Canada 2009; Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration 2009, 75–76). The government itself additionally- and seemingly pre-emptively- ruled out the prospect of regularizing the status of Canada’s undocumented population, despite the committee having not identified a consensus to call for a regularization campaign nor having made such a recommendation (Government of Canada 2009). The Conservatives pre-empted *even the emergence* of such a demand. Instead they essentially ignored the recommendations for reforms, re-emphasized their differentiation between “low” and “high” skilled workers in justifying the former’s lack of opportunities to become permanent residents and pointed favourably to the meagre pathways to permanent residency which existed through the small Canadian Experience Program and Provincial Nominee Programs. The government defended the existing governance and approach to the program, arguing that “that efficient

partnerships and consultation channels already exist” in rejecting calls for more meaningful civil society input into the program. Instead, Ministers would closely guard the powers that had been further distanced from parliament and placed in their hands through omnibus budget bills.

The neoliberal ideology at play of facilitating business access to workers from abroad and a lack of interest in progressive civil society participation and input into the program was more overtly expressed by dissenting committee member Rick Dykstra, then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration who expressed in his dissenting report that there should be no “disincentives” to firms using the program through higher fees, since “a tax is a tax, even when it’s mislabeled a fee,” nor should non-governmental organizations concerned with labour rights be granted “special status” to help educate workers about their rights. Overall, the greatest concern of the Conservative Party seemed to be to avoid “creat[ing] roles for the government which we do not believe that it would fulfill effectively, hinder the ability of reasonable firms to conduct their business, empower an undefined set of groups . . .” (Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration 2009, 75–76). Rather than bring in positive structural reforms, the party continued to facilitate access to unfree workers in precarious positions. The party’s pro-business agenda would continue in this realm, and the government proceeded to continue to grow the program until public anger with the program grew to unmanageable proportions.

The Conservatives continued to grow the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and implement employer-friendly reforms until widespread opposition grew as a result of several years of resistance and activism from migrant workers, unions and their allies. As Flecker notes, “The courage of migrant workers, their allies, investigative journalists, and some unions in persistently exposing the realities of these policy choices can be credited for increased public awareness of the ugly side of temporary migration schemes” (Flecker 2015, 144). These actors

published several reports based on observations, interviews and access to information requests and alerted the media to abuses within the program and to practices designed to replace Canadian workers with temporary workers that could be paid less. Indicative of government inaction in terms of enforcement of labour rules and punishing abuses by firms, the “Ineligible Employers” list of companies found to have misused the Temporary Foreign Worker Program or mistreated their workers announced by the government in 2009 and only implemented in 2011 did not contain a single name for several years, until late 2014 (Government of Canada 2013; Flecker 2015, 134).

Later, as outrage grew over the expansion of the temporary foreign worker program amidst stories of exploitation and outsourcing of jobs associated with the program became more public it was recognized by pollsters and conservative columnists that such controversies posed a significant threat to the “Tory Brand” of being capable economic managers focused on jobs and employment whose policies are to benefit the middle class (Shane 2013). Thus as the Conservatives’ support of the expansion of the program became public amid controversies such as Royal Bank workers having to train their own replacements (Mehta 2013) and HD Mining company requiring Mandarin as a language of work in British Columbia (Nuttall 2013)- clearly cases designed to undercut the employment prospects of Canadian workers and to convert to a lower paid, more exploitable workforce- the party had to shift its populism on the fly.

Misleading “Canadians First” and Outreach Rhetoric amidst the Backlash to the Conservatives’ Expansion of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program

As Nerenberg has noted, the Conservatives had a “double message” concerning this policy field. On the one hand the Prime Minister and Minister Kenney reassured Canadians that the Conservative government did not seek to depress wages, while on the other its own “hand picked” Red Tape Reduction Commission recommended- and the Human Resource Ministry

followed- in making it easier to hire such workers from abroad on temporary status (Nerenberg 2013). Responding to such concerns, after expanding the program through less than transparent budget omnibus bills Prime Minister Harper had the audacity to lay the blame for the explosion in the number of migrant workers in precarious status and abuse of the program at the feet of the federal bureaucracy, despite it being their own governments' legislation and regulations that helped lead to the growth of the program's use (Press Progress 2014).

Demonstrating the flexibility of right authoritarian populism- or perhaps rather the hypocrisies of Conservative efforts to juggle its neoliberal contradictions- in the face of a backlash against them for having grown the program considerably with little oversight the Conservatives pivoted to obscuring the data surrounding the program by recategorizing migrant labour streams (Flecker 2015, 139; Faraday 2016, 14–16) and presenting themselves and their rushed reforms as *defending* Canadian workers against what they suddenly proclaimed to be abusers of the temporary foreign worker program (Stanford 2014; Giovannetti and Curry 2014).

As Flecker notes in his examination of the Conservative government on this file, noting the dynamics around the program and public opinion in late 2014,

By this point seven in 10 Canadians thought the TFWP was being abused by the employers who weren't doing enough to hire Canadians. Prime Minister Harper and Minister Kenney, the key government spokesperson on this file, were quick to take political advantage of the perceived culprit. From June to October 2014, the Harper government aggressively stepped up its accusations against employers as the source of the TFWP problems. A culpable and convenient scapegoat deflected what nearly a decade of Conservative government policy had created with its "flexible" labour force agenda. The government had one more strategy left to play. It would roll out another set of extensive reforms targeting employers as the culpable stakeholder, while repeatedly offering the specious commitment that Canadians would get first crack at available jobs.

(Flecker 2015, 137–38).

Despite the government's own changes and approach having aggressively aided in the vast expansion of the program, the government argued in its announced changes entitled "Putting Canadians First" that

... the TFWP is no longer being used as it was intended to be used — as a last and limited resort to allow employers to bring foreign workers to Canada on a temporary basis to fill jobs for which qualified Canadians are not available. Reforms are needed to end the growing practice of employers building their business model on access to the TFWP."

(Employment and Social Development Canada 2015, 10).

Prime Minister Harper expressed similar themes in an interview with various "ethnic media" outlets in British Columbia months before the 2015 Federal Election, although his rhetoric contradicted the exploitative reforms to the program his government (Faraday 2012; 2016) had enacted:

Let me be very blunt about this. Several years ago, before we took office, [the TFW] programs were expanded, and before this government took office and since, those programs have grown in the last decade and a half very dramatically, and largely because I think they existed and the bureaucracy worked to really adapt to the needs of companies.

But what did we see? We saw numerous examples of abuse of this program, outright abuse. Companies importing workers for the sole purpose of paying less than the prevailing wage; companies importing workers for the purpose of permanently moving the jobs offshore to other countries; companies bringing in foreign workforces with the intention of never having them be permanent and moving the whole workforce back to another country at the end of a job...

We have seen very blatant examples of companies using this in ways that were not in the interest of Canadians.

That kind of abuse cannot go on.

There must be plans for companies to transition to a permanent workforce. What I say is if you really need temporary workers permanently, then that means we need permanent workers who become Canadian. And they have a right to stay here, and they have a right to bargain with their employer, and they have a right to be treated fairly, and they have a right not to be sent back to where they came from the first time they don't like something."

(Stephen Harper quoted in O'Neil 2014; Press Progress 2014)

What is perhaps remarkable is that Harper's "blunt" words demonstrated an understanding of many of the problematic structural elements of the programs. However, similar to their approach in many policy fields, the Conservatives' targeted messages towards "ethnic media" and of "ethnic outreach" contrasted greatly with the substantively regressive social relations of the policies they pursued, to the detriment of migrants and immigrant communities. Contrary to Harper's rhetoric meant to portray himself as a defender of migrant workers and immigrants, as has been seen the government had facilitated the ease with which employers could bring in temporary workers from abroad, and with their reforms disadvantaged migrant workers, even capping the length of time some of those workers could be employed rather than transitioning them to permanent residence and offering a pathway to citizenship.

Unfortunately, "[w]hen reforms had to be announced, they were nothing more than window dressing hung with political opportunism" (Flecker 2015, 144). The one program for "low skill" workers that did have a reliable path to permanent residency and citizenship, the Live-in-Caregiver program (LCP), saw that path eroded by the Conservatives through Ministerial instruction rather than more accountable regulations or legislation (Faraday 2016, 34–38) amidst a discourse "reminiscent of the discourse of 'bogus refugees' and 'bogus marriages,'" by then Human Resources Minister Jason Kenney, who asserted "that the Filipino community was abusing the LCP as a family reunification strategy and that most Filipino caregivers were in fact working for family members," contrary to existing academic research (Faraday 2016, 57). Late 2014 changes such as the implementation of a "four in four out" rule for many migrant workers capped their time working in Canada at four years rather than facilitating access to permanent residence and full citizenship. This change, along with work permits limited to one year were likely to greatly increase Canada's population of undocumented migrant workers by increasing

their chances to fall out of status during these four years, and to do the same to those that would not want to leave Canada after investing years of their lives and significant financial resources to come and work here and become part of communities. It was expected that those first affected by the since reversed four-in/four-out rule numbered in the range of 70,000 people, and would have grown over time (Flecker 2015, 134, 140).⁴⁶ For most migrant workers there was no door to joining the “Canadian family” the Conservatives frequently referred to in their citizenship discourses, with seemingly a growing list of othered target groups to be excluded.

In the 2015 election the Conservatives campaigned on “Canada-first” rhetoric, claiming that one of their accomplishments was “Reforming the Temporary Foreign Worker Program to prevent abuses, and ensure that Canadians always get the first chance at available jobs” (Conservative Party of Canada 2015, 33), glossing over the fact they had generated many of the conditions requiring repair. Thus rather than a “populist paradox” between its base and new Canadians (Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013), while constructing a “minimum winning coalition” one of the tensions the Conservatives attempted to manage was that between forces of nativism and capital within its own constituency. This occurred simultaneously to business groups lobbying and often achieving unfettered access to temporary foreign workers while the Conservatives and their civil society allies scare mongered about dangerous and illegitimate foreigners and undocumented persons. Not surprisingly under such conditions, citizen workers became agitated concerning real and perceived threats to their job security. Unfortunately it is not every citizen that will conclude that the larger struggle is one between workers more broadly and a government highly disposed to employer interests rather than one between domestic and “foreign” workers (Hussan and Ramsaroop 2013). As has been seen,

⁴⁶ This change was reversed by the subsequent Liberal government (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016c; CBC News 2016)

Canada's settler colonial state sets the terms of membership of many entering and labouring in Canada on highly disadvantageous terms.

Such dynamics make the terrain of struggle within Canada's settler colonial society highly complex, operating on local, national and global dimensions. In addition to ongoing settler-colonial relations with the nation's Indigenous peoples, the Conservatives sought to discipline progressive and critical civil society voices within Canada and imposed restrictive policies upon many (im)migrants' ability to achieve stable status or reunite with their families. They also sought to make racialized migrant labourers available at comparatively lower cost to Canadian employers. Thus the Conservatives' more creative and enticing - yet authoritarian- discourses concerning immigration were and continue to attempt to paper over a mountain of contradictions- though consistency is not necessarily a mandatory ingredient for political success.

Conservative populist discourses of acting in the interests of "ordinary people" foundered against the reality of suiting the needs of business at the expense of labour and other human rights for many on Canadian soil (Nakache and Kinoshita 2010). As Shields and Türegün note in a prominent summary of research related to settlement and integration in Canada covering the years 2009-2013, "While being transformed into a mainstay of the labour force, migrant workers have extremely limited options for permanent residence and thus citizenship. The end result may be the breakdown of the traditional migration-citizenship nexus and the fraying of immigration as a nation-building project (Alboim and Cohl 2012; CCR 2010; Goldring 2010; Lowe 2010; Siemiatycki 2010)" (Shields and Türegün 2014, 15-16).

Conclusion to Chapter 7

The Conservative decade in citizenship and immigration witnessed a remarkable decline in democratic procedures and social relations amidst their "moment of authoritarian populism" (Hall

1987, 20). While the Conservatives maintained similar total numbers of annual permanent immigrants to Canada to their Liberal predecessors, there were major qualitative and quantitative changes within these totals and the overall politics of citizenship and immigration that bely appearances of continuity. These were driven by the strong mix of neoconservative and neoliberal impulses present in the new Conservative Party.

As noted in chapter four, in the words of Tom Flanagan the Conservatives' "minimum winning coalition" of just under forty per cent support was "ideal" in its ability to "exclude outsiders" and "reward insiders." As can be seen in this chapter, their ultimate societal outsiders appear to be refugee claimants for whom not even permanent residence offered a full respite from intensified state hostility, and the vastly increased numbers of migrant workers present in Canada with no or unlikely pathways to permanent residence and citizenship. Thousands were to be forced to leave Canada despite years of contribution to society under the Conservatives' "four and four" rule as the government reacted to the backlash against their migrant worker policies. For those who were offered a pathway to permanent residence, "two-step" immigration frequently replaced rather than was made additional to spots of permanent residence upon arrival despite all such migrants and immigrants being part of Canadian society.

The fusion of neoliberalism and neoconservatism in the party's core exclusionary orientations frequently trumped more generous and inclusive policies that would have had the added benefit of being more politically palatable. Whereas an early promise and act of the Conservatives was to reduce the right of landing fee as part of their outreach strategy, for example, later in their term they greatly increased the costs and complexity of acquiring citizenship and to reunify families. As a result take-up of citizenship declined as did overall family class immigration. Belying their outreach efforts, within the politics, project and regressive social relations of *Kenneyism* and neoconservative multiculturalism Canada's settler

colonial state set the terms of membership of many entering and labouring in Canada on increasingly disadvantageous terms.

Late in their term, when faced with political backlash to the social relations of inequality they had promoted over the protests of knowledgeable civil society actors, the Conservatives reverted to a nativist discourse of Canadians first and engaged in misleading rhetoric about their record and policy developments concerning the temporary foreign worker program with journalists serving potential “ethnic” and immigrant voters as well as in their overall platform.

As seen in prior chapters, those who managed to obtain citizenship were invited to join the exalted subjects of the Conservative coalition on neoconservative disciplinary terms. To return to the categories employed by Satzewich cited at the beginning of this chapter, employment freedoms and political rights were made more difficult to obtain and relations of unfreedom in both realms intensified. This was particularly given the explosion in the size of Canada’s temporary foreign worker programs.

It can be seen that the Conservatives’ discourses of fraud, immigration abuse and militarism discussed in the last chapter obscured and helped intensify rather than improve such realities. This was particularly the case when such labour market policies were grouped with a raising of the retirement age and toughening of employment insurance eligibility- all of which point to a conscious strategy of labour market flexibilization that negatively impacted migrant workers, permanent residents and citizens. With the 2019 Federal election fast approaching, it remains to be seen if the Conservatives will offer a markedly different set of policies and discourses to the electorate, or if a markedly different competing hegemonic project of citizenship, immigration and national identity will emerge in the medium to long term.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction to Chapter 8

“Canadians and Canadians alone should make decisions on who comes into our country, and under what circumstances. Not the U.N.”

– Andrew Scheer

Justin Trudeau is planning to sign Canada onto the United Nations Global Compact for Migration, *an effort to set international standards and responsibilities around migration.*

Andrew Scheer opposes signing on to this international agreement, because Canada must be in control of our borders and have full autonomy over who enters our country – *not some foreign entity that cannot be held accountable by the Canadian people.*

A Conservative government under Andrew Scheer’s leadership **would immediately withdraw Canada from this Global Compact on Migration.**

The UN Global Compact even contains troubling language around “sensitizing and educating” journalists on how they should report about immigration.

Canadian journalists should be free to scrutinize the government on immigration policy **without influence.**

It is unacceptable that Justin Trudeau wants to give up Canadian sovereignty to an unelected international body!

Add your name if you want Canada to remain in control of our migration system

(Party Website. Conservative Party of Canada 2018a. Emphases in original)

“Sadly, under Justin Trudeau, a record-high number of Canadians believe that immigration should be reduced. Worse, Canadians have lost faith in the fairness of our system. They now question the integrity of our borders. And they’re less confident about newcomers’ ability to integrate fully and contribute to our shared prosperity . . .

Among the people I hear from most often on this point are new Canadians themselves. People who have played by the rules and arrived in Canada fair and square. They are the most offended at Trudeau’s status-quo, where some are able to jump queues, exploit loopholes, and skip the line. And like you, Conservatives have questioned the current government’s ability to preserve the integrity of our immigration system. Now Justin Trudeau and his ministers

responded how they always do when confronted with criticism – with more rhetoric and personal attacks . . .

. . . , before I move on to what a new Conservative government will do to renew faith in our immigration system, I'd like to make something absolutely crystal clear.

What I'm about to say, I have said many times before. There is absolutely no room in a peaceful and free country like Canada for intolerance, racism, and extremism of any kind.

And the Conservative Party of Canada will always make that absolutely clear. This goes to one of my most deeply held personal convictions. I believe that we are all children of God. And therefore, there can be no inferiority amongst human beings. And that equal and infinite value exists in each and every one of us. And I find the notion that one's race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation would make anyone in any way superior or inferior to anybody else absolutely repugnant. And if there's anyone who disagrees with that, there's the door. You are not welcome here . . .

As Prime Minister, my government will restore fairness, order, and compassion to the immigration system . . .”

- Conservative Party of Canada Leader Andrew Scheer's "My Vision for Canada: Unity in Diversity Speech on Immigration, May 29, 2019 (Scheer 2019)

In the years since their 2015 defeat, the Conservatives have struggled to balance or reconcile discourses and practices of exclusion with attempts to regain a minimum winning coalition, though the latter effort is taking greater shape with the approaching 2019 Federal election. The excerpts above, from the Conservative Party of Canada website in 2018 concerning the Global Compact for Migration and Andrew Scheer's May 2019 "Vision" speech on immigration are reflective of official party discourses of immigration and multiculturalism since 2015 and moving towards the 2019 federal election.

The first selection, and other discourses since the Conservative Party leadership contest to replace Stephen Harper have been marked by authoritarian populist discourses and dog whistles to the far right. These have included alarmist statements designed to generate outrage concerning

refugee claimants crossing into Canada from the United States and conspiratorial tones and insinuations over the 2018 Global Compact for Migration, which Canada signed but other conservative and far right governments refused to join or withdrew from. It is the type of rhetoric that ignores the causes of migration and seeks to shift Canadian common sense attitudes concerning migrants and refugees rightward while providing material for fundraising appeals to the party's base.

Such a discourse appeals to and reinforces their relationship with much of their electoral base, including sections of the audience for Rebel Media and Canada's incarnation of "Yellow Vest" protesters, whose far right voices the party has helped to amplify. Canada's "Yellow Vest" protesters tie xenophobic themes to concerns over pipelines and a hatred of Justin Trudeau that the party helps to feed (Bell 2019).⁴⁷ Such developments are reminiscent of the organic ties between the Conservative Party and the former Sun News Network, which also engaged in highly alarmist rhetoric concerning immigration and refugees. This ideological work is strengthened and reinforced in a period where the far right has grown globally and become more comfortable both in both expressing its xenophobia more publicly and in overt racist acts in North America, in part inspired by the election and discourses of Donald Trump.

The second excerpt, from what was touted as a major late May 2019 "Vision for Canada" speech on immigration indicates that some of these discourses are likely to be at least partly reined in by party leadership in order to offer a more palatable version of neoconservative multiculturalism to the electorate during the 2019 Federal election. It demonstrates awareness of their political vulnerabilities as a result of their discourses and the racialized and ethnicized

⁴⁷ For an election-related example of the Conservatives feeding hate for Trudeau one can consult an accessible collection of misleading and alarmist Conservative claims on their "Not as Advertized" election-related website. While factual critiques of any government's record are expected, it includes multiple misleading claims, including that a single Trudeau tweet was the cause of the surge of refugee claimants from the United States and "is costing taxpayers \$1.1 billion" and that he tried to "rig the electoral system" (Conservative Party of Canada 2019a).

voters they need to court as the party seeks to inoculate itself against charges of racism. Thus while xenophobic accusations of a “loss of integrity” of the border invoking “queue jumpers” and “line skippers” are employed to denigrate refugee claimants fleeing Trump’s America, so is more xenophilic language.

While Scheer is a less eloquent spokesperson than Kenney in these fields, the attempted hegemonic theme of “Unity in Diversity” is meant to appeal to potential immigrant and “ethnic” voters, as well as those parts of the electorate who might consider voting Conservative but have a lower tolerance for overt racism than many members of the party’s base. The speech recycles earlier Kenneyist themes of law and order and integrity alongside efforts at outreach. The party’s June statement on Canadian Multiculturalism Day seeks to portray the Conservatives as Canada’s unambiguous party of multiculturalism, invoking Progressive Conservative accomplishments in that realm despite their own rejection of Red Toryism (Conservative Party of Canada 2019b). Thus in late August 2019, it seems most likely that the Conservatives will emphasize outreach to centrist and “ethnic voters” over embracing right wing conspiracy theories as it had often done between the 2015 and 2019 elections. However it is probable that both xenophobic and xenophilic messages will be delivered or at least dog-whistled to different audiences. These are dynamics which will be returned to further below, after summarizing the findings of this dissertation.

Summary of Findings

To return to the politics of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism of the Conservatives under the leadership of Stephen Harper, it has been seen that the Conservative Party and government employed a creative authoritarian populist recipe of Kenneyism and neoconservative multiculturalism to deepen neoliberalism and shift the terms of citizenship, immigration,

multiculturalism and Canadian identity in highly regressive directions for nearly a decade. From an anti-racist political economy perspective, it is evident that Canada's new Conservative Party remained an exclusionary political force whose approach to politics and policy reinforced and further intensified existing social hierarchies between its base of white settler colonial supporters and (im)migrant and "ethnic" Canadians, particularly with their treatment of Muslims, refugees, migrant workers and prospective citizens. In addition to further racializing and (re)ethnicizing Canadian citizenship, their policies and policy-making approach greatly increased the precarity of (im)migrants and refugees as well as reducing the public and parliament's role in making immigration policy. While liberal institutionalist analyses help to demonstrate the need for parties to reach out beyond their traditional bases and consider important elements of the "rules of the game" of electoral competition within which parties operate, they can fail to take important power relations into account.

As Bannerji (2000) has identified, by flattening social relations and underemphasizing power dynamics, "cultural pluralist interpretive discourse hides more than it reveals" (97), while the Canadian nation-state represents a highly challenging set of social relations over which to attempt to exercise hegemony (109-110). Beginning by outlining and considering assessments of the Conservative government and party in the media, civil society documents and academic literatures, this dissertation has insisted on grounding its assessment of the Conservative Party and government in the settler colonial dynamics of Canadian society and the substance of its dominant policy orientations and ideologies in these fields. Any evaluation of the Conservatives' electoral and governing approach – which was praised and/or significantly divorced from its substantive effects in many assessments - must be placed in such a context and foreground their impact on societal membership in Canada. This dissertation has traced how the Conservatives sought to navigate this terrain and advanced such an analysis.

Concurring with some analyses concerning the novelty and creativity of the Conservatives' approach but wishing to pair it critical public policy analysis, this dissertation developed the concepts of *Kenneyism* and *neoconservative multiculturalism* to grasp both the creative outreach *and* disciplinary and exclusionary elements of their approach. Invoking the persona and xenophobic and xenophilic faces of former Minister Jason Kenney in the ministries of citizenship, immigration, multiculturalism and human resources, the notion of Kenneyism builds upon earlier work by Stuart Hall on authoritarian populism and Thatcherism in the context of the rise of neoconservatism in the United Kingdom. These terms were developed in this dissertation to help identify and emphasize the necessary uniqueness of the path taken by Canada's neoconservatives on Canada's settler colonial terrain. Canada's hard right, operating through the Reform and its successor parties needed to learn to operate within a popular consensus and demographic realities working in favour of expansionary immigration policies and a generally positive disposition towards multiculturalism on the part of the wider population. These concepts contribute to the literature by providing further analysis of the creativity and social realities of the Conservatives' political project and the struggle over -- and shifting of -- dominant societal ideas in Canadian partisan politics and their impact on public policy. It is relevant to literatures on political parties, citizenship, immigration, refugee studies and multiculturalism.

Authoritarian populism highlights the anti-democratic nature of the neoconservative political project, both symbolically and in substantive terms. In the Canadian context these have included policy making approaches and policies themselves that make Canada's political system less democratic, as well as authoritarian discourses and symbolic politics that attempt to delegitimize political opposition and social actors. The use of the label of authoritarian populism and questions of democracy in Canada were extended to include state policy choices that resulted

in a decline in the rights, possibilities and security of (im)migrants and refugees in Canada's economic, political and social life.

As the Conservatives were part of a long term trajectory of the neoliberalization of Canadian immigration policies, it was also necessary to consider the dynamics of the interactions between neoliberal and neoconservative politics and policies, and to differentiate the new Conservative Party and government's approach from those of its Progressive Conservative and Liberal predecessors. This dissertation found that while significantly accelerating trends towards neoliberal social relations of immigration and working to establish neoconservative forms of national identity, the Conservatives would and continue to creatively appropriate the legacies of the "Red Tory" Progressive Conservative Party in the service of bolstering their multicultural credentials. However they have done so while rejecting policies that might inject even modest levels of compassion into their approach to refugees, for example, and have further hollowed out any progressive potentials of multiculturalism by attacking any remnants of anti-racist potential.

This dissertation contextualized and sought to understand the Conservative political project by examining its evolution from its Reform and Alliance predecessors. This was done by examining the evolution of party platforms and reflections and writings of key party officials and members of the Conservative government. Considering these materials and relevant secondary literatures, this dissertation traced how the Conservatives' neoconservative predecessor parties had to modify their approach from one of an explicitly neoconservative "invasion from the margin," where the Reform Party had shaken up the Canadian political party system and re-politicized common sense notions concerning immigration and multiculturalism in Canada. These efforts helped shift many elements of Canadian "common sense" to the right, but also limited their growth as a party by troubling much of the electorate whose support they needed to win office. Grasping the realities of Canadian demographics, in the 2000s the Conservatives

increased their efforts to incorporate “ethnic voters” into the Conservative political tent more intensively.

Consequently, the party was forced to reconfigure its discourses, as well as rebrand and discipline the late Reform, Alliance and Conservative Parties to offer a palatable image to new and “ethnic” Canadians in an effort to achieve a “minimum winning coalition” of voters, to employ the words of Tom Flanagan. The Conservatives also needed to make themselves palatable to other socially liberal but economically conservative Canadians -- what some term Blue Liberals -- who do not wish to see themselves as contributing to blatantly exclusionary politics or be associated with racist nationals. Such Canadians needed a more palatable form of conservatism that could still allow them to plausibly appeal to some voters who might define themselves as “sophisticated, urbane and cosmopolitan” through their adherence to state multiculturalism, a dynamic that has also been observed in the British and Australian contexts (Thobani 2007, 153). Thus the evolution of the Conservative Party from its predecessor parties towards a flexible form of *Kenneyism* has been a long term process of reconfiguring the party, constructing a novel form of Canadian nationalism and seeking sufficient numbers of new supporters to win and maintain power.

Kenneyism is in part the story of the creative, temporary construction of a “pillar” of support from “ethnic” voters to replace the potential Quebec pillar, which was proving difficult to manage with its negative reaction to culture program budget cuts and preference for greater benefits from the federal government (Flanagan 2008). The Conservatives developed an authoritarian populist discourse for Canadian conditions that made sympathetic appeals to “hard working” immigrants that was no longer openly antagonistic to significant sectors of the voting population, though still operating within an authoritarian populist imaginary that demonized refugees while appealing to Canadians’ self-image as fair and just, and raising social anxieties

about the security of Canada's borders. The positive face of Kenneyism meant a higher level of sophistication with respect to its outreach efforts, but was accompanied by very negative substantive impacts for many (im)migrants in terms of policy and discourse while they were in power. This was particularly the case for refugees, who were a constant target of authoritarian populist discourses and cruel policies.

Placing discussions of the Conservatives' political project in the context of the politics of multiculturalism in Canada -- one of the country's most significant hegemonic values and common sense ideas -- this dissertation engaged in dialogue with and linked discussions of political parties with critical literatures on citizenship, immigration, multiculturalism, public policy and settler colonialism in Canada. These bodies of knowledge provided important conceptual tools that greatly helped to engage in substantive evaluations of the Conservative record.

The notion of neoconservative multiculturalism advanced in this dissertation reflects that the Conservatives had to construct a novel form of neoconservative settler colonial politics to operate within Canadian common sense notions of diversity and multiculturalism. This was done in part done by a novel mix of xenophobic and xenophilic discourses and politics (Honig 2001) and took advantage of the properties and weaknesses of pre-existing neoliberal multiculturalism, which had devolved into a "Selling Diversity" (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002) or lowest common denominator version (Winter 2014a) by the early 2000s. State multiculturalism's property of what Thobani refers to as the *communalizing power* of the state to help organize and generate "ethnic communities" was in some ways ripe for what Flanagan referred to as the at times top down and "clientelist" nature of "ethnic outreach" (chapter four). The Conservatives engaged in creative and highly disciplinary forms of multicultural politics combining novel forms of xenophilic, xenophobic and clash of civilizations discourses. This was explored through the shifts

and transformations they made in the multiculturalism and citizenship portfolios, where this dissertation sought to provide conceptual and empirical contributions to these literatures.

It was found that the Conservatives had room to manoeuvre to differentiate themselves politically with plausible gestures of modest expense directed at immigrant and “ethnic” Canadians within the prior neoliberal policy directions of Liberal governments, which left considerable space for symbolic changes to send signals that could convey a progressive or more hospitable meaning amidst electoral competition, as discussed in chapter three in particular. While featuring an attempted hegemonic form of politics in their political appeals, neoconservative multiculturalism was of a highly disciplinary construct and was often exclusionary in terms of the acquiescence it demanded to conservative discourses, ideologies, symbolic politics and as well as policies both nationally and globally.

In addition to deepening neoliberal and precarious social relations, upon winning power the Conservatives also engaged to a significant extent in a re-ethnicization of Canadian citizenship and identity. Through their creative project of neoconservative multiculturalism in a settler colonial state the Conservatives embodied and enacted the most vocal and active representation of Canada’s exalted subjects of primarily European origin in order to achieve hegemony - and failing that, attempted to assert disciplinary dominance over racialized and ethnicized others and their political opponents.

Such trends make it less surprising that a 2015 campaign whose prospects were turning dim took on such a negative, divisive tone, for they were rooted in many of the party’s existing policies and discourses. It is misleading at best to call such dynamics an aberration or assert that the party merely “snapped,” as asserted by *Globe and Mail* editorialists cited at the beginning of this dissertation. As noted in the introduction, *Kenneyism*, whatever its namesake’s political talents is not solely or even primarily about the politics of a single Minister in a single

government, but rather the trends of form of politics that can be fairly included under the label in contemporary Canada. *Kenneyism* did not, for example, end in Citizenship and Immigration when the portfolio was handed to Chris Alexander, even if the Conservatives' talking points were communicated in a much less articulate manner. As seen in chapter six, in many ways, their authoritarian populist discourses intensified with Bill C-24, the "Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act." When threatened with electoral defeat the Conservatives reverted more overtly to their divisive base instincts.

Such developments belied the tokenistic "pride in the fact we are a nation of immigrants" discourse (Conservative Party of Canada 2015, 128) and highly optimistic - if not frequently misleading - presentation of their record concerning immigration and related policies. These included their management of the temporary foreign worker program and the extent of protection offered to refugees in Canada that the party included in their 2015 election platform (Conservative Party of Canada 2015, 32–33). Reflecting the party's continued attempt at a hegemonic project, the Conservatives included measures that could be cited when addressing newcomer communities in their platform mixed with positive language concerning immigration. This included low-cost measures such as recognizing cross-cultural "bridge-builders by establishing a new 'Maple Leaf' designation to honour extraordinary Canadians who cultivate these links" between Canada and their country of origin (128), as well as offering more foreign credentials recognition loans to immigrants struggling to have their skills recognized (30). In doing so they sought to provide a plausible narrative of a party celebrating immigration as part of a nation-building project and helping newcomers achieve their professional goals.

At the same time, however, reflective of the Kenneyist project of building a conformist, disciplinary neoconservative multiculturalism the Conservatives doubled down on their re-ethnicization of Canadian citizenship. They included the concept of "strengthening citizenship"

throughout the platform and in seemingly unrelated areas such as their “plan for strong communities” (151), where they once again reasserted their plans to ban face coverings for the citizenship oath (152) as well as their “plan for a more secure Canada” (75-101). That latter plan included their citizenship revocation discourse and policy under a “Combatting jihadi terrorism” section (78). They also promised to bring permanent residents into Canada’s reserve armed forces as part of that plan (95).

Somehow in a platform written under the theme “Protect our Economy” the party also found room to target “brutal practices” “taking place within some cultural communities in Canada” with an RCMP tip line (Conservative Party of Canada 2015, 118)- what became known as the barbaric cultural practices tip line- and continued to employ a language of “bogus refugees” (33). As noted in the introduction, during the campaign Stephen Harper even speculated about a Niqab ban in public service public in a CBC interview (CBC News 2015b) while also citing the sensibilities of “old stock” Canadians to help defend their position on cutting health care to refugee claimants (Gollom 2015). Overtly politicizing and setting their militarist, disciplinary project of Canadian citizenship and nationalism against their electoral opponents they argued that the Liberals and NDP were putting Canada “at Risk,” having “made promises that would hurt communities and set families back,” including “Repealing our important reforms that have strengthened Canadian citizenship and reaffirmed Canadian values” (Conservative Party of Canada 2015, 155). While in office, however, the “Canadian values” they promoted were those of social exclusion, division and the marginalization vulnerable (im)migrants, and refugees.

The Limits to and Continued Strength of Kenneyism and Neoconservative Multiculturalism

While the Conservatives were able to achieve and hold power for over a decade, their political project and approach to citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism faced important limits in its potential to be a hegemonic form of politics or turn the Conservatives into a “natural governing party.” Their policy orientations also faced significant civil society contestations, as well as opposition at times from other levels of government. While described in this dissertation as an attempted hegemonic politics, in its world view and exclusions the Conservatives authoritarian populist project can also be seen to be a *supremacist* project that proved capable of capturing state power for nearly a decade. It may be reinforced by the rising tides of overt white supremacy.

The nature of the Conservative project was reflected in the models employed by Flanagan to describe the party and its overall strategy: first that of a neoconservative “invasion from the margin” from the ideological right and geographical West of Canada, and then an effort to build an exclusionary *minimum* winning coalition rather than an electoral coalition that seeks to generate or concede to more centrist positions. While benefitting from Canada’s first past the post electoral system and divisions amongst more consensus-based parties, it is also a project with significant fragilities and opposition. Even facing a weakened Liberal Party it took several elections for the Conservatives to achieve a majority government, one that achieved less than forty per cent support amongst voters in 2011. However even their minority governments governed aggressively and proved capable, willing and able to use or abuse parliamentary conventions and procedures to keep power and advance their political agenda and its regressive social relations.

As seen in the last chapter, the party's constituency of business support that favours easy access to an exploitable class of temporary foreign workers can clash with the views of its primarily white neoconservative base as well as concerned immigrant and "ethnic" voters and the wider public. The party's other exclusionary policies also generated grassroots and wider political opposition, as might flirtations if not future outright embraces of more far right constituencies or policy positions. While many migrant workers, refugees and others with precarious status or that did not yet have citizenship and were harmed by their policies could not vote them out, others who were related to them or stood in solidarity with them *could* vote or join movements against the government. This was certainly seen in the refugee field with the rise of new groups motivated to oppose specific Conservative policies. As Jackson observed in her dissertation, *Politicizing the White Coat*, in response to the Conservatives' drastic and dramatic cuts to refugee health care, "in an equally dramatic fashion, physicians and the greater healthcare community took to the streets, occupied offices, and interrupted politicians in an effort to restore refugee claimants' access to healthcare" though a nationally unprecedented "physician-led response" (Jackson 2018). The Conservatives' actions in this sphere also led to the founding of the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers (CARL) in 2011, whose battlefronts are apparent on their website's "About" page, which describes that CARL "carries out its work promoting the human rights of refugees in the courts, before parliamentary committees, in the media, among its membership via bi-annual conferences, and elsewhere in the public sphere" (Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers 2019). As noted in the introduction, a wide variety of labour, human rights and migrant rights groups such as the Canadian Council for Refugees, No One is Illegal and many others whose work and public statements are cited in this dissertation would also contest their policies. While highlighting the prominence of such opposition, Simmons

assesses that “efforts at mobilizing policy change ... and the circumstances under which they are successful are poorly understood” and “is a priority research topic” (Simmons 2017, 315).

Some (mostly non-Conservative) provincial governments also opposed or refused to cooperate with federal initiatives, with some stepping in to fund refugee health care until the program was reinstated under the Liberals following the 2015 election. They also generally refused to cooperate with Conservative outcries and demands for action over “birth tourism.” Concerning the latter, where provinces control birth registration, Griffith notes a lesson learned was that in areas of provincial or shared jurisdiction “the provinces provided the most effective brake on anecdote-driven policy given that any workable response required their cooperation. Contrast this to the Citizenship Act changes, where the government had no need to be flexible” (Griffith 2014b).

The Conservatives also faced limitations imposed by the courts concerning following the rule of law in general and as a result of human rights protections in Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms in particular. These were seen with many significant changes they sought to enact concerning the citizenship oath and to refugee policy, for example. As will be discussed below and can be seen in footnotes in the last two chapters, the subsequent Liberal government reversed some Conservative legislation and regulatory changes.

While, as in other fields, the government ignored or even targeted many of its critics (Eliadis 2015), their overall authoritarian populist approach led to exhaustion with their government by many. In the 2015 election, driven in part by what one scholar has described as a case of “social movement electoralism” (Kellogg 2019), a motivated Canadian public, in part educated by activists from below turned out in significantly higher numbers than other recent elections to expel the Conservatives from power. This occurred in an election where refugee policy and discourses concerning citizenship and national identity were prominent themes. The desire of a

majority of Canadians to oust the Conservatives from power saw the coalescing of votes behind the formerly third-place Liberal Party and its promise of “#realchange” and a 7.2 per cent higher turnout in 2015 than in 2011.

Even with their much criticized 2015 campaign resulting in a loss, the Conservative Party still achieved almost 32 per cent of the vote, and won 99 out of 338 seats and the status of the official opposition in the House of Commons, by far the strongest opposition party. The Conservatives achieved only a couple hundred thousand less votes (218,787) than in the 2011 federal election. Neither the highest turnout since the early 1990s nor the collapse of New Democratic Party support will necessarily re-occur. Prime Minister Trudeau’s Liberals have been particularly damaged by the SNC Lavalin scandal.⁴⁸ If the Liberals cannot recover from disappointing much of their base and potentially only short term supporters -- as the party failed to recover from in the late Chretien and Paul Martin years -- a pragmatic *Kenneyist* formula of grafting sufficient levels of support amongst new and “ethnic” Canadians to the party’s seemingly solid thirty per cent base of support may help the Conservatives achieve power again if they can better suppress some of their base instincts. In times of austerity and rising right wing populism, vote splitting between the Liberals and the NDP could conceivably permit even a more Trumpist or overtly Reform-like Conservative Party to achieve a minority government given their seeming floor of thirty per cent support. Their path since 2015 has witnessed many troubling signs for those hoping for inclusive immigration and refugee policies.

⁴⁸ At the time this conclusion is being edited in August, 2019 the Liberals sit in second place in aggregated national opinion polls with 32.6% to the Conservatives’ 33.9% support, but have a 55% chance of winning the most seats (35% chance of a majority) versus the Conservatives 44% chance of winning the most seats (18% chance of a majority) (Grenier 2019).

Reform Redux or Worse? The Underbelly of Canada's Neoconservative Exalted Subjects Re-Exposed

Post-election, freed both from the restraints of government and the discipline required of the garrison party approach to campaigning the party had employed for many years, multiple Conservative leadership candidates such as Kellie Leitch moved in the direction of *Trumpism* through proposals such as “Canadian values testing” and hysteria over irregular border crossings from the United States. This came after a dose of tears from first leadership candidate Leitch (Zimonjic 2016) lamenting the controversial “barbaric cultural practices” tip line proposed by the Conservatives during the 2015 election she helped to announce.

Some candidates also engaged in outright Islamophobia in their reactions to parliamentary motion M-103 in the wake of the Quebec mosque shooting.⁴⁹ Several such leadership candidates condemned the motion (Khalid 2016) in February 2017, including participating in Rebel Media organized events against it (Press Progress 2017). This was before Rebel Media became a pariah in mainstream discourse in the wake of the white supremacist Charlottesville riots of August, 2017 due to its “angry, hate-filled, unapologetic and surprisingly successful ‘Breitbart North’” (Markusoff 2017a) like promotion of far-right discourses and positions. Other candidates advertised on the Rebel media website during the party’s leadership contest (Garossino 2017). Domestic conservative media outlets and think tanks (Gutstein 2014; Azhar Ali Khan 2014) with organic links to the Conservative Party such as the Sun newspaper chain and Rebel Media, as

⁴⁹ M-103 condemned and called for further study to better grasp Islamophobia and racism, which took on even more urgent meaning in the wake of the murder of six Muslims and wounding of many more in a Quebec mosque the previous month on January 29, 2017. Rather than accept that Islamophobia is a significant social issue requiring study, leadership and efforts to combat it, in their dissenting committee report the Conservatives argued against there being “an increasing climate of hate and fear” in Canada and against the use of the term at all by quibbling with its definitions, challenging the existence of systemic racism in Canada and, seeking in the very first recommendation of their dissenting opinion to dilute attention to the issue into wider discussions of “the positive role that religious faith has played in the history of Canada and reaffirming to Canadians that it will continue to be welcomed as a major contributor to the fabric of Canada in the future”(Conservative Party of Canada 2018b).

well as far right social media personalities have been contributing to a fraying of any relatively progressive (im)migration consensus through exclusionary anti-refugee and anti-immigrant discourses. They have been emboldened by right populist movements, governments and politicians in North America and Europe (Schain 2018; Pierce, Bolter, and Selee 2018). Such long-term civil society links between the Conservatives and the mainstream and further right demand further academic research and analysis in both the Canadian and international context.

Well known is that Andrew Sheer's leadership and the Conservatives' 2019 campaign lead Hamish Marshall was formerly a director and service provider to Rebel Media, for example (Craig 2017; Geddes 2017). Rebel Media has served as former Reform Party MP and media personality Ezra Levant's right wing successor project to Canada's failed Sun News Network (nicknamed "Fox News North" for its similarly reactionary tone), whom high level members of the Conservative party had sought to found and bolster (L. Martin 2015). Marshall had also worked in former Prime Minister Harper's office. The outlet was comfortably at home during the Conservatives' 2016 convention, interviewing former Immigration Minister Jason Kenney as had been common at Sun News (Rebel Media 2016), while former Harper communications lead and Sun News Network head Vice Chair Kory Teneycke would serve as an emissary for Levant and Rebel Media for sensitive and tense negotiations with far-right journalists with whom Rebel Media parted ways with in the United Kingdom (Goldsbie 2017). That was before Teneycke become Rob Ford's campaign manager for the 2018 Ontario provincial election and a prominent advisor thereafter (Maher 2019).

It can be seen through the Conservative Party leadership contest and their August 2018 convention that there is a significant appetite within the party and its base for divisive policies concerning "Canadian values" and immigration policy, particularly targeting refugees. Their 2018 convention saw members approve the erosion of birthright citizenship for (im)migrants and

refugees as party policy (Smellie 2018). The departure of nearly victorious 2017 leadership candidate Maxime Bernier after his tweets decrying Canada's "extreme multiculturalism" on the anniversary of the Charlottesville riots also demonstrates that populist politicians on the right in Canada are moving well beyond the bounds of message discipline and party organization previously imposed under Stephen Harper (Flanagan 2013). Such developments, and the increased prominence of far right anti-immigrant protests, a resurgence of white nationalism, and increases in hate crimes and Islamophobia (Meyer 2017; Wilkins-Laflamme 2018) raise the spectre of a return to a period where ethnic pluralism might again be overtly "under siege" in Canada in some quarters, a dynamic not seen since the early 1990s, which was partly linked to the rise of the Reform Party and a challenging global economic context (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 1992).

In contrast to defensive Conservative Party talking points such as those in Andrew Scheer's speech provided at the beginning of this chapter, right wing alarmism and cries of crisis at the border erode support for immigration and refugee protection. It is likely not a coincidence that the recipients of messages such as those above and others invoking an "illegal migrant crisis" and asserting Canada's immigration system is broken (Conservative Party of Canada 2017) from the Conservative website and email lists are by far the least supportive of accepting immigrants amongst Canada's main national parties (T. Wright 2019). In this light it seems unlikely that the party's dog whistle politics and discourses concerning refugees and Muslims will fully wane in the near future.

In June of 2017 social conservative former speaker of the House of Commons Andrew Scheer emerged to win the leadership of Canada's Conservative Party. Younger and seemingly more affable than former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Scheer seems to represent continuity with the Harper legacy with a friendlier face as he was not in cabinet for the party's most

controversial policies and discourses. The party's 2015 defeat and new leader leave the question of the party's long-term approach in these fields open. However while avoiding some of the most troubling rhetoric of his colleagues his leadership campaign highlighted his opposition to M-103 and ran a platform that included a call for Canada to prioritize "real refugees" and promoted a narrative of Christian persecution and exclusion from refugee protection (Username GSHWK 2017) reminiscent of the party's recent problematic discourses in this field and earlier "clash of civilizations" informed discourses.

Since becoming leader Scheer himself, and the Conservative Party Immigration critic Michelle Rempel have continued in the tradition of the party and government's authoritarian populist discourses when it comes to refugee claimants, particularly targeting those coming to Canada from Donald Trump's America (Conservative Party of Canada 2017) . Rather than acknowledge the role of US policy in generating the flows of refugees to Canada, particularly Trump's negative discourses concerning refugees and the end of temporary protections for many who had lived in the US for many years, the Conservatives repeatedly blamed Justin Trudeau's 2017 "welcome to Canada" tweet, referenced below, for the inflow of irregular arrivals.

The Conservatives have sought to mobilize, fundraise and create anxiety concerning the border amongst their base and in potential voters by invoking notions of crisis, a lack of control and dog-whistle appeals, including imagery of a black man crossing the Canada-US border over of a bridge covered with the text of Trudeau's earlier tweet (Canadian Press 2018). These efforts were conducted through party emails, social media and their parliamentary discourse. To attack the government the Conservatives insisted upon using the terminology of illegality and queue-jumping to delegitimize refugee claimants from the US.

Flirting with the far right, they also supported and spoke to the Rebel-media backed United We Roll Convoy to Ottawa that also engaged in border hysteria and racist online social

media dialogues (A. Wright 2019) . Amidst their alarmist rhetoric, the Conservatives implausibly proposed and demanded turning the entire Canada-US border into a port of entry and unlikely changes to the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement to turn refugees back at the border even though Jason Kenney himself had admitted US governments had not been willing to agree to such changes (Markusoff 2017b).

The Conservatives also followed far-right political parties and movements world-wide in condemning the recently negotiated Global Compact on Refugees (Bauder 2018), a loud example of the dog-whistle politics discussed in chapter five. As can be seen in the opening quotation of this chapter, the Conservative Party website and Andrew Scheer particularly cited efforts to promote fact-based discourses concerning migration as a problem, falsely asserting that “**Justin Trudeau wants to give up Canadian sovereignty to an unelected international body!**” (emphasis in original), a demonstrably false proposition as evidenced in the discussion of Liberal immigration policies, below.

Reflective of what might be to come, there have been highly troubling directions from Scheer’s provincial Conservative allies in Ontario, where the provincial Ford government has instituted drastic cuts to legal aid – eliminating provincial funding for such services for immigrants and refugees - and refused to help fund temporary housing for refugee claimants (Abedi 2019). Such cuts are devastating cuts given the much lower success rate for unrepresented refugee claimants at the Immigration and Refugee Board (Rehaag 2011) and potentially point to some of the ways a renewed assault on refugees and their rights might proceed – potentially coordinated from multiple jurisdictions. As noted below, many troubling powers created during the Harper government remain in the federal government’s hands due to a lack of reforms by the Liberals.

Returning to The Kenneyist Path to Achieve Power?

As described in earlier chapters, the Kenneyist formula consists in large part of flattering, plausible appeals towards immigrant and “ethnic” voters alongside exclusionary governing discourses and policies towards refugees and other vulnerable migrants. Interestingly when asked - and despite his own earlier niqab ban in citizenship ceremonies and invocation of “barbaric cultural practices”- Jason Kenney distanced himself from what he termed Leitch’s “slapdash” approach to the politics of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism during the Conservative leadership contest and called for more “nuance and prudence” (Proudfoot 2016). He also called for a more positive overall tone (Iverson 2015b), somewhat ironically given his own authoritarian populist approach while in office. Such a statement is reflective of a more sophisticated approach to balancing neoconservative and neoliberal forms of governance and social exclusion with electoral politics than some of his former colleagues in the party exhibited then and since. Heading towards the 2019 election it is a potential strategy Jason Kenney himself already seems to be itching to pursue, offering to campaign in the “905” or Greater Toronto Area to reach out to the “ethnic voters” the Conservatives once successfully convinced to lend them their support, despite now serving as Premier of Alberta (Ibbitson 2019) .

It remains to be seen overall what path the Conservatives will pursue, but in addition to promoting “order” and “integrity,” as can be seen in the excerpts from Scheer’s “vision” speech on immigration cited at the beginning of this chapter, the Conservatives are attempting to project a more positive political project of “unity in diversity” and distance his party from charges of racism while emphasizing themes of fairness and compassion. This may be reflective of a party seeking to tack closer discursively to the middle of public debate on immigration issues in a bid to once again achieve a minimum winning coalition through a politics of neoconservative

multiculturalism. It is important that the public be reminded of their overall policy record and the implications of policy proposals they may provide, and that such realities not be lost within the horse-race analysis of the coming election campaign.

The Rhetorical Promises and Observed Limits of (Neo)Liberal Multiculturalism

Despite offering substantially different rhetoric, the extent to which the Liberal government elected in 2015 represents a fundamentally different (im)migration present and future for Canada's settler colonial state demands further analysis.

In an inclusionary direction, one could observe a clear shift towards a more inclusive hegemonic discourse of "a Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian" (Meurrens 2016) during the 2015 election to contrast themselves with the militarist, citizenship-stripping approach of the Conservatives, and in some of the important reversals made to citizenship changes under the Harper government (Griffith 2016a). The Liberals also moved the multiculturalism portfolio back to Canadian Heritage from the Citizenship and Immigration ministry where it had become less impactful, a development increasing its prominence that was applauded by at least one former Director General of the portfolio (May 2015). They also increased overall immigration levels and the number of refugees admitted into Canada, as well as ending the Conservatives' policy of "conditional permanent residence" for sponsored spouses discussed in chapters five and seven (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2017b). Notions of the ideal Canadian admitted through Express Entry remained thoroughly neoliberal, but with a greater human capital rather than a directly employer-driven approach.

Perhaps most prominently, the Liberals intentionally foregrounded the significance of refugee policy and refugee protection by renaming the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). In the words of John

McCallum, the government's first immigration minister under Trudeau, with that change "our Prime Minister sent a strong message that refugees are important, that refugees are always welcome in Canada" (McCallum 2015). The resettlement of tens of thousands of Syrian refugees to Canada became what McCallum frequently referred to as a "national project" (McCallum 2015). The government also dropped appeals of court decisions that had found multiple pieces of Conservative legislation targeting refugees to be unconstitutional, and in 2019 finally delisted all countries from the Conservative-implemented "Designated Country of Origin (DCO)" list discussed in the last chapter. Earlier in their term they also lifted the visa requirement on visitors from Mexico, a refugee producing country, though not primarily for humanitarian reasons given trade agreements, tourism and the negative effects such visas had on the Canadian economy and diplomatic relations with that country.

It is difficult to overstate the change in tone and discourse from the prior government that occurred in the first years of the Liberal government, such as Prime Minister Trudeau tweeting in early 2017 "To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcomeToCanada" the day after Donald Trump's attempt to ban immigration from several Muslim countries (Ljunggren and Mehler Paperny 2017). Such language represented a stark difference with the Conservatives' constant, top-down authoritarian populist governing discourses of "queue jumping," "bogus refugees" and insinuations concerning security threats.⁵⁰ Such a shift in tone and the Syrian resettlement effort was a major breath of fresh air in early years of the government, even moreso in coinciding with the beginning of Donald Trump's time in office, which began in 2016. Positive public leadership

⁵⁰ Those discourses were evident not only in examples explored within this dissertation, but also in Conservative Immigration Minister Chris Alexander hanging up on or having highly contentious relations with CBC journalists and other media concerning refugee policy late in the party's term (Lum 2015; Goar 2014a; CBC News 2014).

and discourse is one of the most fundamental contributions high profile politicians can make to progressive change.

Based on their approach to refugees and those that arrived on the MV Ocean and Sun Sea boats off the coast of British Columbia in particular, as well as their reactions from the opposition benches to the surge in refugee claimants from the United States, it is reasonable to speculate that the Conservative response to irregular border crossers would have been far harsher. They would likely have made greater use of powers such as the designated foreign national regime they had empowered themselves with. It is also unlikely that anywhere near the same level of effort would have been made to boost refugee sponsorship, to Syrians or otherwise.

However while the Liberals instituted some positive changes, they have left many problematic policies in place and even intensified others, including through omnibus budget bills. While largely reverting general citizenship eligibility and timelines to pre-Harper requirements, the Liberals left in place an exclusionary fee structures and language testing formats and requirements that make citizenship much harder to acquire for many permanent residents, as well as the same financially prohibitive requirements and obligations for family sponsorship discussed in the last chapter. Also in the realm of family sponsorship, while the Liberals did increase the eligible age for dependents, their claims of providing a much more generous and compassionate approach to parent and grandparent sponsorship was found by at least one media outlet to be “a lot of baloney” (Blatchford 2019), as noted in the footnotes to the last chapter. Thus, for the Liberals, a Canadian might be a Canadian (be a Canadian), but obtaining such exalted status remains beyond the economic and linguistic means of many members and potential members of Canadian society, including the still sizeable temporary foreign worker program with limited pathways to citizenship.

After a major spike in Syrian refugee resettlement linked to their 2015 election commitments in 2016, both private and government assisted (sponsored) refugee (GAR) levels were reduced significantly the next year to “anemic targets” according some researchers, while the government left in place caps placed on private refugee sponsorship that had been instituted by the Conservatives.⁵¹ Though resettlement levels are again rising slowly, GAR levels are projected to be little more than half the capped levels private citizens are expected to be able to sponsor, in contrast to the long-standing principle of additionality whereby resettlement by private citizens is to *augment* rather than replace the resettlement efforts of government (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2018; 2016b; Canadian Council for Refugees 2018). The Liberals also left many of the problematic refugee determination system reforms of the Harper government in place. In their first, and potentially only term, they failed to undertake significant reforms called for by some observers, “as a condition to ensuring the system’s fairness and integrity . . . in line with the Liberal government’s objective of taking a leadership role . . . by changing the negative narratives about refugees and immigrants, and by respecting the 1951 Refugee Convention” (Atak, Hudson, and Nakache 2017, 39–40). The Liberals have also maintained a long-standing multiple borders strategy stretching out to potential refugee claimants’ countries of origin. Through that strategy “Canada has expanded and intensified its use of offshore interdiction, inspection, and deflection measures” that “work in concert to block and deter asylum seekers from reaching Canada’s territorial frontiers, making it harder for asylum seekers to lawfully seek refugee protection in Canada” (Arbel and Brenner 2013, 4).

⁵¹ According to Hyndman, Payne, and Jimenez, “While it is crucial that the government fulfill its responsibility to directly assist refugees (GARs), removing the limits introduced only recently would facilitate significantly higher numbers of PSRs [privately sponsored refugees] given the clear interest, if not demand, of civil society. In light of these obligations, it should be noted that Canadian civil society has reacted with consternation in face of the state’s anemic targets for 2017 (7,500 GARs, 16,000 PSRs, and 1,500 BVORs [Blended Visa Office Referrals])” (Hyndman, Payne, and Jimenez 2017, 6).

While certainly less harsh than their Conservative predecessors likely would have been, perhaps most emblematic of the limits of symbolic politics of neoliberal multiculturalism and dynamics of guarding settler colonial prerogatives in Canada under the Liberals have been the twists, turns and dynamics of the Liberal government's approach to irregular border crossings from the United States. While such flows are significantly affected by dynamics within the United States affecting refugees and immigrants, such border crossings were mostly *irregularized* as a result of the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement. The agreement, with few exceptions, prohibits refugee claims to be made at regular ports of entry along the Canada-US border (Macklin 2005). To their credit, the Liberals have struck a much less alarmist tone than their Conservative counterparts overall. At times they have asserted that the less stigmatizing term "irregular" rather than "illegal" is the best term for such crossings and those making them (Chandler 2018). However the Liberals still undertook efforts to deter those who might cross the Canada-US border to make a refugee claim and both the Conservative and Liberal parties have stayed relatively mute on human rights abuses experienced by migrants and refugees in Trump's America, thereby legitimizing the US approach to refugees and maintaining a form of settler colonial solidarity similar to that discussed in chapter six.

Despite the increasingly anti-refugee policies and discourses in the United States (Pierce and Selee 2017; Pierce, Bolter, and Selee 2018), the Liberals have thus far refused civil society calls to rescind or suspend the Third Country Agreement (Canadian Council for Refugees and Amnesty International Canada 2017), instead speculating that if anything they wished to "modernize" the agreement to apply to areas between ports of entry along the Canada-US border employing means such as biometrics (T. Wright 2018). The Liberal government also put minority-background MPs front and centre in such efforts, dispatching them to the United States to deter claimants from their shared communities of origin from seeking a more secure life in

Canada (McSheffrey 2017; Ocampo 2017). Such MPs achieved election to a House of Commons where women and minorities are seriously under-represented. However these MPs were not employed in this situation to help represent or serve as a bridge connecting such persons to the Canadian state or to combat the challenges faced by their communities of origin. Rather, evident of the Liberal manifestation of neoliberal multiculturalism, they were sent to dissuade them from seeking to enter Canada's settler colonial state, ruled on behalf of Canada's more exalted subjects.

Subsequently, feeling pressure from the Conservatives on the file, rather than empowering their existing Ministers of Immigration and Public Safety – including Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen, himself of a refugee background -- the Liberals appointed Bill Blair as a new Minister for Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction (Trudeau 2018).

Civil society critics such as Amnesty International noted such action runs

the risk that it fuels unfounded alarm among Canadians of there being a crisis related to refugee claimants crossing the US/Canada border; the negative impact of conflating migration and crime in the name of the new Ministry; and the uncertainty about the new Minister's powers and the associated risk that there will be inevitable confusion in the division of responsibilities with two existing Ministries, namely the Minister of Public Safety and the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. (Neve et al. 2018)

This risk was being taken despite that fact that, as prominent refugee scholars Sean Rehaag and Sherry Aitken note, "there is no crisis." While claim numbers have been somewhat high in recent years, they are "declining and not far from longer term historical averages" (Rehaag and Aiken 2019). Despite this reality the Liberals stuck with measures associating migration with crime while leaving a former refugee to be the public face of their refugee policies and further reduced access to asylum.

Late in their first term the Liberals snuck regressive changes to Canadian refugee policy that would deny a refugee hearing applicants that previously filed a claim in one of the "five

eyes” countries into a budget omnibus bill in an effort to avoid parliamentary scrutiny (Canadian Council for Refugees 2019; Neve et al. 2019). In practice the measure is most likely to affect those who had made claims first in the United States. Perhaps such a development should not be surprising coming from the party whose earlier Chretien government had originally brought in the Safe Third Country Agreement, but it significantly belied their earlier, more measured tone concerning refugee claimants and serves as a powerful reminder of some of the dynamics and limits to neoliberal multiculturalism in Canada.

These dynamics have persisted in in face of seemingly ever-more draconian treatment of refugee claimants and border crossers by the US government, particularly at the US-Mexico border and in Central America. This includes the US forcing “safe country” agreements on Mexico and Guatemala to force refugee claimants to make claims in those countries rather than in the United States despite dangerous conditions and a lack of state capacity, through what even a conservative critic calls “choke-hold diplomacy,” backed up by the withdrawal of foreign aid and trade threats (Homan 2019). Both the Liberals and Conservatives have maintained a stunning silence and enthusiasm for the STCA amidst such developments.

As seen in the Liberals’ handling and public response to the SNC Lavelin affair, these were far from the only policy directions that have increased the dismay of some 2015 Liberal Party voters. That the Liberals turned their backs on their promise to change an electoral system that granted the Conservatives (and themselves) power- or a “Minimum winning coalition” - with less than forty percent of the popular vote has left the Official Opposition Conservatives with a potential path to power, an outcome that the most vulnerable members of Canadian society would be forced to bear. However while there are certainly important and troubling policy continuities between what Dobrowolsky (2017) labels Liberal “Big” and Conservative “Bad Canada” state

imaginaries, the differences between the parties' rhetorical and policy record should not be minimized. It is important to assess them and their competitors comparatively.

Thus beyond the scope of this dissertation there is a need for more systematic and detailed comparisons between the current and prior Liberal governments and the Conservatives' record and discourses to further illuminate the substantive differences and overlap between their respective projects of neoliberal and neoconservative multiculturalism to find not only common dynamics of exclusion but also openings for inclusive change. It is also important to assess alternatives, even if they are nascent, and the spaces and openings within which they might operate. It remains the case, as Laycock argued nearly fifteen years ago, that "leaving the field of innovation in populist appeals and political mobilization to the political Right is a mistake that progressive Canadians cannot afford to continue making" (2005, 201). However it is not clear that a strong alternative vision that offers significantly more inclusive social relations in terms of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism policy will soon be on offer by the New Democratic or other parties on Canada's settler colonial terrain. Maxime Bernier's People's Party of Canada has clearly set a course in the opposite direction.

The NDP's "A New Deal for People" document – but not a platform -- released in mid-June, 2019 leads off with pocket-book issues of affordability and includes a mix of platitudes and promising positions related to immigration without specific language to clarify how they would be implemented or as to their cost. Their single platform page (page 89 of 109) concerning immigration in Canada is contained within their "new deal to build stronger, more vibrant communities" section. It includes a seemingly obligatory heading that "IMMIGRATION MAKES CANADA STRONGER" and promises to "work with the provinces to address gaps in settlement services and improve foreign credentials recognition," and government regulation of the immigration consultant industry. There is nothing unique in those promises.

The document represents potentially a more inclusive vision informed by, but falling short, of social movement demands. Short on explanations of how they would be implemented, the document includes promises to 1) “end the unfair cap on applications to sponsor parents and grandparents, and take on the backlogs that delay reunification for years,” 2) that “if someone is good enough to come and work here, then there should be a path for them to stay permanently” and that they would 3) “treat caregivers brought to Canada with respect and dignity, providing them with status and allowing them to reunite with their families without delay.” Such policy changes and pathways to permanence would be significant progressive steps forward but fall well short of social movement demands for full status upon arrival in Canada.

Without any details or numbers, such as proposed immigration levels, they also promise to fix the refugee determination system to eliminate its backlog and to “work with Canadians to resettle refugees in our communities, ensuring they are given the support they need to build successful lives and new homes here in Canada. Finally, they include neoliberal discourses within an important promise that “New Democrats will make the right choice to promote safety, security, and efficiency in Canada’s border communities by suspending the Safe Third Country agreement with the United States, allowing people to make asylum claims at official border crossings” (New Democratic Party of Canada 2019) .

If fully implemented their vision of pathways to permanent residence for all and positivity towards refugees could conceivably amount to a somewhat distinct form or return to what might be labelled social democratic multiculturalism in its offer of a relatively more inclusive society. But the document does not address the fees, expenses and difficulties in pursuing family sponsorship or acquiring citizenship, nor commit to fully withdrawing from the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement. In the unexpected event the NDP does form a government, the lack of details provided for their broad policy proposals and low-priority placement in their platform are

not promising signs. If one was forced to speculate, in part based on the overall trajectory of the party, without strong Ministers in the relevant portfolios and a decision to make the policy field a much higher priority a New Democratic Party government seems more likely end up demonstrating continuity with the Liberals' neoliberal variant of multiculturalism in practice rather than a radical departure.

The Search for More Progressive Alternatives and Comparative Knowledge of Projects of (Im)migration and Belonging

Amidst this challenging context activist migrant and allied movements continue to push from below for more just local, provincial, national and transnational social orders and challenge the Canadian state, capitalism, colonialism and imperialism (Fortier 2013; Walia and Smith 2013). Because such movements are led by migrants and activists from below who engage in political organization but do not (and often explicitly do not wish to) occupy state power or necessarily offer a national project in the conventional sense, I classify these as subaltern movements and projects concerning (im)migration and belonging in Gramscian terms (M. Green 2002, 18; Gramsci 1971). Members of such movements have loudly voiced unheeded calls to reform Canada's temporary foreign worker programs and grant permanent residence upon arrival for migrant workers and their families to avoid many of the abuses and inequalities that result from the structure of those programs, for example (Coalition for Migrant Worker Rights Canada 2018; Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration 2009). They continue to work creatively and strategically to improve the situation of migrant, refugee and undocumented people despite major obstacles (Tungohan 2017; Bridget Anderson, Sharma, and Wright 2009; J. McDonald 2009).

Such efforts can be seen to be gaining a wider constituency and influence with some notable victories, including at the local scale with "Sanctuary City" declarations in Ajax,

Hamilton, London, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver since 2013, and as several more cities consider following their lead. Such declarations are nowhere near a panacea to the precarity and lack of security for undocumented residents of those cities, however (Hudson et al. 2016). Such movements also face contestation from Canada's right, including from those who have worked within the Canadian state and supported the Conservative Party before and after their time in office in conservative think tanks and media (Malcolm 2017; Anglin 2017; Collacott 2013). These organic links and their increasing prominence demand more detailed exposure and analysis. They have also faced opposition from immigration enforcement arms of the state. However the Ontario provincial NDP's push for a "Sanctuary Province" in its 2018 election as well as calls for sanctuary city policies by organized labour (Hudson et al. 2016; NDP Ontario 2018; Canadian Labour Congress n.d.; No One is Illegal Toronto 2018) demonstrate some momentum for subaltern civil society proposals from below that offer a more inclusive (im)migration future and popular imaginary. Some actively seek out collaborations and alliances with First Nations peoples and foreground Canada's nature as an exclusionary settler colonial state with foreign policies that contribute to displacement globally. While these movements are subject to their own literatures and debates, they are also worthy of considering as distinct projects of (im)migration and belonging, and as challenges from below to, and in comparison with projects such as neoconservative and neoliberal multiculturalisms from above.

Primary questions of such comparative research could include 1) What are the primary competing hegemonic (dominant) ideologies and projects concerning (im)migration and national identity in Canada? Is there a coherent, or the potential for a coherent social democratic alternative or more radical alternatives to presently dominant approaches? ; 2) What are the primary civil society (subaltern) alternatives "from below" to dominant state and political party approaches that make precarious and exclude an increasing number of (im)migrants and

undocumented residents economically, socially and politically? ; 3) What are the social bases and primary scale(s) of operation, be it local, provincial, national and/or transnational of these respective political projects and movements? Such knowledge could illuminate competing projects and potential futures of (im)migration and national belonging and their potential for politics and policies of inclusion or exclusion and further our knowledge of political parties, civil society actors- including social movements- and immigration policy. Such research could help identify proposed and actual (im)migration policies and political imaginaries espoused, as well as the creative ideological work present within each project.

As this dissertation has tried to argue, the significance of *Kenneyism* is not just the particularly demagogic politician so effective in its politics, but what it captures about the contemporary Conservative political project that has operated on the terrain of Canada's diverse population. While an electorally important project, of more substantive import are the regressive changes and shifts in government policy and the environment for discussion and deliberation that the Conservatives assiduously created. Given the neoliberal vision of prior Canadian governments in these and other fields and the current global environment one must summon optimism and will to struggle for a reversal of much of the damage wrought and to safeguard against an even more damaging alternative emerging from Canada's right and move towards achieving a more just domestic and global social order of (im)migration and belonging.

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