A Liberal Partisan? A Study on Canadian Visible Minorities' Partisan Preferences

Clayton Ma

A Thesis

In the Department of Political Science

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Arts (Political Science) at

Concordia University

Montreal, Québec, Canada

September 2019

Concordia University

<div align="center">

Concordia University

School of Graduate Studies

</div>

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: Clayton Ma

Entitled: A Liberal Partisan? A Study on Canadian Visible Minorities' Partisan Preferences

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

<div align="center">

Master of Arts (Political Science)

</div>

complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the final Examining Committee

_____ Chair

Elizabeth Bloodgood

_____ Examiner

Mireille Paquet

_____ Examiner

Daniel Salée

_____ Supervisor

Antoine Bilodeau

Approved by _____

Daniel Salée, Graduate Program Director

April 2020   _____

André G. Roy, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Science

ABSTRACT

A Liberal Partisan? A Study on Canadian Visible Minorities' Partisan Preferences

Clayton Ma

Concordia University, 2020

Using survey data drawn from the 2014 *Provincial Diversity Project*, this thesis provides a more comprehensive look at visible minority (VM) Canadians' federal partisan preferences compared to other Canadians. My findings show that even in 2014, VMs are more likely than other Canadians to identify with the Liberal party instead of other parties.

Additionally, this thesis explores the factors explaining VMs' partisan attitudes by examining social, attitudinal, and ethnic factors' influence on partisan preferences. In particular, I assess the idea of Liberal issue ownership over topics of diversity by testing the effects of opinions on multiculturalism and ethnic consciousness, or one's attachment to their ethnic community, in influencing Liberal support. My findings show that while the symbolic effects of multiculturalism could not explain VMs' preferences, ethnic consciousness is key to understanding VMs' partisan attitudes. Moreover, I conclude that while VMs' Liberal attitudes are shaped by distinct factors, those shaping VMs' Conservative attitudes are characterised by considerable convergence with the existing dynamics found among other Canadians.

Lastly, this thesis goes beyond the monolithic limitations of the VM category and examines the heterogeneity found within that category by looking at the cases of Chinese-Canadians and VMs of Muslim faith.

Thank you to Antoine Bilodeau for his light-hearted yet firm supervision

Table of Contents

List of Figure and Tables

Introduction and Methodology

Since the adoption of an official policy of multiculturalism in 1971, Canadian society has been reshaped into an increasingly multi-ethnic and diverse national community. Whereas immigrants to Canada historically came mainly from Western countries, today's immigrants primarily come from non-European countries as a result of the introduction of a non-race dependent point system in 1967. The arrival of many racialized non-white minorities has had a profound influence in reshaping the Canadian political community and, more fundamentally, our notion of who is a Canadian. Canadians of a visible minority background, defined socio-cultural categories other than White and Indigenous, now constitute an increasingly important demographic bloc; in 2016 over 22 percent of Canadian society belonged to a visible minority (VM) group (Statistics Canada, 2019). While today VMs constitute a significant proportion of the Canadian electorate, that was not always the case. Historically, racialized minorities were in fact denied the right to participate in the political process, Chinese-Canadians for instance were denied the right to vote until 1947, well after most other White Canadian men. Today, as an important bloc of voters, VMs have become a structuring force in reshaping Canadian politics to reflect the interests of non-White ethnic minorities. Yet, despite their increasingly influential electoral weight, we know relatively little about visible minority Canadians' political preferences. As Canadian society increasingly becomes plural and multiethnic, it also becomes important to understand the political attitudes of visible minority voters as potentially distinct voters from other socio-demographic categories of voters. Without doing so, we fail to recognise the inherent socio-political heterogeneity that exists in Canada and the potential visible minorities have in shifting the electoral landscape of Canadian politics. Only by studying the political attitudes of minorities can the existing partisan system better accommodate the interests and needs of this increasingly influential demographic partisan base.

By focusing on the case of visible minorities, this study assumes that there is something unique about visible minority Canadians' case that is worth researching separately from the case of other Canadians. I argue that this is the case as visible minority Canadians' lived experience can differ considerably from other Canadians, not least because of the many challenges related to discrimination and systemic inequality which minorities face (Simpson, 2018). Even when compared with other immigrant communities' struggle, visible minorities have the added

challenge of being *visibly different* from other Canadians which is fertile ground for rejection. It is in a sense a "bright boundary" as Alba (2005) might say which segregate minorities from mainstream society; in other words, a clear dividing line that forms the basis of inter-group difference. Even in an officially multicultural state that is supposedly inclusive and treats all ethnicities on an equal footing, the systemic and institutional barriers that prevail and arise from the implicit majority-minority power hierarchy remain very much present in affecting visible minorities' lived experiences. Hate crimes, for instance, tend to particularly affect minority groups like Blacks and Arabs (Statistics Canada, 2017b); similarly, VMs tend to perceive themselves as the victims of discriminatory experiences (Reitz and Banerjee, 2007). Discrimination also manifests itself in the labour market with minorities often disadvantaged compared to other candidates in hiring practices (Helly, 2004; Lenoir-Achdjian et al., 2009). It is clear that despite multiculturalism, VMs nonetheless face unique challenges and are confronted with a distinct lived experience compared to other Canadians. Visible minority Canadians also come from a very diverse range of cultural backgrounds, many of which are considerably different from "mainstream" Canadian or Western culture. As Blais (2005) discusses, VMs have quite distinct social values when compared to other Canadians on social questions such as abortion and homosexual marriage making them a particularly conservative segment of Canadian society. As such, not only are Canadians of a visible minority *visibly* different from majority Canadians, they are also characterized by differences in lived experiences and socio-political attitudes. All of these divergences from mainstream Canadian society makes them a particularly interesting group of voters to study.

Existing research on visible minorities' electoral attitudes has largely focused on their preference for the Liberal Party of Canada (Blais, 2005; Harell, 2013). Yet, we know relatively little about why that is the case. Indeed, few authors have written on the reasons behind why such a political preference exists among minorities in the first place. In fact, due to the paucity of empirical works looking at minorities' political preferences, we are not even certain if this relationship between VM Canadians and the Liberal Party is still just as strong today as it was in past decades. Additionally, almost nothing in the literature has been written regarding the potential heterogeneity in political attitudes that exists between the different ethnic communities that fall under the visible minority category. The existing literature on VM voters therefore only provides an incomplete portrayal of the latter with key questions such as explaining the motives

behind VMs' political preferences largely unanswered. Why do VMs consistently support the Liberal party much more strongly than other Canadians? Is this gap owed to socio-demographic factors related to the unique dynamics of each VM community, or to cultural and attitudinal factors? More broadly, what are the core motivations of VMs in supporting the Liberals as opposed to other parties?

With these questions in mind, this study aims to elaborate a more nuanced and detailed portrayal of visible minority Canadians' political attitudes. Not only will this study re-examine the state of VMs' partisan preferences in 2014 and the motives underpinning them, but it will also study in detail how and why their preferences differ from other Canadians. I will begin by looking at VMs' attitudes toward the Liberal party and how they compare with other Canadians; having done so, I will then assess VMs' opinions of the Conservatives. For both parties, the emphasis will be on identifying the key factors motivating VMs to support specific parties when compared to other Canadians. Finally, I go beyond the visible minority category by looking at VM Canadians along ethnic and racial lines. Doing so allows the study to distinguish between different ethno-cultural communities and thus better assess the differences in each group's political attitudes – if there are any.

To do so quantitatively requires a significant sample of VMs to develop sophisticated statistical models: an obstacle which many past studies run into. My study has the key advantage of drawing its data from the *Provincial Diversity Project* (PDP) conducted by Bilodeau et al. in 2014 which includes a special sample of 1,647 VMs living in four of Canada's most ethnically diverse provinces (Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta). This sample size alone is far greater than the samples used by most past works. Additionally, the PDP also includes a considerable control sample representing the general Canadian population with 6,400 respondents, thus allowing for useful comparative analyses between VM and other Canadians.

I divide this study into three chapters: the first looks at VMs' attitudes towards the Liberal party, the second on their views of the Conservatives, and the third looks at the differences between different VM communities in an effort to break down the VM category. In all three chapters, the methodological focus is first and foremost on uncovering the current state of VM Canadians' political attitudes and the motivations underlying them. In chapter one and two, the focus is also on explaining the gap in attitudes between VMs and other Canadians whilst

in chapter three the emphasis is on highlighting the differences between VMs in regards to their attitudes and motivations. While studying these dynamics, the analyses will account for a variety of other factors with possible effects on party preference such as social values, immigration status, and opinions of ethno-cultural diversity.

Visible Minorities as Political Partisans

Earlier works in the Canadian electoral behaviour literature have traditionally emphasized notions of volatility and weak partisanship in contrast to the American case where party identification was characterized as largely static while still strongly indicative of voter preferences. The comparative influence of the Michigan school model, initially proposed by Campbell et al. (1960) in *The American Voter*, on Canadian political analyses of voter behaviour was considerable in this regard. Indeed, Michigan's influence was present from the onset when the first Canadian Election Study team gathered in 1965 (Swartz 2012). And although the Michigan model's emphasis on party identification seemed less relevant in Canadian elections where partisanship was said to be volatile (Clarke et al. 1979), the model's short-term focus on leader evaluation and issue salience did seem to fit well with Canadian elections' unstable dynamics. Consequently, in line with the Michigan school's influence, the Canadian literature on electoral behaviour has over time gradually shifted towards a greater focus on short-term, often attitudinal, perspectives in examining Canadian voter behaviour. The transition towards short-term approaches is also likely explained by a general disenchantment vis-à-vis sociological approaches, the perception being that such approaches naturally imply a stability in voter behaviour which is contrary to Canadian electors' established pattern of volatility (Bilodeau et al., 2012; Schwartz, 2012). After all, how could one explain Canadian electors' changing electoral choices through something as relatively fixed as socio-demographic factors? Suffice it to say, this gradual shift towards short-term attitudinal factors has shaped scholars' view of the Canadian party system as being inherently unstable as a result of weak partisanship, notably following the works of Clarke et al. on the subject (see Bilodeau et al., 2012). As such, long-term sociological perspectives have somewhat fallen to the wayside in research in favour of short-term attitudinal analyses that focus on topics such as issues, campaigns, and leaders.

Yet, as Gidengil (2012) points out, we cannot simply ignore the long-term social dimension when assessing Canadians' political preferences. Indeed, social cleavages have an important influence in structuring Canadians' opinions. One needs only to think about the structuring influence of regionalism in Canada to understand the influence one's socio-background and group belonging can have. What's more, social cleavages' influence on political preference is not as static as some may have thought. Although individuals' values and social-demographic traits might not typically change, how they become relevant and salient can matter considerably depending on the immediate political environment (Berelson et al. as cited in Gidengil, 2012). As such, we should not think of voters' social background as being inconsequential to one's political attitudes; if anything, there should a strong link drawn between one's socialisation and one's political attitudes.

Early works on long-term social cleavages in Canada focused on the influence, or lack thereof, of regionalism, religion, and social class on political attitudes. Religion for instance still had, up until recently, a considerable influence in explaining electoral support for both Conservatives among Protestants (Gidengil et al., 2006) and Liberals among Catholics (Blais, 2005). Indeed, a renewed focus on other socio-demographic factors has started emerging, which is all the more relevant when attitudes within segments of society shift and change over time. The effect of gender on political attitudes is one such example. Not only do men and women's values fundamentally differ, a finding which is reflected in their respective party preferences, but this trend maintains itself even when other sociological variables are present (Gidengil et al., 2013a). Moreover, this dynamic has evolved over time, from women historically shunning left-wing politics to now being considerably more supportive of the Left than men (Gidengil et al., 2013a); if anything, this finding highlights the relevance of sociological studies of political attitudes to understand changing dynamics within the electorate. Indeed, there are still many novel aspects of sociological politics which remain largely unexamined and potentially very interesting to study, including even intersectional approaches between gender and visible minority status (Gidengil and Roy, 2016). Thus, contrary to the claim that sociological approaches are too static, we see that in fact the dynamics of societal cleavages evolve and change with time in a way that research must consistently update itself and keep up.

When looking at the case of visible minority Canadians' political attitudes and behaviour, the literature has traditionally emphasized VMs' tendency to overwhelmingly support the Liberals in elections. Blais (2005) even described Canadians of non-European descent as being a "pillar of Liberal success" alongside Catholics. Using CES data from 1965 to 2004, Blais found that there was a 23 percent gap in Liberal support between Canadians of African, Asian, or Latino origin (i.e. of non-European descent) and Canadians of European-descent (Blais, 2005). This trend is noticeably present with the class of "new immigrant voter[s]" who come from non-traditional countries of immigration to Canada, in other words non-European countries (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010). In more practical terms, this translates into an utter Liberal dominance of VM electoral support. In the 2000 elections, the Liberals secured an astounding 72 percent of VM Canadians' vote and. In the 2004 elections, even with the political fallout resulting from the sponsorship scandal, the Liberals could still count on 54% of VMs' support at the ballot box (Gidengil et al., 2006). In the 2008 election, despite a considerably weakened Liberal party, a majority of VMs still supported the party at the ballot box when by then Catholics, the other pillar of Liberal support, had switched their support over the Conservatives (Gidengil et al., 2013b). Even in times of electoral decline and defeat, VM Canadians were proving to be the Liberal party's most loyal social base. My first hypothesis therefore focuses on re-examining the state of VM Canadians' partisan preferences even in the wake of Liberal collapse:

H1: Visible minorities are more likely to support the Liberals than other Canadians

Should this still be the case, the reason(s) why this dynamic exists among VM voters remains, however, largely unanswered, especially in explaining the gap between VMs and other Canadians' partisan preferences. A key potential explanation might relate to the effect of economic ideology on party choice. Indeed, the role the state plays in regulating society and the economy on topics such as taxation, healthcare and social programs which can all have considerable effects on VMs' lives. Social-economic policy should therefore have a notable effect in shaping VMs' political views, especially as many less settled-in VMs might have pressing material concerns to account for when deciding on which party to support. After all, immigrating to a foreign country and trying to build a new life again is no easy feat, the idea that recently arrived VMs would be in favour of greater levels of economic support from the host society would therefore make sense. Indeed, it is expected that minorities face considerably more

barriers and challenges, of a cultural and economic nature in host countries. As opposed to native-born Canadians, they might not for instance benefit from the perks of having established roots and social networks that provide the same type of social opportunities. Anything to ease the challenges of integrating into Canadian society, even if it means greater State intervention in economic life, would likely be welcomed.

These systemic barriers should not be seen as being limited to immigrant minorities only. Racial and ethnic minorities face a distinct, if not additional, layer of barriers to full integration into the socio-cultural and economic life of the dominant society. Whereas immigrant minorities face challenges as a result of migration, ethnic and racial minorities with visible differences face obstacles intimately linked to their different appearance. While perhaps inconsequential sounding, outward visible differences can have drastic consequences in everyday life, with discriminatory experiences ranging from personal insults to a hindered access to employment (Helly, 2004; Reitz and Banerjee, 2007). In this regard, the state can play a particularly useful role in protecting minorities from discrimination by enacting policies and passing laws. For instance, policies like affirmative action and the Employment Equity Act of 1995 can improve VMs' access to the labour market in order to counter systemic barriers. Other measures such as social assistance can also be of great help for those who are struggling.

Indeed, there is evidence that the link between economic ideology and minority politics is present in other Western countries such as in Australia and in Europe where left-wing political parties have also tended to be most favourable to minorities when compared to right-wing parties (Bilodeau, 2009; Messina, 2007). In European democracies, left-wing parties tend to have more favourable attitudes towards minorities and their interests when compared to right-wing parties (Messina, 2007). In Britain, for instance, Saggar (as cited in Messina, 2007) attributes the strong levels of support for Labour among British ethnic minorities to the party's willingness to defend minorities' interests which coincide with the party's inclination towards redistributive policies and economic welfare (Saggar, 2016), policies which minorities might support as they are often economically disadvantaged (Messina, 2007). A similar pattern of partisan preference among visible minorities can also be observed in Australia among visible minorities who tend to express a preference for the Australian Labor Party (Bilodeau, 2009).

In Canada, the left-right ideological divide on immigration and diversity can be observed with right-wing parties like the Reform party and the Canadian Alliance adopting anti-immigration positions (Marwah et al., 2013). Likewise, the right-wing Conservative party is noticeably stricter than other major parties on enforcing immigration law and securing borders against asylum claimants (Baglay, 2017). In contrast, the left-leaning NDP is characterised by strong positions in favour of immigration and protecting migrants' rights (NDP, 2015; NDP, 2019). Similarly, the Liberal party is often viewed as the party of Canadian multiculturalism as well as generally being pro-immigration and ethno-cultural diversity (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010; White and Bilodeau, 2014). The comparative literature as well as Canadian political parties' historical positions would suggest that there might indeed be a convergence between economic ideology and immigration topics. Hence, there is an argument to be made that VMs' economic views might lead them to be more favourable towards pro-welfare parties such as the Liberals instead of the Conservatives. Conversely, those VMs with more right-wing positions should be more in favour the Conservatives than the other parties.

H2: Visible minorities are more likely to support the Liberals compared to other Canadians because VMs tend to be more favourable to left-wing economic ideology

Another potential explanation might relate to the effects of social attitudes on party choice. Interestingly, Canadians of non-European descent while typically more socially conservative than other Canadians on issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage have nonetheless remained quite loyal to the Liberals (Blais, 2005). This is despite the fact that their attitudes are fundamentally at odds with the party's more socially progressive stances. While these attitudes do have statistically significant effects, they also seem to have had little impact on VMs' support for the Liberals historically (Blais, 2005). However, Gidengil et al. (2013) suggest that the decline in Liberal support in 2008 among VMs might in fact have to do with their more socially conservative outlook which the Harper conservatives sought to appeal to. Indeed, seeing the electoral potential of the VM electorate, the Conservative party under the guidance of Stephen Harper and Jason Kenney reshaped the party into a more inclusive entity that appealed to minorities' social conservatism (Marwah et al., 2013). And indeed there seems to be a link between social values and partisan choices, even among VMs. Harrel (2013) finds that liberal values, favourable attitudes towards welfare or immigration, are all related to VMs' Liberal

support at the ballot box. Intuitively, these findings hint towards a shift in VMs' political attitudes where social values have begun gaining in importance versus other issues. In the context of the Conservatives' outreach efforts to VM communities, we should expect that the party might very well have been successful in convincing VMs to realign themselves by appealing to their social conservatism. Despite this, Blais' (2005) findings demonstrate that while social conservatism was linked to partisan support, it could not explain the partisan differences between VMs and other Canadians. We should therefore not expect social conservatism to explain the gap in Liberal support between VMs and other Canadians. In fact, VMs should still be more likely to support the Liberals despite their social conservatism when compared to other Canadians.

H3: Visible minority Canadians are more likely to support to support the Liberals than other Canadians despite their more socially conservative values

Another key attitudinal factor to consider when discussing about Liberal support is that of multiculturalism and ethnocultural diversity. In fact, compared to White Canadians, we would expect that these topics to be of even greater importance for VMs seeing as VMs' very presence in Canada depend on the existence of Canadian multiculturalism. The political loyalty of VMs to the Liberals might therefore very well have to do with their adherence to the party's positions on multiculturalism and diversity. Indeed, this link between VMs' partisan attitudes and multiculturalism seems straightforward if we consider the history of the Liberal party on these issues. After all, it was the Liberal party under Pierre-Elliot Trudeau who introduced the point system and thus opened up the Canadian immigration system to non-European immigration. It was also Trudeau and the Liberals who first introduced the official policy of Canadian multiculturalism, marking a key turning point in our conception of the Canadian nation. It is likely as a result of these historical stances in favour of diversity and against discrimination, that newly arrived immigrants and minorities might feel that the Liberals are the best party to defend their interests.

However, these are merely assumptions based on most Canadians' conventional view of the Liberals, there has yet, in fact, to be significant evidence to prove that this is also the case for VMs. Indeed, only a fairly limited number of works have actually explored the effect that opinions of multiculturalism has on political attitudes. There is evidence among studies looking

at immigrant minorities generally that the Liberal party's multicultural legacy does reflect itself in minorities' view of the party. Indeed, Bilodeau and Kanji (2010) speculate that immigrants' loyalty to the Liberals might have to do with the party's issue ownership of topics relating to immigration and diversity. The concept of issue ownership in the voting behaviour literature refers to a party's ability to develop a positive reputation over a specific political issue where they are known to be particularly competent in managing (Bélanger and Meguid, 2007). In this case, Bilodeau and Kanji (2010) argue that the Liberal party has developed a particularly strong reputation in its competence and ability to uphold and defend Canadian multiculturalism among minorities. This is a theory supported by White and Bilodeau (2014) who find that immigrant voters are especially sensitive to issues relating to immigration that affect their group. Moreover, as is the case with other Canadians, their study provides evidence that more positive views of immigration can also be linked to their partisan choices, notably in supporting the Liberals. However, while their findings provide a preliminary attempt at explaining the link between immigrants' opinions on diversity and their support for the LPC, the study does suffer from methodological issues which make the findings less than conclusive.[1] Still, while the study did not focus specifically on VMs, we know that most VMs are also immigrants, as such this study does provide some preliminary indications that there is a link between VMs' views of diversity and their support for the Liberals.

Does this simply mean that VM support largely derives from the Liberals' strong stance on immigration and diversity? Blais (2005) is rather dismissive of this argument's influence in explaining Canadians of non-European descent's level of Liberal support. While he does find that Canadians of non-European descent do have more positive attitudes towards immigration and helping racial minorities, which are positively correlated with Liberal support, he minimises those variables' impact, stating that they "contribute little to explaining non-Europeans' support for the Liberals" (Blais, 2005). Blais also remarks that the effect of these opinions on Liberal support was not particularly different among non-European Canadians when compared to other Canadians (Blais, 2005). What this could means is that whilst one's opinions on diversity and immigration are indeed positively linked with Liberal support, the influence of such attitudinal factors is fairly minimal. Moreover, even if those attitudes do have an influence on non-white

---

[1] White and Bilodeau's (2014) study is limited by an unusual operationalisation of party loyalty (clientelism) via a measure of MP incumbency.

ethnic minorities, the effect on voter behaviour might largely come down to a composition effect as minorities' opinions on these topics tend to be more positive than other Canadians' views (Bilodeau et al., 2015; White and Bilodeau, 2014). Still, it should not be surprising to know that VMs, as racial minorities, would favour a party supportive of diversity, immigration, and multiculturalism in the first place. Nonetheless, my fourth hypothesis will, first, seek to test if there is indeed a link between one's preference for the Liberal party and one's attitude on multiculturalism in Canada. Secondly, if such a relationship is present, can it explain the gap in Liberal support between VMs and other Canadians? And while this test is not a perfect assessment of issue ownership as Bilodeau and Kanji (2010) envisioned, it should still highlight the influence that attitudes towards diversity has on partisan attitudes sufficiently well.

H4: Visible minorities are more likely to support the Liberals than other Canadians because they express a stronger support for multiculturalism

Alternatively, an explanation for VMs' support for the Liberals might also be found at the ethnic community level between VMs and the Liberal party, a phenomenon which Karen Bird (2005) describes as a "clientelistic pattern of relationships" between Liberal MPs and community leaders. As Uhlaner (1989) discusses, the role of group leaders as "intermediary elites," or mediators between the group community and political elites, can have an influence in shaping community members' political behaviour via an appeal to communal interests and loyalty. Similarly, Liberal support can be cultivated through the party's presence within minority communities. Harell's (2013) findings however seem to indicate that VM involvement in local ethnic or religious associations, something which would likely put them into contact with Liberal outreach, did not have a significant impact on ethnic minorities' electoral support levels. Similarly, White and Bilodeau (2014) also conclude that party mobilisation at the communal level and clientelism are likely not what motivates immigrants to support the Liberals. Moreover, the fairly weak proportion of VM MPs and candidates in the Liberal Party, largely due to the high incumbency rate of elected Liberal MPs (Bird, 2005), seems to suggest that VM representation has little to do with the popularity of the Liberals among VMs. Based on these findings, it would seem that Liberal involvement in ethnic minority communities is not the reason why VM Canadians have historically supported the Liberals this strongly.

A party's ties with ethnic communities is, however, only one facet of how pro-Liberal sentiments can be developed and maintained among minority communities. The role of ethnic networks in encouraging Liberal support within communities through personal links and formal associations might have a considerable role in this regard. The theory behind the role of social groups and interactions in reinforcing political homogeneity within groups is not a new one. The Columbia model, also known as the sociological approach to voting, understood voting as being a "group experience" and emphasised the role of societal cleavages in predicting how people ultimately voted (Lazarsfeld et al., 1965). The influence of social networks such as family, especially within a context of political homogeneity, is considerable on individuals' vote choice, even when the latter did not necessarily agree with the dominant *zeitgeist* within their social circles (Lazarsfeld et al., 1965). Similarly, Huckfeldt and Sprague (1987) note that individual political preference is in fact intimately linked with one's social environment's political predispositions. Indeed, as ethnic networks and other such social networks often play a significant role in assisting newly arrived immigrants, many of whom are VMs, in managing the costs and difficulties of migration (Massey, 1999), we can easily assume that networks might also play an important role in encouraging and sustaining Liberal identity among minorities. As theories from the Columbia school of voter behaviour argue, social contact with one's community can indeed push individual members to adapt and defer to the majority position (Lazardfeld et al., 1965).

Any such intra-communal push towards Liberal homogeneity would depend on the loyalty and social bonds tying an ethnic group's members. Indeed, one would expect that a community's influence is largely limited by its constituents' social links and attachment to the group. Ethnic attachment is, however, itself a multifaceted concept which goes beyond individuals' surface-level ethnic identifiers. As based on Garcia's theorization (1982), one's *ethnic consciousness*, or more simply understood as just communal attachment, should be viewed as both *behavioural* via ethnic in/out-group relations and *attitudinal* as based on one's cultural affinity and, I would argue, emotional attachment to the community. In the US, older works like Wolfinger (1964) and Gabriel (1972) highlight that these communal or ethnic factors can have potent and long-lasting effects among certain minority communities in the US that go beyond economic conditions. This view of "ethnic voting" contradicts Dahl's (1961) perception of ethnicity as a declining factor with communal "assimilation" over time.

In the Canadian context, community attachment can also be viewed as a second measure of Liberal issue ownership of topics related to diversity and minority rights. A VMs' concern for their community's well-being and interests is essentially a measure of one's sensitivity towards minority communities' cause and, by extension, issues of diversity and immigration. If one's political attitudes become characterised by this key concern for communal interests, to the extent that such positions can be linked with specific political parties, then the issue adopt an electoral aspect. If VMs with particularly strong sense of ethnic solidarity, or concern for their ethnic community's interests, tend to support a specific party then the dynamic becomes one defined by a certain party's "issue ownership." As the literature would suggest, we would most strongly expect minority rights and interests to be a Liberal issue, i.e. a topic which most support and care about would most likely support (White and Bilodeau, 2014). To test this, my fifth hypothesis examines this communal facet of Liberal issue ownership by looking at the role of social networks and ethnic solidarity on VMs' partisan preferences. Likewise to my first measure of Liberal issue ownership, I should expect that the stronger one's communal attachment is, the wider the VM preference gap should be.

H5: The more visible minorities have contact with members of their own ethnic community, the more we should expect them to support the Liberals

H6: The more visible minorities identify with their ethnic community, the more we should expect them to support the Liberals

Data and Methodological Considerations

Partisan Preference versus Vote Choice: Methodological Considerations

An important theoretical consideration to entertain is that this study's focus is on VMs' partisan identification, not vote choice. The distinction matters as party identification is a more stable measure of partisan preference than vote choice, the latter which fluctuates from one election to the other. This is so as party identification is an identity-based assessment that asks respondents which party they feel closest to without any reference to a specific election, unlike vote choice which asks which party respondents voted for during a specific elected. As such, while someone's actual vote choice might change each election due to specific circumstances,

their partisan preferences will tend to remain unchanged for longer periods of time. Indeed, party identification tends to be shaped by long-term factors like social background and values or ideological predispositions whereas vote choice is also affected by short-term factors like campaigns, issues, and leader evaluations (Blais et al. 2002; Gidengil et al. 2013). As such, looking at partisan preference is arguably more relevant in the context of this study as I seek to understanding the broader dynamics of VMs' political attitudes and not so much their short-term voting patterns. Of course, the two concepts are not unrelated either, as partisan preference does have a strong effect in predicting VMs' vote choice (Harell, 2013).

The impact of partisan identity in Canada has, however, not always been accepted in the Canadian voter behaviour literature. Older works such as those of Clarke et al. (1979) tended to minimize the role of partisanship in Canadian elections by emphasizing the tendency for Canadians to frequently shift their partisan identification over time. While this view fits the idea of Canadian voters as non-ideological in the context of brokerage politics, more recent works have argued that partisanship in fact plays a more important role than previously thought. As Gidengil et al. (2013) conclude using data from 2004-2008 a large proportion of Canadians do in fact identify with a party and do tend to stay consistent in regards to party identity over time. As such, contrary to the view that partisan identity is largely meaningless as a concept, Canadians do in fact account for partisan loyalties when choosing which party to vote for. Yet, it is crucial to mention that Canadians, while certainly partisan, are nonetheless *flexible partisans*: For although they might feel closest to a particular party, this does not mean that they will invariably support that party at every election regardless of circumstances. For instance, nearly a quarter of Liberal partisans in the 2004 elections ended up voting for a different party despite identifying themselves first and foremost as Liberals (Gidengil et al., 2013b). While Canadians' loyalty towards their preferred party might be relatively weak and flexible, their party preference is nonetheless a relevant consideration when going to vote at the ballot box.

As the central dependent variable of this study's analyses, respondents' partisan identification is assessed via the question "thinking about federal politics, which party do you usually feel closest to?" Respondents were given the choice between all major federal political parties including the Liberal party, the Conservative party, the NDP, the Greens, and the Bloc Québécois. If respondents did not identify with any of the major parties, there was also an

"other" option, they could also indicate if they had no partisan identity whatsoever. In order to keep the analyses focused and concise, respondents who refused to answer the question were discarded from the analyses. Moreover, as the focus of this study is on the partisan attitudes of VMs and not their lack thereof which is very much a separate phenomenon with its own set of dynamics, this study also excludes answers indicating no partisan identity. To keep the discussion focused on the three main parties, smaller parties like the BQ and Greens alongside other parties, all of which received marginal levels of support, were amalgamated into a residual category for smaller parties. In some analyses where the emphasis is on understanding the partisan base of one party, the dependent variable can be reworked into a binominal category with everyone with different partisan identities being the comparison point for those supporting the specific party being studied. Doing so allows this study to access the characteristics leading minorities to support a specific party versus all other options, this approach is particularly useful when analysing a specifically strong partisan predisposition as is the case with VMs and the Liberal party. A similar approach was also used to examine Conservative support among VMs.

As party identity is a stable long-term factor of electoral behaviour, the variables I analyse are also mainly long-term factors so as to respect the theoretical framework of the Canadian multistage model developed by Gidengil et al. (2013b). Factors such as one's ethnicity or race which are integral to one's social background or attitudinal factors like social conservatism and opinions of ethno-cultural diversity are thus particularly relevant. While it can be argued that one's position on the topic of immigration could be considered a short-term issue in elections, I consider immigration and diversity to have a much deeper connection with VMs' personal beliefs. Just as overarching political issues such as Quebec's place within Canada or more simply politics on a left-right spectrum often tie into people's "fundamental" beliefs and values (Gidengil et al. 2013), so does, I would argue, VMs' opinion of their place within Canadian society be considered "fundamental" to themselves. The issue of ethnocultural diversity is one which likely has deep implications for VMs' sentiment of inclusion in Canada and as such should be not be treated as just another campaign issue when it should be understood as a long-term factor marked with relative stability.

Going beyond the "Visible Minority" Category?

Up until now, I have discussed VMs as if they were a single monolithic, if not somewhat unwieldy, group. This is despite the fact that VMs are not a particularly homogenous group beyond their shared experience of being non-White. The many ethnic and racial groups which constitute the VM category are hugely diverse and originate from an even more heterogenous range of backgrounds that could, intuitively speaking, drastically differentiate their political preferences. Despite this, the existing literature on non-White and (non-Indigenous) Canadians' relationship with Canadian democracy has only been studied through the simplistic methodological categorisation of "visible minority." In a sense, this regrouping of all "Others" who do not fit with the traditional conception of a Canadian makes studying them that much easier. Yet, there is something surprisingly othering and arguably problematic in this conception of demographic groups. Fundamentally, it very much is a White-centric classification system that conveniently classifies all "Others" into one category. The VM label is imposed on the "Other" despite its lack of historical and cultural meaning. It is important to understand that minorities do not identify first and foremost with such categories which are so broad to the point of being meaningless to those included within it. Unsurprisingly, we would expect them to identify with more meaningful and self-created categories which are relevant to them such as one's ethnic or religious group. Just as it would be alienating to discuss of White Canadians as if Anglo-Canadians and Franco-Canadians or Quebeckers were the same, speaking of non-White Canadians as if they formed one cohesive group is very much an abstract simplification. In common parlance, the term "visible minority" has no practical use for those it categorises, nor does it evoke any particularly significant sense of belonging or emotional attachment. Unsurprisingly, the term has remained largely confined to the world of statistical databases for classification purposes. Yet, even then, researchers should take care to remember that the category they work with has inherent limitations which we should seek to overcome.

This is not to say that researchers did not have understandable reasons to resort to using the more simplistic VM category when studying Canadian of non-European descent. If anything, this simplification was even necessary seeing as this literature is overwhelmingly quantitative and requires sizeable sample sizes; this, of course, poses a considerable problem as gathering a sufficiently large VM sample is already challenging enough, let alone collect a sample which is

sufficiently fleshed out so as to discuss individual ethnic/racial communities separately. Yet, discussing non-majority population topics along ethnic/racial lines is very much the norm in other ethno-culturally diverse countries, notably Britain and the US. Why this has yet to happen in the Canadian literature of political behaviour perhaps testifies to a traditional lack of interest, will, and/or funds in pushing this line of study.

Seeing as VM groups are characterised by a high level of cultural heterogeneity, I very much expect that individual VM communities display distinct political preferences partly as a result of their own history of immigration to Canada. For instance, it should not be particularly surprising if more economically established communities like the Chinese community with a longer history of settlement in Canada are politically distinct with more recently arrived communities such as Arabs and South-Asians. For instance, there is evidence of such a gap existing between more recently arrived VM communities and older European immigrant communities (Harell, 2013). If we reconsider Bilodeau and Kanji's (2010) conclusion that it is recently-arrived immigrant communities who would support a pro-immigration party like the Liberals, we might also think that this pattern of preference might perhaps expire as more established minority communities no longer are considered as being "recently-arrived" immigrants. As those communities become better rooted in Canadian society, they might not need or benefit from the symbolic support offered by the Liberals. Instead, through increased political socialisation they might instead begin adopting more conventional "Canadian" patterns of partisanship and align themselves more closely with other Canadians' political views. After all, VMs are indeed affected by their political environment (Harell, 2013; Bilodeau et al, 2015) and as such we should expect VMs' opinions to change and evolve over time and not expect stagnation over time.

Assessing Visible Minorities' Partisan Preferences

Quantitative research regarding VMs' political attitudes has historically been rather limited in Canada due to the lack of VM respondents in most Canadian data samples. Researchers interested in this topic have often had to come up with inventive ways to gather a sufficiently large VM sample. For instance, some studies relying on data from the *Canadian Election Study* would often pool multiple surveys from different years together into one so as to

gather enough VM respondents (e.g. Gidengil and Roy, 2016; White, 2016). While this practice does work, it has the disadvantage of adding a layer of methodological complexity when working with quantitative methods as well as restricting the use of questions not found in every questionnaire. A different approach taken by Bevelander and Pendakur (2009) is to take an existing data base which coincidentally included a higher than usual number of minorities, which was what they did with data from the *Equality Security Community survey*. Although the survey's focus was not explicitly on the issue of minorities, it did include an unusual urban sample which of course ended up including immigrant minorities, but even then, the sample of VMs was still rather small which limited the scope of analyses.

In the context of this study, however, I have the possibility of drawing upon a large number of VM respondents as well as a wide variety of questions relating to socio-political attitudes, partisan attachment, and ethnic networks from the PDP conducted by Bilodeau et al. (2014). Using two out of three sections of the project, namely the general population sample and the dedicated VM sample, I can call upon upwards of 2,107 VM respondents, most of whom reside in Canada's four most ethno-culturally diverse provinces: Ontario, Quebec, British-Columbia, and Alberta. In the context of the PDP and this study, an individual, as defined by Statistics Canada (2011), is considered to be a VM if they self-identify as both non-white and non-Indigenous.

Additionally, alongside the oversample of VM Canadians, the PDP also includes a general population sample of 5,704 non-VM respondents which will serve as a comparison point for VM respondents. In order to maintain sample consistency across analyses, this study will limit itself to studying to respondents living in Ontario, Quebec, British-Columbia, and Alberta. As the oversample of VM respondents is only drawn up from these four provinces, consistency with the general population sample was deemed to be preferable, not least to reduce inconsistencies across regions. Even then, this is not necessarily problematic as the overwhelming majority of VMs living in Canada, over 94 percent of them, do in fact reside in those four provinces (Statistics Canada, 2019). Despite this, I still maintain a strong overall sample of 1,588 VM and 3,420 non-VM respondents.

Looking at the demographic and attitudinal characteristics of VM Canadians in the *PDP* data, VMs were, on average, noticeably younger than other Canadians with an average age of

around 39 versus 50 among non-VM respondents. The age difference of VMs might potentially be an important demographic factor to consider as previous works have demonstrated that the younger composition of VMs do affect their political behaviour, notably in regard to their electoral participation rates (Gidengil et al., 2004; Bilodeau and Turgeon, 2015). Likely as a result of Canada's point-based meritocratic immigration system which rewards more educated individuals, VMs' level of education was also on average higher than the rest of Canadians: on average, 58 percent of VMs had at least completed an undergraduate degree versus only 35 percent among other Canadians. As Harrel (2013) suggests, higher education level could perhaps lead to differences in partisan attitudes for VMs. Income-wise, non-VMs were more likely to have a higher income than VMs. In terms of province of residence, VMs in the *PDP* came primarily from Ontario (57%), followed by British Columbia (21%), Quebec (13%), and Alberta (9%).

The sample of VM found within the PDP is also sufficiently diverse to distinguish VM Canadians from a range of different origins. Of the 1,588 VM respondents of the VM sample, 591 self-identified as Chinese (37 percent), 264 as South Asian (17 percent), 223 as Black (14 percent), and 145 as Arab (9 percent), with the remaining respondents belonging to other smaller ethnic or racial categories (23 percent). The majority of the oversample, 67 percent, were born outside of Canada and immigrated with only around a third of respondents being native born.[2] The VM sample also allows for a representative distribution of religious groups. Within the sample, 40 percent were Christians (including 18 percent Catholics), 14 percent were Muslim, 8 percent were Hindu, and 4 percent were Sikh.

An additional methodological consideration is that the scope of this study is centered on a behaviouralist approach that emphasises the individual voter's personal socio-demographic background and attitudinal characteristics. This approach is distinct from the large literature which exists focused on the role of parties and party systems in shaping democratic systems. As such, my analyses largely limit themselves to factors innate in individuals and their social interactions as opposed to focusing on party discourse and action. While a number of authors have written on the efforts of Canadian political parties in courting visible minorities (Bird,

---

[2] See annex for descriptive statistics of the visible minority sample

2005; Marwah et al., 2013), it is also crucial to re-assess the dynamics of VMs' political attitudes in order for us to make sure of parties' strategies vis-à-vis VMs.

In order to test my first hypothesis, I begin my analyses by first revisiting the conclusions of the conventional wisdom by confirming if there is indeed still a stronger Liberal preference among VM compared to other Canadians. By comparing my VM respondents to the control sample of other Canadians, I can assess the impact of being a VM on partisan preferences. I do so by employing a dummy VM variable based on respondents who self-identified as being a VM. When used in a regression, this variable can determine if being a VM has a statistically significant effect on partisan attitudes. This variable's impact on partisan support levels is assessed side by side with control variables which account for social, attitudinal, and communal factors. However, beyond just determining if there is a relationship between being a VM and one's political attitudes, I can assess, by using a predicted values command in Stata, similarly to Blais (2005), the effective percentage point gap between VMs and non-VMs in regard to their partisan support. Used alongside other socio-demographic and attitudinal control variables, this VM dummy variable can accurately capture any effect which is specific to VM Canadians independently of effects brought about by gender, income, age, religion, province of residence, and level of education. The predicted values command would essentially allow me to assess the influence of being a VM has on partisan preferences. In theory, should the traditional literature's findings be replicated, I should expect a positive relationship between the VM dummy variable and levels of Liberal support even when controlling for other variables. If this is the case, we might also observe a considerable gap between VMs and other Canadians' levels of support for the Liberals which cannot be explained by conventional control variables.

However, by adding in predictor variables I can also assess those variables' influence in explaining the gap between VMs and non-VMs. For instance, if I were to find that there is a 15 percent point gap in Conservative support between VMs and other Canadians but that that margin drops to 12 percent when I account for respondents' opinion on multiculturalism, this would mean that multiculturalism, in theory, accounts for 3 of the original 15 percent point gap. Doing so, the idea is to reduce the VM variable's marginal effect on party support to as low as possible by gradually adding in indicator variables so as to be able to determine which factors explain VMs' tendency support the Liberals.

Looking at the operationalisation of indicators and control variables included in the analyses, the variables are divided into three categories: socio-demographic factors, attitudinal factors, and ethnic factors. Beginning with socio-demographic control variables, sex is operationalized as a binomial dummy variable to control for the influence of being a woman. Sex is relevant as the literature on Canadian voting behaviour has highlighted significant differences between men and women, with the latter tending to express more left-leaning voting preferences compared to men (Gidengil et al., 2013b). Meanwhile, to control for differences related to wealth and education, income is assessed using respondents' self-declared income bracket to account whereas level of education is broken down by respondents' highest level of completed education ranging from no schooling to a doctorate degree. Age was measured as an absolute number by using respondents' year of birth compared to the 2014 when they completed the PDP questionnaire, age cohorts were then coded into respective generations including millennials (born after 1997), generation X (1965-1976), baby boomers (1946-1964), and traditionalists (1908-1945).

A socio-demographic dynamic which is particularly relevant to visible minorities is that of differences brought about by immigration generation where we might expect differences between native-born (2nd generation) and immigrant VMs (1st generation) to manifest themselves. Indeed, immigration status can be particularly relevant factors as a large number of VMs are first-generation immigrants. In 2016, 69 percent of all VMs were born outside of Canada whereas that proportion was only eleven percent among other Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2019). As most VMs are recently-arrived immigrants or their descendants, we could expect them to have more positive views of immigration and diversity. These attitudes should, in theory, lead them to support parties with particularly favourable positions towards minorities and immigrants such as the Liberal party (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010). This theory of issue ownership thus depends on the fact that, more often than not, VMs tend to be new immigrants compared to other Canadians and, as such, will also tend to identify more strongly with the Liberals. However, relatively few studies have actually examined the effect of being an immigrant on Liberal support. One such study is that of Kim and Perrella (2008) which finds significant differences immigrants of European versus those of non-European descent (i.e. VMs). There might be therefore be important discrepancies between immigrants of non-European and European-descent to be accounted for in this regard. In fact, the authors themselves find

considerable attitudinal differences between White and non-European immigrants (Kim and Perrella, 2008) to an extent which justifies looking at the case of VM immigrants separately from other immigrant minorities. And while Kim and Perrella's findings are quite revealing of the political predispositions of immigrants in Canada, the scope of their study did not allow for precise comparisons between native-born and foreign-born VMs.

By controlling for immigrant-native born differences, my analyses would account for the effects of immigration while also measuring the variables' effect on VMs versus other Canadians. Assessing for generational effects is useful in that we can analyse the differences between VMs born outside of Canada and those who were born in the country. This is important as there has been very little research regarding the attitudinal differences between native-born VMs and immigrant VMs. And while we might expect there to be considerable differences between the two groups (White and Bilodeau, 2014), how this difference plays out remains largely unresearched. Should we expect, for instance, that minorities born in Canada have attitudes more in line with other Canadians while the opposite is true for immigrant VMs? Intuitively, we might expect VMs born in Canada and those have lived the longest in the country to be more acculturated with mainstream society and be more likely to adopt its political dynamics.

Another key socio-demographic variable to control for is that of province of residence whereby it is assumed that minorities learn and adopt the political dynamics of their province of residence. The idea being that as minorities typically reside in large urban centres in provinces with traditionally Liberal tendencies, VMs will also tend to adopt their environment's partisan preferences. Some evidence of this is provided by Harell (2013) who highlights the effect of regions on VMs' political opinions in her study of VM voter behaviour. VMs living in Ontario were, for instance, more likely to support the Liberals as opposed to those living in Western Canada, a region which historically expresses a stronger propensity to support the Conservatives. Harell's findings suggests that there is evidence of political acculturation which occurs among VMs where they learn and re-enact the political dynamics of their surroundings. Likewise, Bilodeau et al. (2015) and Bilodeau et al. (2010) find considerable level of adaptation of VMs to their provincial political sphere in regards to key regional grievances, with the key of exception being that of VMs in Quebec; in effect, this highlights that local political dynamics can have a

considerable influence on VMs' own views. It would not be surprising to assume that VMs' adaptation to their local political environment would not only draw them closer to other Canadians' patterns of political attitudes, but also away from their (initial) preference for the Liberals. Based on this, we might expect regional partisan dynamics to be reflected among VMs if such a regional socialisation effect exists.

Beyond social-demographic variables such as age, income, sex, level of education, religion, and province of residence, economic ideology (H2) and long-term social values (H3) also likely play a significant role in shifting political preferences. Respondents' economic ideologies (H2) are controlled using three separate variables assessing opinion on taxation, private healthcare, and on the influence of the state on people's lives. We might expect these control variables to be linked to partisan preferences with more right-leaning attitudes being linked with Conservative support. It is noteworthy that these three variables could not be simplified into one aggregate scale as their Cronbach alpha, which assesses covariance, score was inadequate to do so. The presence of the NDP on the left of the Liberal on the ideological spectrum could, however, pose a methodological problem in the analyses. On the other hand, the analyses looking at Conservative support should be able to discern any ideological effect more clearly as they are the only major right-wing party. Meanwhile, when focusing on the effect of social conservatism (H3), I make use of a single indicator variable which assesses, on an aggregate basis, how socially conservative respondents' social attitudes are. More specifically, this variable is developed as a scale by using five separate questions asking respondents' positions on homosexual marriage, abortion, the role of women, the legalisation of marijuana,[3] and prostitution. Negative or more conservative attitudes on those issues were understood as an indication of social conservatism among respondents. The scale, as a whole, is designed so that respondents who expressed more conservative views on those topics will have a higher score compared to those with more progressive opinions.

Looking at my fourth hypothesis which focuses on the effect that opinions on multiculturalism has on partisan preference, I make use of an indicator variable that assesses respondents' views on the effects of multiculturalism. This variable is built as a scale using three questions asking respondents on their opinions of multiculturalism's influence on immigrant

---

[3] The *PDP*'s question related to the legalisation of marijuana was asked in context prior to decriminalization in 2014.

integration, tolerance, and Canadian identity. Likewise to the social conservatism scale, the multiculturalism scale is designed so that respondents with positive views on multiculturalism's effects will have a higher score versus those that view multiculturalism's effect less positively.

To account for the effects of ethnic network (hypothesis 5), I control for the influence of contact with co-ethnics, specifically the frequency of contact with one's own ethnic community. This factor is assessed by using a question asking VM respondents how often they spent time with "people of the same ethnic background" as them without counting family members. Alongside this measurement of ethnic contact, I include a variable accounting for respondents' sense of ethnic consciousness for hypothesis 6 which looks at individuals' tendency to identify with their own ethnic community. This variable is operationalised using a specific question asking respondents if they would take criticism levelled against their community as a "personal insult." This question effectively allows us to assess the emotional attachment one forms with their ethnic community.

Should the ethnic argument be correct (H5 & H6), we should see that increased contact and attachment with one's community would theoretically incite individuals to conform and align with the rest of their community's political leanings. Intuitively, I would expect this "default" group position to be Liberal-leaning due to the traditionally close links found between minority and immigrant communities and the Liberal party. On the other hand, we might assume that a weaker overall attachment with one's community might lead to VMs having a weaker sense of Liberal attachment. Moreover, as previously stated, ethnic consciousness can also be interpreted as a second measure of minorities' issue sensitivity towards topics of diversity and minority interests. VMs with a strong attachment to their ethnic community would be expected to care more deeply about communal interests, even more so than their purely personal ones. As such, based on the existing literature, we would expect that VMs with stronger ethnic attachment than would also tend to express a stronger sense of Liberal preference even when controlling for other factors.

In line with the arguments relating to political socialisation, I expect that more long-term established VMs who have been in Canada longer and/or who are born in Canada to be more in tune with mainstream society's partisan preferences. I measure this dynamic via VM respondents' length of residence which should provide an idea of their level of socialisation and

acculturation with Canadian politics and society. So as to keep native-born VMs in the analyses, I use native-born as a reference category for the different immigrant generations. To assess the presence of any gap between Canadian-born and immigrant status respondents, I sometimes also opt to simply run a dichotomous variable in some analyses.

Having assessed the factors underlying VMs' pattern of partisan preferences, I will proceed to breaking down the VM category so as to potentially identify political heterogeneity among the different ethno-cultural minority communities. To ensure I have enough respondents in my each of my analyses, I limit the scope of the analysis to two VM communities which deviate significantly from other VMs' partisan pattern, specifically Canadians of Chinese origin and Muslim VMs. I will first assess if there is meaningful difference in partisan preference between the two communities and other VMs by first using descriptive statistics and then separate regression models for each community so as to distinguish the different communities. Assuming that there is indeed heterogeneity between the different VM communities,[4] this will allow me to construct a much more detailed and fleshed out analysis of each VM community and better understand what factors underpin their respective political preferences.

---

[4] My preliminary analyses do seem to suggest that there is an appreciable level of heterogeneity in partisan preferences.

Chapter One – A Liberal Partisan?

Section I – Are Visible Minority Canadians Different from Other Canadians?

This research rests upon the assumption that VM Canadians have distinct partisan preferences compared to other Canadians, at least partly as a result of their unique social backgrounds. Although past works have already commented on the existence of strong political preference for the Liberal party among Canadians of non-European descent and VMs, it is nonetheless appropriate that this study would revisit this claim using new data. Doing so is not only a necessary starting point for this research, as the absence of any discernable difference would undermine the purpose of this research, but also because reconfirming the conventional knowledge in the wake of almost a decade of Conservative rule is necessary.

Table 1 - Partisan Preferences of Visible Minorities and Other Canadians

	Visible Minorities	Other Canadians
Conservatives	24%	28%
Liberals	46%	31%
NDP	24%	25%
Other Parties	6%	16%
n	1,364	2,698

Looking at the simple distribution of partisan identification of VM Canadians and other Canadians in Table 1, it is apparent that there is a noticeable gap in the level of Liberal preference among VMs versus among non-VM Canadians. Whereas other Canadians' propensity of identifying as a Liberal or a Conservative are fairly similar, with only a difference of around 3 percentage points (31 vs 28%) in favour of the Liberals, that gap is a massive 22 percentage points in favour of the Liberals among VM Canadians (46% for the Liberals versus 24% for the Conservatives). VMs' preference for third parties like the Bloc Québécois and Green Party was also considerably weaker than other Canadians.[5] Compared to our descriptive sample

---

[5] Although not mentioned here, a considerable number of VM Canadians (31 percent) did not express any partisan loyalty whatsoever or did not know which party to identify with, much more so when compared to the 20 percent of other Canadians with similarly non-partisan views. One might interpret this weaker sense of partisan identity as being the result of a lack of familiarity with Canadian politics since a good number of VMs only recently

(n=4,062), when we narrow down to our analysis sample in Table 2 (n=3,143) because of discarded responses, we notice that there is a 16 percentage point gap between VMs and other Canadians in favour of the Liberals where 44 percent of VMs identified with the party versus 28 percent with other Canadians (28%). In subsequent analyses, we will see how control and indicator variables might lessen (or increase) this gap as they may provide explanations for the gap in Liberal preference.

Table 2 - Gap in Liberal Preference Between Visible Minorities and Other Canadians

	Liberal support
Visible minorities	44%
Other Canadians	28%
VM predicted value gap	.16
n	3,143

With these observations in mind, the presence of a clear Liberal preference among VMs therefore seems quite clear, yet these simple analyses do not reveal much beyond simply listing the distribution of political preferences. Instead, more complex analyses are required to assess the individual effect of specific factors such as VM status' influence on Liberal preference while controlling for socio-demographic factors. Looking at the results in Table 3, we see that visible minority status is positively correlated to the likelihood of identifying as a Liberal at a statistically significant level even when controlling for factors relating to social background

The control variables indicate some signs of generational effects with younger people seemingly more open to the Liberals than older respondents. In line with the Canadian literature on voting behaviour, regionalism had a strong effect in shaping Liberal support with respondents outside of Ontario being noticeably less likely to support the party. Albertans were, unsurprisingly, the least likely to support the Liberals. Residents of British Columbia and Quebec were also considerably less positive about the Liberals than Ontarian respondents. Reflecting the findings of Harell (2013), education did not have any effect in predicting Liberal

---

immigrated to Canada and as such might not have developed a particularly close relationship with any political party.

support. Catholics in this sample were not found to be more pro-Liberal either despite Blais'
(2005) strong results regarding Liberal support among Catholics.

Table 3 - Canadians' Liberal preferences, controlling for social-demographic factors

	Other Canadians		Visible minorities	
	Coefficient	**SE**	**Coefficient**	**SE**
Visible minority status (ref: non-VMs)	.82	.15***	---	---
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.54	.18**	.25	.54
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.30	.18	.66	.54
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.09	.17	.83	.56
Born in Canada (ref: Immigrant)	.08	.16	.15	.23
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	-.02	.21	-.17	.24
Female	.01	.10	.19	.18
Education level	.03	.03	.06	.06
Income	.02	.01	-.02	.03
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-.21	.12	.31	.23
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	-.53	.13***	-.32	.21
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.34	.12**	-.15	.20
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.11	.12	-.15	.24
Constant	-.93	.31**	-1.12	.70
Visible minority preference gap	.19		---	
Pseudo R-Square	.03		.02	
n	3,143		1,053	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

Interestingly, there was no statistically significant effect which distinguished immigrants
from native-born Canadians, nor was there any effect for recent immigrants. This finding seems
to provide evidence against White and Bilodeau's (2014) finding that immigrant voters are more
pro-Liberal than their domestic-born counterparts. The second result is, however, consistent with
the findings of Kim and Perrella (2008) that length of residency is rather lackluster predictor of
Liberal support for immigrant voters. In short, these results seem to provide considerable

evidence against the hypothesis that recent immigration and immigration status have a significant effect on partisan preferences.

The results of this initial analysis reconfirm the idea that VMs do indeed express a stronger attachment to the LPC than other Canadians, even when controlling for socio-demographic and regional factors. Yet, far from explaining VMs' stronger Liberal preference, controlling for these factors seem to further emphasize the individual effect of being a VM. While the gap in Liberal preference between VM and other Canadians was originally 16 percentage points in favour of the Liberals (Table 2), with social-demographic factors controlled for, the margin gap in fact *increased* to 19 percent. The absence of a decrease in the predicted values gap caused by the addition of socio-demographic and regional control variables suggests that those factors are unable to explain why racial minorities are more likely to identify with the Liberal party. If anything, a widening gap would suggest that VM Liberal support would be even higher if it were not for those other factors which drive support for other parties. Moreover, the overall regression model's r-square is very low at 0.03 which signifies that the model has very weak overall explanatory power. This suggests that socio-demographic factors might not be the main explanation behind Canadians' Liberal preference. This is a conclusion which is reinforced by the complete lack of significant relationships when looking at VM respondents only in the second part of the table. This means that none of the social-demographic control factors could explain VMs' Liberal preference.

While this might be seen as an important set-back for the use of social-demographic approaches in the case of this study, it is worthwhile to specify that social-demographic factors should not be seen as the most direct or explanatory factor in shaping individuals' political identity. Instead, more immediate factors with stronger direct links to partisan identity need to also be considered such as individuals' political attitudes and communal dynamics which should have a greater influence overall. And although social-demographic factors might not be the main explanation behind political preference, it is arguable that they nonetheless have a significant role in shaping attitudes and as such play an indirect role in structuring partisan preference. Still, it is apparent that the bulk of the explanation behind VMs' preference for the Liberal party lay in factors going beyond social characteristics.

Section III – An issue of economic ideology?

Moving on from social factors to attitudinal ones, the following sections (III-V) focus on examining the impact social and economic values have on party preferences. As previously discussed, I focus primarily on deep-seated values and ideological factors which are unlike shorter-term attitudes like leader evaluations and campaign dynamics. One such ideological attitude of note is that of economic ideology, particularly regarding the role of the state, and its effects on partisan attitudes. Economic attitudes have the potential of having considerable influence on VMs' party preferences seeing as social and economic policies have important consequences on their livelihoods. If this assessment is correct, we should see that not only does economic ideology affect party preference but that, moreover, a left-right divide should emerge. However, seeing as there is a lack of studies looking at minorities' economic ideology in Canada, the existing literature has fairly little to say regarding this and thus the ideological tendencies of VMs remains largely unknown and difficult to predict.

Using data available from the *Provincial Diversity Project* I can begin to draw the outlines of VM Canadians' economic ideology. Three questions in the *PDP* assessed respondents' ideological tendencies on the role of the private sector in healthcare, on investing in social programs as opposed to lowering taxes, and, generally, on if the state has too much influence in everyday people's lives. Respondents were asked if they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each of the three statements. While initially I attempted to combine all three questions into a single index akin to the multiculturalism variable, I reverted to using all three questions separately in the analyses as the three variables did not covary well together as a scale with a Cronbach alpha of only 0.43. In fact, there was fairly little coherence or ideological consistency in the answers provided in all three questions. As shown in Table 4, while a small majority (55% versus 45% against) of respondents favoured (agree and strongly agree) investing more into social programs as opposed to decreasing taxes, 70 percent of respondents felt that the government had too much influence in people's lives, and around 52 percent believed that the private sector should play a bigger role in healthcare. Additionally, we can also see that the differences between VMs and other Canadians are mostly minimal, except in regard to the question on health care where VMs were in fact more favourable to privatization.

Table 4 - VMs and other Canadians' economic ideological positions

	Visible Minorities	Other Canadians	All Canadians
Prefer reducing taxes than investing in social programs	44%	47%	45%
In favour of the private sector having an expanded role in health care	59%	48%	52%
Agree that the state has too much influence on people's lives	72%	69%	70%

When looking at the regression model in Table 5 which adds in the three variables assessing economic ideology, results show that none of them has any statistically significant effects in predicting Liberal support among all respondents. In fact, the VM gap in Liberal preference essentially stagnated compared to the previous analysis, thus indicating that opinions on economic policy and the role of the state fail to explain VMs' unique political preference for the Liberals. The VM only analysis further reinforces this conclusion as none of the three ideological factors were significant. These results therefore seem to suggest that economic ideology has little influence in explaining VMs' strong Liberal preferences. This implies that the key factor behind VMs' partisan preferences has little to do with their personal economic ideology, the argument that they might be more sensitive to economic policies as it affects integration processes does not seem to hold in this case.

Table 5 - Assessing the VM gap in Liberal support, controlling for social-demographic and social-economic ideological factors

	All Canadians		Visible minorities	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
Visible minority status (ref: non-VMs)	.84	.15***	---	---
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.54	.18**	.35	.53
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.30	.18	.76	.54
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.08	.16	.90	.55
Born in Canada (ref: Immigrant)	.08	.16	.16	.53
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	.02	.21	-.20	.54
Female	-.02	.10	.19	.19
Education level	.02	.03	.06	.06
Income	.02	.01	-.02	.03
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-.20	.13	.31	.23
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	-.53	.13***	-.31	.21
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.35	.12**	-.15	.20
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.14	.12	-.14	.23
Lowering taxes vs social programs	-.06	.05	.05	.09
Private sector in health care	-.06	.05	-.09	.09
Government has too much influence	-.10	.06	.14	.11
Constant	-.30	.40	-1.51	.84[T]
Visible minority preference gap	.20		---	
Pseudo R-Square	.03		.02	
n	3,143		1,053	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

Section IV – A Socially Conservative Political Partisan?

If social-demographic factors and economic ideology do not explain the Liberal predominance among VMs, then perhaps the core of the explanation may come down to social values as Harrel (2013) suggests. Older works like Blais (2005) find that Canadians of non-European descent tend to be more socially conservative than other Canadians, yet that has not traditionally prevented them from supporting a fairly socially progressive party like the Liberals.

This is rather counter-intuitive as we would expect fairly fundamental social values to hold considerable influence in one's political preferences. In practice, we should be expecting VMs to be supporting the Conservatives because of the convergence in social values instead of the more socially progressive Liberals, yet this does not seem to be traditionally the case. Regardless, the factor of social values, more specifically social conservatism, and its effect on partisan attitudes requires to be further fleshed out, especially in assessing the variable's overall weight when compared to other socio-attitudinal factors.

My measure of respondents' social conservatism was comprehensive in that it combines respondents' views on five social issues: homosexual marriage, women's role at home, access to abortion, legalisation of marijuana, euthanasia, and decriminalisation of prostitution. In all five questions, respondents could indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statements put to them in the questionnaire. Using these five social questions, I constructed my social conservatism scale which ranged from 0, being most progressive, to 10, being most socially conservative. This was possible as the five variables covariate well together with a Cronbach alpha score of 0.73.

Table 6 - VMs and other Canadians' average social attitudes

	Visible Minorities	Other Canadians	All Canadians
Social conservatism scale mean score (0-10)	4.7	3.9	4.2
n	2,041	3,420	5,647

Looking at Canadians' social attitudes in Table 6, we notice that there is indeed a gap between VMs and non-VMs in regards to social values with VMs being noticeably more socially conservative across all five social issues. Whereas non-VMs scored an average of 3.9 on 10 in the social conservatism scale, VMs scored 4.7 in the scale which means that VMs are overall around 8 percentage points less socially progressive than other Canadians on the questions of abortion, homosexual marriage, euthanasia, the role of women, and the legalisation of marijuana. The fact that VMs that are more socially conservative than other Canadians is very much in line with Blais' (2005) findings and should come as no surprise. After all, many VMs originally

immigrated from non-Western countries and brought over, in the process, more conservative views of society.

If VMs overall have more conservative social values, then the question remains as to how that affects their partisan attitudes. When run in a regression model with all respondents in Table 7, the social conservatism variable is statistically significant in predicting Liberal preference: as expected, respondents with less conservative values tend to prefer the Liberals as opposed to other parties. Statistically significance does not, however, reveal a complete picture of reality. In fact, the addition of the social conservatism scale into the regression actually *increases* the gap explained by the VM factor to 21 points from 20 points. This result suggests that, far from explaining VMs' Liberal preferences, social conservatism actually has the opposite effect in further emphasizing VM distinctiveness. In fact, the results of the second model which only looks at VM respondents shows that social conservatism does not have a significant effect on Liberal support. Social conservatism therefore does not seem to have a distinct effect in shaping VMs' view on the Liberals compared to other Canadians.

This result seems to run counter to Harrel's (2013) conclusion that there is a link between more progressive VMs and a greater likelihood to vote for the Liberals. It is however to be noted that Harrel (2012) looked at vote preference whereas, in my case, I focus on long term political partisanship. While in theory it would be surprising to find that social conservatism impacts one's vote but not one's political partisanship, it remains that this is a difference to possibly consider. Temporal differences in the data used by my study and Harrel (2013) might also provide an alternate explanation for the discrepancy in results. After all, that study primarily focused at a time of Liberal decline. Yet, this explanation hardly holds ground when you consider that Blais (2005) looked at CES data around the time of the 2004 election and also found little in regards to social attitudes affecting Liberal support. Similarly, if there was not an affect prior to Harper nor was there an effect in the last year of the Conservative government in 2014, it becomes fairly difficult to explain Harrel's (2012) finding.

One way to interpret the lack of correlation between social values and Liberal support is down to a factor of issue salience. Likewise, issue salience can also explain the contradiction between VMs' socially conservative values and their willingness to support a progressive party like the Liberals. In the voter behaviour literature, issue salience is generally understood as the

Table 7 - Canadians' Liberal preferences, controlling for social-demographic, social-economic ideology, and social attitudes (without and with social values interaction effect)

	All Canadians		Visible minorities	
	Coefficient	**SE**	**Coefficient**	**SE**
Visible minority status (ref: non-VMs)	.91	.15***	---	---
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.55	.18**	.33	.53
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.29	.18	.76	.54
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.09	.16	.89	.55
Born in Canada (ref: Immigrant)	.03	.15	.14	.23
Recent immigrants (<15 years)			-.17	.24
Female	-.00	.10	.19	.19
Education level	.01	.03	.06	.06
Income	.02	.01	-.02	.03
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-.21	.13^T	.29	.23
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	-.51	.13***	-.33	.22
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.35	.12**	-.16	.20
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.16	.12	-.15	.23
Lowering taxes vs social programs	-.04	.05	.05	.09
Private sector in health care	-.04	.05	-.08	.09
Government has too much influence	-.08	.06	.16	.12
Social conservatism	-.08	.03**	-.06	.05
Constant	-.07	.40	-1.29	.86
Visible minority preference gap	.21		---	
Pseudo R-Square	0.04		.02	
n	3,143		1,053	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

issues which voters consider to be most relevant and important during elections (Bélanger and Meguid, 2008). In this regard, despite the fact that VMs are noticeably less progressive than other Canadians, it is arguable that their Liberal preference is largely unaffected as social ideology is not a key component in structuring their political preferences. It is simply not their priority when choosing which party to support. When viewed this way, the issue salience argument would at least partly explain why VM support for the Liberals seemed largely unaffected in the early 2000s despite the Liberals' position to legalise same-sex marriage (Blais,

2005). In essence, even though the Liberal party has historically tended to support more progressive policies like on abortion and homosexuality when compared to the Conservatives, VMs are willing to overlook their social ideological antagonisms with the Liberals in favour of other factors. Historically, some authors hypothesized that this was due to the Liberals' position on multiculturalism, diversity, and immigration (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010). The argument would therefore be one of issue salience whereby social values are not VMs' key priority versus those relating to ethnocultural diversity. Moreover, the results show that VMs' distinct social values cannot explain the gap in Liberal support between them and other Canadians. Instead, we need to look at other factors to potentially explain the said gap.

Section V – The Liberal Party as The Party of Multiculturalism?

One factor we should expect to be particularly important for VMs is their opinions of multiculturalism, a policy and ideology closely tied with their position within Canadian society (White and Bilodeau, 2014). Indeed, the idea of Canada as a racially and ethnically diverse and inclusive country partly depends on the policy of multiculturalism. We would therefore expect VMs to have a strong attachment to multiculturalism. On an electoral level, we would expect that VMs with more positive attitudes towards multiculturalism would also tend to support parties with strong stances in favour of multiculturalism and diversity. Historically, we would associate these issues with the Liberals, hence the idea of Liberal "issue ownership" on topics of diversity and immigration (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010).

To test the relationship between attitudes towards multiculturalism and Liberal partisan preference, I employ an index based on three questions that asked respondents if multiculturalism had a positive, negative, or no effect on (1) how well immigrants integrate, (2) on Canadians' level of tolerance towards other ethnic groups, and (3) on Canadian identity. With a Cronbach alpha score of 0.82, all three questions were sufficiently in line with each other to be combined into one scale variable ranging from -3, being very negative about the effects of multiculturalism, to 3, being very positive about its effects. When looking at VMs' opinions of multiculturalism we quickly notice that, in line with past research, they are noticeably more positive (1.7) than other Canadians' opinion (0.0). This finding should not be surprising as

multiculturalism was essential to reshaping Canadian society from a primarily white (non-VM) society to a more multiethnic society where VMs could, at least, feel included in.

Table 8 - Canadians' Liberal preferences, controlling for social-demographic, social-economic ideology, and social attitudes

	All Canadians		Visible minorities	
	Coefficient	**SE**	**Coefficient**	**SE**
Visible minority status (ref: non-VMs)	.82	.16***	---	---
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.61	.18**	.30	.54
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.33	.18^T	.74	.55
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.11	.17	.89	.56
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	.04	.15	.16	.24
Recent immigrants (<15 years)			-.16	.24
Female	-.01	.10	.18	.19
Education level	-.00	.03	.06	.06
Income	.02	.01	-.02	.03
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-.21	.13^T	.31	.23
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	-.54	.13***	-.37	.22
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.37	.13**	-.18	.20
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.16	.12	-.17	.23
Lowering taxes vs social programs	-.02	.06	.05	.09
Private sector in health care	-.05	.05	-.10	.09
Government has too much influence	-.06	.06	.15	.12
Social conservatism	-.07	.02**	-.06	.05
Multiculturalism	.08	.03**	.07	.06
Constant	-.11	.40	-1.26	.87
Visible minority variable's margin	.19		---	
Pseudo R-Square	.04		.03	
n	3,143		1,053	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; T $p < 0.1$

When looking at the variable's effect in a regression model in Table 8 alongside our previous social-demographic factors, we notice that the multiculturalism variable is indeed statistically significant when looking at all respondents and manages to explain a small two percent of the VM/non-VM gap: 19 points versus 21 points in the analysis of Table 7. However, when looking at the VM-only analysis, we see that the multiculturalism variable loses its

significance. This suggests that opinions of multiculturalism have no effect no on VMs' Liberal preference, but also that this relationship between multiculturalism and the Liberal party only seems to hold true for other Canadians.

This finding would suggest that the myth of multiculturalism as a Liberal issue does not seem to be present among VMs, regardless of what the majority Canadians believes. This result could also suggest that multiculturalism for VMs has, as an issue, transcended the realm of partisan politics. The issue might therefore not be particularly relevant in structuring VMs' political preferences. After all, it can be argued that the very idea of multiculturalism as a societal ideology has become largely unchallenged within the sphere of mainstream political discourse. In a sense, neither the NDP, the Liberals, or the Conservatives would actively run on a platform actively "against" multiculturalism. Just as most political parties would agree that improving the economy or reducing crime is good, all major parties would agree that multiculturalism and cultural diversity are also fundamentally "good." Instead, if there is partisan competition over this issue it largely is limited to how best to manage the said issue, supporting multiculturalism has thus essentially become something of a valence issue akin to the idea of creating jobs or fighting crime (Bélanger and Meguid, 2007; Stokes, 1963). The results of Table 8 suggest that the Liberal party does not distinguish itself on multiculturalism in the eyes of VMs to warrant an issue ownership of the topic. The absence of a statistical relationship among VM respondents might however come down to some methodological issues. One might for instance assume that there is a fairly weak amount of variance found in VMs' opinions of multiculturalism as one would assume that the overwhelming majority hold very positive views. Indeed, over 70 percent of VM respondents stated that multiculturalism had a positive effect on Canadian identity, in contrast only around 35 percent of other Canadians who shared this view. As such, one might infer from this that there is a general lack of variance among VMs in regards to these questions and thus the variable is unable to correlate strongly with anything else. However, when looking at the multiculturalism variable as a scale we notice that the standard error is in fact greater among VMs (0.5) than non-VM (0.4) which suggests the opposite. The lack of relationship between VMs' view of multiculturalism and their partisan preferences therefore does not seem to be caused by a lack of variance in VMs' opinions.

Still, despite a null finding among VMs, there was still a very strong link between the multiculturalism variable and levels of Liberal support when looking at non-VMs. This finding therefore provides some evidence of Liberal issue ownership on the topic of multiculturalism as suggested by Bilodeau and Kanji (2010), but only among majority Canadians. In a sense, Bilodeau and Kanji's hypothesis that VMs support the Liberals because they perceive the Liberals as the party of multiculturalism is in fact rather representative of most Canadians' view of the matter, but not actually that of VMs'.

Section VI – Ethno-Communal Dynamics and Effects on Partisan Attitudes

If attitudinal factors cannot account for VMs' Liberal preference, then perhaps the key to understanding VMs' Liberal propensity might relate to their feelings towards their community. While this study has already looked at the social bases underpinning partisan attitudes in a manner not too dissimilar to Gidengil et al. (2012) and Blais et al. (2002), there is more to it than one might initially think. Indeed, the sociological dynamics of political behaviour go beyond simple analyses of individuals' socio-demographic background and into more complex assessments of specific groups' communal dynamics, namely via the effects of in-group socialisation. Consequently, the communal dynamics underpinning VMs' partisan attitudes have yet to be thoroughly examined in Canada, despite the fact that evidence would suggest that in-group social networks can have considerable influence on minority groups' political behaviour (Bilodeau, 2009).

Community-related dynamics are all the more relevant when one considers the historical preference of VMs for the Liberals and, more specifically, the strong relationship the LPC has had with ethnic communities at the communal level (Bird, 2005). Consequently, the hypothesis I suggest here is that because of this historical relationship, VM communities have, broadly speaking, also developed a particular preference for the Liberals. Variance in Liberal support might therefore stem from individual VMs' closeness with their ethnic community: whereby minorities with strong attachment to their community will adhere to their groups' Liberal preference whereas those with more individualistic attitudes might instead express a more lukewarm Liberal preference. To examine this hypothesis more closely, this section focuses on the influence of VMs' social contact and ethnic attachment on their Liberal preference.

Operationalising ethic contact, I make use of a question asking respondents how often they spent "time with people of the same ethnic background as them" (excluding family members). Respondents could then choose between never, a few times a year, once or twice a month, and every week. While this question is certainly not an all-inclusive measure of all forms of social contact it at least does account for the ethnic component of being a VM. I expect that increasing levels of ethnic contact to be correlated with an increase in Liberal preference. Looking at the variable on a descriptive level, we see that most VMs see members of their ethnic community only fairly occasionally with only 20 percent meeting on a weekly basis and 29 percent on a monthly basis. Meanwhile, 34 percent reported seeing their co-ethnics a few times per year and 16 percent state that they never do.

Table 9 – Visible minorities' level of ethnic contact with non-family members

Time spent with people of the same ethnic background (excluding family members)	
Weekly	20%
Monthly	29%
Yearly	34%
Never	16%
n	1,557

The other variable I include is that of ethnic consciousness or ethnic solidarity, as a measure of respondents' level of attitudinal attachment to their ethnic community. The assumption here is that individuals with a high level of ethnic consciousness are more conscious of their communities' interests and preferences whereas those with a weak sense of consciousness might instead view themselves as being detached or even distinct from their community. Moreover, ethnic consciousness could be considered another measure of Liberal issue ownership in regards to cultural diversity and minority rights alongside the multiculturalism variable. Ethnic consciousness, in this sense, assesses how much respondents care about their communities' interests and, by extension, about those of minorities. To gauge ethnic consciousness, VM respondents were asked their level of agreement with the statement "when someone criticizes people of my own ethnic group it feels like a personal insult." While the choice of question may initially seem rather indirect, it remains that the question strikes

directly at VMs' emotional attachment to their communities. A person who identifies strongly with their community would most likely answer that they would feel *personally* attacked if their community was criticized, whereas an individual with a weak sense of attachment and a more individualistic outlook might feel rather indifferent. In a sense, ethnic consciousness also becomes a measure of solidarity with one's ethnic group. Conversely, a weak sense of ethnic consciousness could also hint at a more individualistic attitude which is more detached form the community. Looking at VMs' sense of ethnic consciousness, we see that the large majority of VMs, slightly under 76 percent, express a sense of ethnic consciousness whereas more than 24 percent did not.

Table 10 – Visible minorities' level of ethnic consciousness with non-family members

When someone criticizes people of my own ethnic group it feels like a personal insult	
Strongly agree	38%
Agree	38%
Disagree	17%
Strongly disagree	7%
n	1,582

However, by deciding to include both variables in this study's analyses, this adds methodological issues as the two questions used for measuring ethnic contact and ethnic consciousness were only included in the VM only segment of the PDP. This limitation therefore restricts the possibility of doing combined VM and non-VM analyses as the non-VM respondents did not provide answers in regards to their ethnic contact and their level of ethnic consciousness; moreover, this means that assessing the marginal effect of being a VM is no longer as straightforward as it had been in previous analyses.

The alternative to maintaining a combined VM and non-VM analytic approach is to continue the analyses by only looking at VM respondents (n=819). The main advantage to this is that it allows for a clearer assessment of variables affect VMs' partisan preferences; the disadvantage, however, is that we lose the benefits of using the marginal effect to assess which factor(s) have the greatest influence on VMs' distinct partisan attitudes when compared to other Canadians. With this mind, I opt to continue this chapter's empirical analyses in this manner: I

expect that the more refined assessment of VMs' socio-attitudinal effects to be sufficiently data rich to compensate for the loss of the marginal effect analysis.

Table 11 – Visible minorities' Liberal attitudes with all control variables

	Coefficient	SE
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	.26	.54
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	.49	.56
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	.68	.55
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	.11	.25
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	-.18	.25
Female	.39	.20*
Education level	.01	.06
Income	-.02	.03
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	.44	.23T
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	-.25	.24
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.07	.23
Catholic (ref: other religions)	-.13	.25
Lowering taxes vs social programs	-.02	.10
Private sector in health care	-.08	.10
Government has too much influence	.05	.12
Social conservatism	-.08	.05
Multiculturalism	-.02	.06
Ethnic network contact	-.04	.11
Ethnic consciousness	.25	.11*
Constant	-.88	.97
Low ethnic consciousness support	.33	
High ethnic consciousness support	.50	
Pseudo R-Square	.03	
n	819	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

Looking at the results of the two factors in Table 11, we see that respondents' frequency of contact with (non-familial) individuals of the same ethnic group had no significant effect in predicting VMs' Liberal support. This is a partial defeat for the Columbia approach which understands social interactions as a strong factor in individuals' political socialisation; although,

it is to be noted that the data here does not control for community homogeneity which Lazardfeld et al. (1965) viewed as an important measure for socialisation intensity. Surprisingly, the only statistically significant variable is that of ethnic consciousness. This means that opinions of multiculturalism, economic ideology, and even social conservatism has no effect and only VMs' emotional attachment to their ethnic community actually matters. This result is all the more surprising when one considers that it introduces a previously untested factor into the literature of partisan attitudes in Canada.

As for control variables, gender proved to be a significant factor whereby female VMs were considerably more likely to identify as a Liberal versus their male counterparts. This somewhat supports the findings of Gidengil et al. (2013) regarding women's more left-leaning tendencies versus men. In this case, this would mean that this effect would also seem to apply to VM women. Interesting also, VMs living in Quebec also tended to support the Liberals more strongly than those living in the other provinces. While this effort was only the edge of statistical significance, this might a political expression of the alienation faced by VMs in Quebec towards the province and who instead view the Liberals as the party to defend their rights.

Figure A – Visible Minorities' Liberal Preference by Level of Ethnic Consciousness (ref: other Canadians' Liberal preference level)
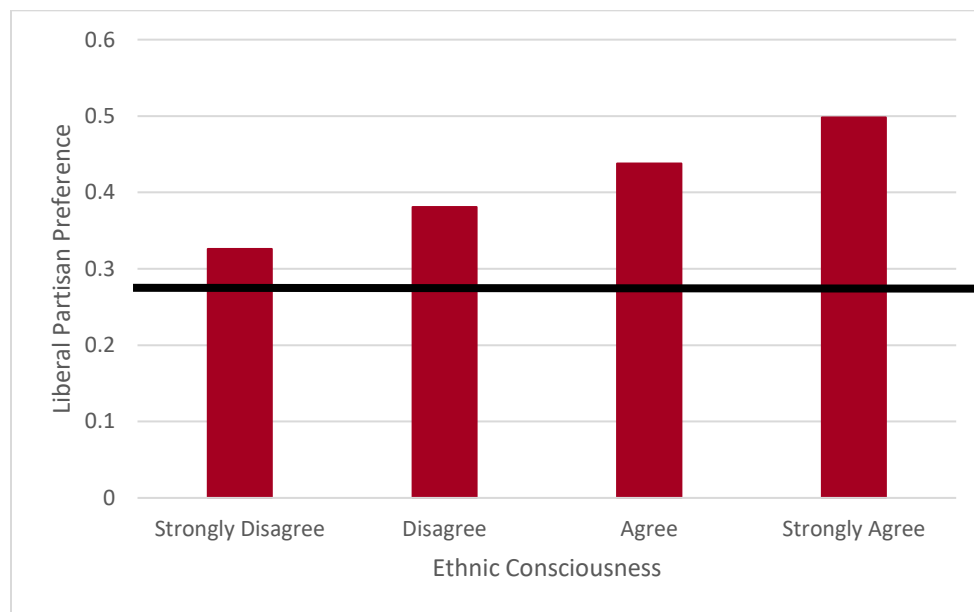
As it was not possible to properly assess the gap in Liberal support among VMs compared to other Canadians in this section, I measure the variance in Liberal support differently. By using predicted value commands I am able to calculate the likelihood of supporting the Liberals by level of ethnic consciousness while still controlling for all the other factors. Reflecting the effect of the ethnic consciousness variable in the regression analysis, VMs' Liberal support increased the more strongly attached they felt to their community (Figure A). For reference, I include a baseline of non-VM respondents' level of Liberal support (28%) when controlling for other factors. As seen in Figure A, we see that VMs with a very weak sense of ethnic consciousness expressed similar levels of Liberal preference (33%) compared to other Canadians. Meanwhile, VMs who did express a fairly strong sense of community attachment were noticeably much more pro-Liberal: those who agreed with the ethnic consciousness question were 44 percent in support of the party whereas that number was a staggering 50 percent for respondents who strongly agreed.

What does ethnic consciousness mean for VMs' partisan attitudes if ethnic contact is not a key factor? The unique nature of the results imply that the underlying dynamic is not so much one of ethnic interaction since ethnic social contacts do not seem to matter in this case, but rather it is one's emotional identification with the community which has an effect. Then, what effect does this variable have? Why are VMs with a stronger attachment to their community more likely to support the Liberals? One possible explanation harkens back to the multiculturalism and diversity argument which this study has previously examined. As suggested then, while multiculturalism does not seem to have a Liberal partisan connotation among VMs as is the case for other Canadians, it remains that VMs do in fact particularly care about issues relating to ethnocultural diversity (White and Bilodeau, 2014). Perhaps then the key underlying explanation for ethnic consciousness is when it is viewed as a measure for respondents' sensitivity towards their ethnic communities' interests and, more broadly, the treatment of minorities. After all, if the Liberal party truly is the party of minorities as suggested (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010; White and Bilodeau, 2014), then VMs will invariably flock to the party for being the best defender of their interests. That dynamic, however, invariably depends on if the VM respondent actually even identifies with their community in the first place. A person who lacks the emotional attachment to their ethnic community - as measured through the ethnic consciousness variable - is unlikely to feel as strongly about their community's interests as a person who identifies very strongly

with their community. The dynamic herein presented is thus dependent on minority respondents' sense of collective ethnic solidarity with others in their community as well as their willingness to prioritize their groups' interests above other political issues.

What do the implications for the role of ethnic networks on political attitudes? The absence of relationship between ethnic contact and Liberal support seems to provide some evidence that the strong Liberal propensity found among VMs cannot be explained by social contact with one's own in-group. Simply put, extra-familial social-ethnic interactions are not the key factor in explaining VMs' partisan preferences.

However, ethnic communities do matter in influencing partisan attitudes as demonstrated by the factor of ethnic consciousness. As demonstrated by the data, there is a perceived link between VM groups' interests and the Liberal party as VMs with a strong sense of attachment to their community tend to gravitate towards the supposed party of minorities. This perspective is consistent with the communally held understanding that the Liberal party is indeed the party of VM groups. But even then, this does not mean that all VMs support the Liberals as this is clearly not the case with the majority of VM partisans preferring a party other than the LPC (Table 1). Indeed, to assume that would be to imply that all VMs adhere to the dominant thought pattern within their groups simply because they are a member of the group, which is of course an overgeneralised assessment. Clearly then, there is a factor at the sub-group level that allows for appreciable variance in party preferences among VMs, I argue that the key factor underlying this is that of ethnic consciousness. If there is indeed a belief within VM communities that the Liberals are the party of minorities, one must necessarily identify with that community to care or develop that belief. An individual with a weak sense of emotional attachment to his fellow co-ethnics cannot be expected to fully prioritize the groups' interests above their own as they view themselves as being somewhat separate from the group. What this could mean is that there is indeed a dominant group view in regard to which party is best for the community's interests, but that that collective view can only apply to those members who actually view themselves as intimate members of the community. Members with a weaker sense of emotional attachment to the group will not necessarily abide by the dominant view as they themselves do not feel a strong personal link with the community's fate and interests. This means that although there is a

sociological aspect to political partisanship, that aspect must also consider the individual level in assessing its influence.

Section VII – A Liberal Partisan?

This chapter has reconfirmed that VMs, even in 2014, still maintained a particularly strong preference for the Liberal party as opposed to other political parties. Levels of support for the Conservatives, the NDP, and other minor parties were all noticeably lower among VMs when compared to other Canadians; moreover, VMs were also considerably more likely to state that they had no partisan preference compared to non-VM Canadians suggesting a weaker political integration. And while at a glance the gap in Liberal support between VMs and majority Canadians may only be a few percent, the gap widens to almost 19 percent (Table 3) once other socio-demographic factors are accounted for.

When trying to explain *why* the bulk of this gap exists, most conventional indicators were unable to do so. Socio-demographic factors such as age, immigrant status, province of residence, income, gender, and level of education all could not explain VMs' higher likelihood to prefer the Liberals. I also find that immigration status has no effect in predicting VM's Liberal preferences, there is therefore no difference between native-born VMs and their immigrant brethren. And while past works have often emphasized the Liberals' achievements in liberalising the immigration system to explain support among minorities (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010; Blais, 2005; Kim and Perrella, 2008) and the presence of a domestic-foreign born divide (White and Bilodeau, 2014), it would seem that this perceived "friendliness" of the Liberals is not limited to only immigrant VMs but also extends to their native-born counterparts. What the results suggest is that VMs are actually fairly homogenous across generational lines in regards to their attitudes towards the Liberals. Hence, variance in one's political attitudes might not so much be due to personal experiences and background; instead, greater emphasis on the group's collective mindset and perception might yield better results. As a mere socio-demographic measure, length of residence and immigrant status provide little in terms of explanatory power to the analyses.

Overall, conventional attitudinal factors fared little better than socio-demographic factors, with social conservatism and economic ideology actually widening the gap in Liberal support

between VMs and non-VMs. Opinions of multiculturalism explained around 2 percentage points of the gap (lessening it to 19 points) which whilst not insubstantial still leaves much of the variance caused by the VM factor unexplained. What the results demonstrate is that using conventional analysis indicators cannot effectively capture the dynamics underlying VMs' political attitudes. In many ways, the conventional approach is better suited to explaining majority Canadians' political attitudes than those of minorities. Indeed, a large number of conventional control factors actually widened the gap between the two groups, meaning that the difference linked with being a VM is even greater when accounting for those factors. That means that, if it were not for those socio-demographic factors, VMs' Liberal support would be even greater.

Using a more VM-specific approach yielded more promising results. While ethnic social contact proved to have to little relationship with Liberal support, ethnic consciousness was very much central in explaining VMs' Liberal support. Even when controlling for opinions of multiculturalism, social demographic controls as well as other attitudinal variables, VMs' emotional identification with their community remained an effective predictor variable of Liberal support. Indeed, if one's group's members have a general attitudinal predisposition then we would expect individuals who actually identify with that group to also be likely to share those attitudes. Only with a keener awareness of one's ethnic belonging with the community can one view their fate as being interlinked with that of their community; individual interests here become fused and indistinguishable from those of other members of the in-group. In this sense, ethnic "solidarity" or "consciousness" reinforces the notion of group interests as a core partisan motivation. If VMs with a particularly strong attachment to their community are more likely to vote for the Liberals, it implies that there is in essence a particular link between VM communities and the Liberals. This attitudinal link could be understood as an expression of communal interests; supporting the Liberals could be viewed to be in the community's interests.

Then, why the Liberals specifically? Intuitively, one would point to the Liberals' landmark achievements in introducing multiculturalism and opening up non-traditional sources of immigration (Kim and Perrella, 2008). And while multiculturalism, as a general idea, does not seem to have a partisan link for VMs as shown by this study's results, it remains that there is nonetheless a view of the Liberals as the party of minority communities. Kim and Perrella (2008)

demonstrate for instance that favouring better treatment for racial minorities is strongly linked with Liberal support among immigrants. Similarly, Blais (2005) comes to the same conclusion when looking at non-European Canadians specifically. While this is not particularly surprising as ethnic minority respondents would of course be in favour of receiving more positive support, it nonetheless highlights the link made between the treatment of minorities and the Liberal party, so much so that one would reasonably view the LPC as indeed being the "party of minorities."

Based on these findings, there seems to be strong evidence of Liberal issue ownership in regards to defending minority rights and ethno-cultural diversity among minorities, as suggested by Bilodeau and Kanji (2010). And while the idea that minorities support the Liberals because the latter will do the most to help "racial minorities" is not especially new (Blais, 2005; Kim and Perrella, 2008), what distinguishes this study from past works is in its different approach to assessing support for ethnocultural diversity. Doing so expands our analysis of VM interests and motivations beyond simply relying on asking minority respondents if they feel more should be done to support them and then linking that with a partisan preference.[6] And while this approach is useful to directly assess the link between VMs' general interests and their partisan attitudes, it lacks nuance and complexity due to the CES question's straightforward wording and limited scope. And while past studies have successfully linked the factor with Liberal support among minorities, it remains that on a theoretical level the findings' implication are fairly limited. As such, even if agreeing with the statement may be linked with a higher level of Liberal support, the finding in of itself does not actually much complexity to explaining the intricacies behind VMs' partisan attitudes.

The measure is also quantitatively problematic. As one would expect, there is indeed a relative lack of variance in the CES question with over 70 percent of Canadians of non-European descent agreeing that more should be done to help them (Blais, 2005), this attitudinal homogeneity undermines the value of this question: why would someone be against getting more benefits for their own group? Moreover, even the variable's impact in explaining non-White voters' partisan predisposition seems fairly small: Blais (2005) concludes that only a small fraction of the gap between non-White Canadians and majority Canadians' Liberal preferences is

---

[6] Past studies such as Blais (2005) and Kim and Perrella (2008) have heavily relied on the question "how much should be done for racial minorities?" in the CES as a predictor of which party Canadians of non-European descent trusted the most to defend their interests.

explained by this factor. A fairly unsurprising result if one considers the lack of variance in the answers to the question among non-Eurodescendant Canadians.

Going beyond this measure of minority interests was therefore necessary when developing a more complete assessment of VMs' attitudes. In fact, as the *PDP* questionnaire did not include that question, it was not possible to include that factor into this study's analyses. As such, I resorted to different measures offering, arguably, more theoretical nuance and complexity. By looking at VM-specific factors such as ethnic contact, and ethnic solidarity, this study proposes a more comprehensive and sophisticated approach to studying VM voters and their political attitudes. In fact, without these minority-specific factors of analysis, any assessment of VM Liberal support would have been unsuccessful and incomplete.

The methodological approach taken by this study has as a result been able to uncover dynamics which have up until now remained untouched by the literature. This chapter concludes that Liberal support among VMs is underpinned not only the fact that the party is viewed as the best defender of minority interests as past works have but that this mindset's salience is dependent on individual's sense of ethnic consciousness. The notion that supporting the Liberals is in the interest of the community can only matter for those individuals that actually care and feel attached to their ethnic kin. Those who do not might instead prioritise other socio-attitudinal factors in shaping their partisan attitudes as we will see in the next chapter on Conservative support among VMs. Hence, the factor of ethnic consciousness, while indeed an individual-level factor in that it assesses one's sense of attachment, nonetheless draws its core explanation from a group-level perspective as in-group members adopt the community's priorities as their own, likely motivated by a logic of common interest and belonging. As such, can VMs still be considered Liberal partisans? Yes, but only if they themselves feel closely attached to their ethnic identity.

<u>Chapter Two – An Increasingly Conservative Partisan?</u>

While the previous chapter has established that there is still a stronger propensity among VM Canadians to identify with the Liberals than with other parties, it remains that this link with the Liberals seems to have weakened over time. Gidengil et al. (2013) notes that although VMs remained more loyal to the Liberals than any other socio-demographic voter category, the decline in Liberal electoral fortunes still had an effect on decreasing support among VMs, albeit less so than with other Canadians. The collapse suffered by the Liberal party coincided with the drastic transformation undergone by the Conservative party under Stephen Harper who shifted the party away from the immigration-sceptic stances of the Reform Party towards a more open and appealing option for minority voters. As a result, considerable efforts were put in to connect with ethnic minority communities (Marwah et al., 2013). As the representative of the Conservative government, Jason Kenney, then immigration minister, worked hard to develop a strong presence among VMs at a communal level by attending events of cultural importance such as Chinese New Year and Yom Kippur (Castonguay, 2013). The Conservatives' new approach with minorities was also reflected in the symbolic stances the government took to appeal to ethnic minorities. For instance, the government apologised to Chinese-Canadians for the head tax imposed on early Chinese immigrants as well as officially recognised the Holodomor and Armenian genocides (Castonguay, 2013; Marwah et al., 2013): issues which were of symbolic importance in the eyes of Canadians of Chinese, Ukrainian, and Armenian descent, respectively. Conversely, the Conservatives also tried to appeal to minorities' social conservatism which aligned with the party's traditional base (Marwah et al., 2013). It was therefore through a mix of communal engagement with minorities, symbolic positioning, and an appeal to social values that the Conservatives sought to sway ethnic minorities, including VMs, away from the Liberals.

While much has been said on the Conservatives' efforts to court minorities at the communal level, fairly few studies have actually assessed the overall effect it has had on ethnic minorities' attitudes towards the party. Existing literature on the effectiveness of similar Liberal efforts seem to show that it contributed little towards Liberal support (Harrel, 2013; White and Bilodeau, 2014). However, it might be argued that as VMs were already partial to the Liberals' pro-minority positions that party involvement at the communal level was not particularly

influential in further influencing VMs' electoral attitudes. For the Conservatives, however, who seek to draw VMs' support away from the Liberals and thus start from a more disadvantageous position, connecting with minorities at the communal level might prove to be far more important and influential. In this sense, reaching out and getting involved with ethnic minorities could even be considered a necessity to changing VMs' pre-existing

Conversely, adopting symbolic stances popular such as apologising and refunding the Chinese head stamp might also have given legitimacy to the Conservatives among minorities. Doing so demonstrates to targeted minority communities that the Conservatives do, in fact, care about minorities' interests. Whereas historically the Liberals were seen as the main party of multiculturalism and minorities, it is in the Conservatives' interests to undermine that reputation monopoly by also adopting similar stances. It demonstrates to minorities that they too can be trusted with issues relating to diversity. The effect of these symbolic political stances on VMs' attitudes towards the Conservatives remains mostly untested, however, on a quantitative level.

Existing research on Conservative support among VMs is fairly sparse. While a number of works have looked at immigrant Canadians or "New Canadians," it becomes rapidly apparent that categorisation is a big issue. The dynamics and political preferences found among VMs are not necessarily the same as the ones found among all immigrants or non-VM ethnic minorities even though many VMs are also immigrants. For instance, while studies show that immigrants as a general group have significantly warmed up their attitudes towards the Conservatives, to the extent that Taylor et al. (2012) conclude that the Conservatives by the time of 2011 had effectively eliminated "any disadvantage among immigrant voters" they might have historically had whereas the Liberals' own advantage among foreign-born Canadians had "disappeared all but completely." Although it is to be noted that this finding seems somewhat disputed (White and Bilodeau, 2014).

Taylor et al.'s (2012) finding must, however, be entertained with the understanding that VMs and other ethnic minorities seem to have very different partisan attitudes and are very distinct electorates. As such, while Taylor and colleagues (2012) find traces of Conservative gains around the Greater Toronto Area in ridings with high numbers of immigrants, it was also

found that VM-heavy ridings tended to opt for the NDP instead.[7] Indeed, Harell (2013) observes that increases in Conservative support was primarily found among immigrants of European descent and not so much among VM Canadians. Even in the wake of the sponsorship scandal, VMs were still considerably more likely to vote for the Liberals than both Conservatives and the NDP despite some signs of weakening (Gidengil et al., 2013b).[8] Still, these findings align with the results of this study's first chapter which showed that even in 2014, after years of poor Liberal electoral performance, VMs were still considerably more likely to identify with the Liberals than with the Conservatives or the NDP when compared to other Canadians.

Table 12 – Foreign-born Canadians' attitudes towards the Conservatives

	Visible Minority Immigrants	Other Immigrants	Native-born Canadians
Conservative support	24%	35%	27%
n	871	285	2,413

An important distinction between VMs and other ethnic minorities needs to be drawn here. While there was a general decline across Canadian society in support for the Liberals in the years following the sponsorship scandal, the decline affected different groups differently. Through an extended campaign targeting minorities, the Conservatives worked hard to build their support in social bases which traditionally favoured the Liberals. While immigrants of European descent switched allegiance and started favouring the Conservatives, VMs nonetheless appeared to have maintained a strong sense of preference for the Liberals. As such, VMs continue to be an exception even among minority groups it would seem. This observation is backed up by the data of the *Provincial Diversity Project*: when comparing immigrant VMs with other foreign-born White Canadians, only 24 percent of VMs expressed support for the

---

[7] Taylor and colleagues' ecological approach does somewhat limit the depth and specificity of their findings, but the study does at least provide some hints of the general trends in VM and immigrant political attitudes.

[8] While Harell (2013) finds that Canadians of non-European backgrounds' Liberal support actually increases after 2004, it is important to emphasize that the analyses run by the author excluded residents in Quebec and might have skewed her results seeing as there is a significant VM presence in that province. The exclusion of Quebec respondents seems to be the key factor in explaining the different results Harrel gets compared to Gidengil et al. (2013) despite both works drawing the bulk of their data from the same source (CES 2000-2008 elections).

Conservatives compared to over 35 percent among White immigrants (Table 12). Foreign-born VMs seem to have very different political attitudes than their non-VM counterparts despite both being immigrants. This result seems to be in line with Kim and Perrella's (2008) findings which also found a significant gap in attitudes between the immigrant Canadians of European and non-European origin. Consequently, it is necessary to study VMs as a separate case from other ethnic minorities as the two demographic categories clearly have very distinct political preferences. To merge both groups together simply because they share the common trait of having immigrated to Canada does not seem to hold ground, instead there seems to be an ethno-racial component which one must consider when studying the topic.

With this in mind, this chapter looks specifically at VMs' attitudes towards the Conservative party of Canada in a context of weakened Liberal support and Conservative gains among ethnic minorities. While this chapter will discuss party strategies more so than previously in this study, its core methodological focus remains on assessing public opinion at the individual level. More importantly, this chapter seeks to fill up a gap in the literature concerning VMs' Conservative support levels.

Section I – The Influence of Socio-Demographic Factors, or Lack Thereof

While chapter one demonstrated that VMs express a considerably more positive opinion of the Liberals than other Canadians, it is however worthwhile to recognise that more than one in four VMs identified most closely with the Conservatives. And while Conservative support still very much lags behind levels of Liberal support among VMs, it remains that this is a significant proportion of VMs and, more importantly, seems to be a significant historical increase. In 2004, less than 15 percent of VMs voted for the Conservatives. In 2006, this proportion increased to less than one in five VM Canadian cast a vote for the CPC (Gidengil et al., 2013b). The data of the *Provincial Diversity Project* shows that by 2014, 24 percent of VMs identified most closely with the Conservatives (Table 12). And while this measure is one of partisan identity as opposed to vote choice like most other studies using CES data, it remains that this comparison does illustrate the shift in VM attitudes over time. More so than that, partisan preference also has the added benefit of being a far less volatile and robust long-term assessment of respondents' electoral attitudes.

Assuming that there has indeed been a shift over to the Conservatives among VMs, what then motivates this shift? To answer this question, I run a series of logistic regressions with two parallel models looking at all Canadians and VMs-only (n-819) to assess the reasons underlying Conservatives preferences. Beginning with social-demographic characteristics, I control for respondents' age, recent immigration, the second generation with immigrants as a reference category, level of education, sex, income, province of residence, and religion control variables. I also keep a combined analysis with all respondents to maintain a point of comparison.

Looking at the results in Table 13, respondents' age did not seem to have any effect on Conservative support. While it initially appears that younger generations are more averse to the CPC compared to older generations, the relationship between age and Conservative support was not found to be statistically significant among VMs. Similarly, level of education and gender

Table 13 – Visible minorities versus other Canadians' Conservative attitudes with social controls

	All Canadians		Visible minorities	
	Coefficient	**SE**	**Coefficient**	**SE**
Visible minority status (ref: non-VMs)	-.21	.17	---	---
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.74	.19***	-.42	.62
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.56	.19**	-.03	.63
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.42	.17*	.02	.62
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	-.11	.18	.21	.30
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	.19	.23	.21	.30
Female	-.34	.11**	-.06	.24
Education level	-.10	.03**	-.04	.07
Income	.08	.02***	.07	.03*
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-1.37	.16***	-1.57	.33***
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	.87	.12***	.42	.24^T
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.04	.13	-.32	.26
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.11	.14	.38	.29
Constant	.08	.32	-.97	.81
Pseudo R-Square	.10		.06	
n	3143		819	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; T $p < 0.1$

were not significant either, although economic status was with higher income respondents being

more likely to be identify as a Conservative. As was the case with Liberal support, there was no

significant effect on partisan attachment linked to recent immigration and immigration status:

immigrants were not more or less likely to support the CPC than those born in Canada.[9]

The general absence of significant differences between native born and immigrant VMs

up until now has been rather surprising, immigrant status has had little to no effect in predicting

Liberal or Conservative support levels among VM. This is interesting seeing as past works

commented on the differences in attitudes between respondents born in Canada and those who

immigrated (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010; White and Bilodeau, 2014). The absence of any

immigrant-native born gap among VMs further reinforces Taylor et al's (2012) conclusion that

whatever advantage the Liberals might have historically maintained among immigrants against

the Conservatives has drastically decreased over time. Immigrant status might simply have lost

its value when one considers it separately from the effect of being a VM. In a sense, it is not

immigrants in general that dislike the Conservatives but rather VMs, many of whom are also

immigrants, that have a particularly resilient Liberal preference. It would therefore seem that

VMs have fairly homogenous partisan attitudes across generational lines.

Regional dynamics seem to also have an effect in predicting Conservative support. When

compared to VMs living in Ontario, VMs in Quebec were much less likely to support the

Conservatives. Meanwhile, living in Alberta was positively correlated with CPC support, but the

relationship was only on the margins of statistical significance. No effect is observed for

respondents living in British Columbia. These findings provide some limited evidence of

contextual political adaptation among VM Canadians. In line with Bilodeau et al. (2014) who

demonstrated that VMs adapt their political preferences differently depending on their province

of residence and the latter's socio-cultural context as well as Bilodeau et al's (2010) findings

regarding the replication of political regionalisation among VMs, my results also seem to

indicate that VMs do *learn* their province's political preferences and *adopt* them as their own.

---

[9] Alternate models which had included a more elaborate assessment of length of residency found very little in terms of significant relationships with Conservative attitudes.

Looking at the results in Table 14 which adds in the three variables assessing economic ideology, we see that there are some signs of one's position on economic policy having an influence on their Conservative support among all Canadians and to a much lesser among VMs. This result is considerably different from the findings of chapter 1 regarding Liberal support and is likely due to the fact that the Conservatives clearly distinguish themselves from other parties on economic policy as the right-wing option unlike the Liberals with the NDP. Whereas the taxation and private healthcare variables were strongly significant in predicting all Canadians' Conservative support, only opinions on healthcare privatization predicted VMs' Conservative

Table 14 – Visible minorities versus other Canadians' Conservative attitudes with economic ideology and controls variables

	All Canadians		Visible minorities	
	Coefficient	**SE**	**Coefficient**	**SE**
Visible minority status (ref: non-VMs)	-.27	.19	---	---
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.88	.21***	-66	.62
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.63	.21**	-.26	.65
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.52	.18**	-.16	.63
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	-.13	.197	.19	.26
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	.01	.26	.12	.30
Female	-.25	.12*	-.01	.24
Education level	-.07	.03^T	-.03	.07
Income	.07	.02***	.07	.03*
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-1.58	.17***	-1.58	.33***
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	1.01	.13***	.49	.25*
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.00	.14	-.31	.27
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.01	.14	.43	.30
Lowering taxes vs social programs	.60	.07***	.20	.13
Private sector in health care	.45	.06***	.29	.13*
Government has too much influence	.07	.08	.13	.15
Constant	-2.76	.47***	-2.56	1.10*
Pseudo R-Square	.19		.08	
n	3143		819	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

support. This result provides some evidence of right-wing economic ideology being linked with Conservative support. This result complements Harell's (2013) finding that positive attitudes towards welfare tend to be linked with Liberal support, it would seem that, conversely, more open attitudes towards privatization of health and preference for decreased taxation can be somewhat linked to greater Conservative support. Essentially, positions such as favouring free market economics and less taxation which are more in line with Conservatives' positions might potentially explain some VMs' Conservative preference.

Overall, when looking at the influence of socio-demographic and economic ideological factors on VMs' preference for the Conservatives, the greater variety of significant effects is noticeable compared to when assessing effects underlying Liberal partisanship. The Liberal support analyses which focused on VMs-only resulted in almost none of the control variables being significant. In this analysis of Conservative support, not only did regionalism have an influence, but even economic status and ideology. However, immigration status had little to no effect, thus further providing evidence against the presence of any specific to VM (recent) immigrants or native-born VMs. Similarly, neither did age, education level, and sex have any statistically significant effects on Conservative support.

The factor of regionalism is particularly interesting here as it reflects an existing reality of Canadian electoral politics, namely that different Canadian regions often have very different political attitudes. This phenomenon is, of course, not limited to VMs as regionalism has been a staple factor for Canadian voting behaviour for a long time (Gidengil et al., 2013b; Nadeau and Bélanger, 2012), but we see that its influence also extends to VMs. This very much coincides with Bilodeau et al.'s (2010) findings regarding the replication of regional cleavages and provincial identities among VMs living in different parts of the country. Similarly, while VMs tend to generally prefer the Liberals at the expense of other parties, it remains that VMs seem to adapt to their political environments' political preferences. In practice, VMs living in Quebec were by far the least open to the Conservatives, not altogether unsurprising when one considers the province's historical aversion to the Conservatives and strong preference for the Liberals (Nadeau and Bélanger, 2012). Conversely, my results show sign of stronger Conservative support among VMs living in Alberta which is consistent with the pro-Conservative tendencies of Albertans.

Yet, the regionalism factor was not particularly central to the Conservatives' strategy with minority communities. While it is certainly insightful to learn more about the social bases underpinning VM opinions of the CPC, doing so does not necessarily provide an answer to the question of if Conservative conversion efforts have had successes among VMs. This makes sense as Jason Kenney and the Conservatives' outreach initiatives were not specific to the realm of regionalism, gender or income, thus socio-demographic factors at a VM-level can only say so much. As such, akin to the analyses of VM Liberal support in chapter one, we have to broaden our analytical scope to include attitudinal and communal factors which were most specifically targeted by the Conservatives' minority outreach efforts.

Section II – Social Attitudes and Conservative Support Among Visible Minorities

Conservative politics was not always in harmony with the notions of ethnocultural diversity and non-European immigration. In fact, both the Reform party and the Canadian Alliance, especially under Stockwell Day, expressed notable objections to multiculturalism and non-White immigration (Marwah et al., 2013). Indeed, it was not until the fusion of the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives under the banner of the Conservative party of Canada under Stephen Harper that a drastic rethinking of Conservatives' relation with diversity and immigration occurred. Under Harper, a conscious decision was made to appeal and conform to the "centrist consensus on immigration and multiculturalism." (Marwah et al., 2013). To openly reject and alienate a growing demographic segment of Canadian society was not only out of step with the times, but also increasingly disadvantageous on electoral grounds. What this meant in practice for Conservative politics was a radical change in tone and strategy regarding non-white minority communities. As opposed to viewing them as a threat to Canadian culture and society as was the case in the Reform and Alliance days (Marwah et al., 2013), the CPC under Harper and Kenney invested significant time and effort into appealing to this minority electorate.

However, gaining ethnic minorities' trust requires far more than simply abandoning Reform/Alliance's past positions, it necessitates that minorities actually believe in the CPC's ability and willingness to defend their interests, particularly in regards to the topics of immigration and ethno-cultural diversity. As discussed in chapter one, historically it is the

Liberal party that was seen as the party of minorities due in part to that party's influence in liberalising the Canadian immigration regime and introducing multiculturalism. To gain VMs' trusts, the Conservatives had to compete with the Liberals and even supersede them, if need be, in regards to defending minorities' interests. The Harper government's approach at a policy level was first and foremost characterised by symbolic, yet important, gestures. Such acts were primarily focused on "redressing historic wrongs" imposed onto minority groups throughout Canadian history. The Harper government arguably distinguished itself by its symbolic stances in apologising, for instance, for the imposition of the head tax on Chinese immigrants and the refusal to admit Sikh migrants aboard the Komagata Maru in the early 20th century (Marwah et al., 2013). And while the actual tangible effects of such statements are arguably quite limited with, for example, only around 220 Chinese-Canadians being actual refunded a symbolic amount to the head tax (Clark, 2006), the symbolic effects were arguably quite considerable in gaining the trust of the Chinese-Canadian community. Redressing past wrongs as well as other symbolic stances were done in a way to target specific minority communities and improve the Conservatives' image within those communities. These public positions went hand in hand with a very direct engagement at the communal level by senior Conservative politicians such as Jason Kenney and even the Prime Minister. The appearance of such senior figureheads at cultural events and even in community media outlets such as TV stations and newspapers allowed the Conservative party to begin developing a more direct and trusting relationship with minority communities (Marwah et al., 2013; Taylor et al., 2012).

The Conservatives' repositioning on immigration and diversity meant a move towards supporting minorities and building a direct and meaningful relationship at a communal level. The Conservatives' strategy aimed to secure ethnic minorities' electoral support by demonstrating that the Conservative party also is fighting for their interests. Doing so undermined the Liberals' issue ownership on topics of ethno-cultural diversity. A more open and inclusive Conservative party likely allowed it to seek out minorities' support by appealing to their social values. Indeed, while VMs tend to be more socially conservative voters than other Canadians (Blais, 2005; Harell, 2013; Marwah et al., 2013), that historically has not stopped them from supporting a fairly progressive party like the Liberals (Blais, 2005). As argued in the chapter on Liberal support, the obvious contradiction of that relationship likely stems from VMs' sense of issue salience or issue priority: VMs are most likely willing to overlook their contradictions in social

stances with the Liberals in favour of the strong defence of their minority interests provided by the latter. Yet, if the Conservatives can also set themselves as a defender of minority interests as well as appeal to VMs' social conservatism, this could effectively undermine VMs' support for the Liberals and transform VMs into Conservative partisans. In a sense, the CPC could very much be seen as a natural partisan choice for VM Canadians in regard to social issues.

While a good number of authors have brought attention to the Conservatives' strategic approach, there is only limited empirical evidence to gauge the results of their efforts. Existing works have been able to examine the general trends of VM public opinion, but most have not been able to fully assess the factors behind VM attitudes towards the Conservatives. In most cases, the analyses are not specific enough to account for VMs' socio-attitudinal characteristics or simply suffer from sampling issues. For instance, in the case of Harell (2013), while the study does account for social conservatism and other ideological positions, VM respondents from Quebec were specifically excluded despite the sizeable VMs population living that province. Moreover, as the analysis focused specifically on Liberal support, Harell's results make it hard to assess the effect of Conservatives' outreach strategy. In the case of Taylor et al. (2012), a geographic analysis can only say so much about VM partisans without erring too closely to the realm of ecological fallacy.

Due to the limitations of past works there is a need to definitively assess the effect of attitudinal factors on Conservative support. Firstly, doing so allows this study to determine if the Harper Conservatives' strategy in realigning themselves as a more pro-minority party and, secondly, in appealing VMs' social attitudes was ultimately a success of failure. Using respondents' opinions of multiculturalism as a predictor for Conservative support I can effectively assess VMs' trust in the Conservatives' ability in managing issues related to diversity. Should we see a positive relationship between multiculturalism and Conservative support, it would provide evidence that the Conservatives have effectively managed to realign themselves with VMs as being *their* political party. This hypothetical outcome would be most interesting as it would suggest that the Conservatives are now effectively competing with the Liberals to be *the* party of multiculturalism since opinions of multiculturalism were a null finding when predicting support for the Liberals in the previous chapter. As for the Conservatives' appeal to VMs' socially conservative tendencies, I test for any signs of correlation between social attitudes and

Conservative support. I reuse the same social attitude scale which combines questions on same-sex marriage, the legalisation of marijuana, prostitution, abortion, and women's role in society. If results show a strong statistically significant link between conservative attitudes and support for the CPC, it would suggest that the Conservatives succeeded in priming VMs' social attitudes to

Table 15 – Visible minorities' Conservative attitudes assessing for social values, opinions on multiculturalism and other control variables

	Other Canadians		Visible minorities	
	Coefficient	**SE**	**Coefficient**	**SE**
Visible minority status (ref: non-VMs)	-.44	.19*	---	---
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.82	.21***	-.69	.66
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.66	.22**	-.36	.69
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.50	.19**	-.19	.66
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	-.05	.19	.30	.32
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	-.14	.26	.09	.31
Female	-.31	.12*	-.05	.24
Education level	-.04	.04	-.02	.08
Income	.07	.02***	.08	.03*
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-1.56	.17***	-1.56	.33***
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	.99	.13***	.53	.26*
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.01	.15	-.27	.27
Catholic (ref: other religions)	-.08	.15	.46	.31
Lowering taxes vs social programs	.56	.07***	.22	.13
Private sector in health care	.44	.06***	.29	.14*
Government has too much influence	-.03	.08	.02	.15
Multiculturalism	-.05	.03	.02	.07
Social conservatism	.30	.03***	.21	.06**
Constant	-3.68	.49***	-3.37	1.11**
Visible minority variable's margin	-0.07		---	
Pseudo R-Square	.23		.10	
n	3143		819	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

their party's advantage. This would indicate a shift in VMs' political priorities as, traditionally, conservative social attitudes only had a minor influence in predicting Conservative support (Blais, 2005). However, chapter one's results seem to indicate that VMs' Liberal preference are largely independent from their social attitudes, hence there is a possibility that social attitudes simply do not have a large influence in shaping VMs' political attitudes.

When looking at the results of the analysis in Table 15, there are noticeable effects from attitudinal factors in shaping Conservative support levels. This is in contrast to the overall minimal effects those variables had on Liberal support. More socially conservative attitudes do seem to have a significant effect in predicting one's propensity to identify with the Conservatives unlike with Liberal support. Social conservatism seems in fact essential in isolating any distinct VM effect for Conservative attitudes as the VM variable now becomes statistically significant and a 7 point negative gap emerges between VMs and other Canadians. A negative gap caused by the social conservatism suggests that VMs' Conservative preferences would be even weaker if it were not for their social values. When controlling for other variables and using a predicted value analysis, a very socially conservative VM was almost 34 percentage points more likely to identify with the CPC versus someone with very social progressive attitudes. This strong finding regarding the effect of social conservatism on Conservative support stands in contrast with Blais' (2005) meeker findings for Liberal support which might hint towards a successful Conservative priming of these issues compared to in the early 2000s.

Looking at opinions of multiculturalism, the variable had significant no effect in predicting VMs' propensity to identify as a Conservative. While the absence of a meaningful statistical effect could be interpreted as a lack of trust in the Conservatives' ability to defend multiculturalism among VMs, it is worthwhile to recall that the variable also had fairly little effect on Liberal support which could mean that the effect is split between the two parties or even completely absent. As such, we do not know if the null findings mean that supporters of multiculturalism are split between the two parties or views of multiculturalism simply have no effect in shaping partisan preferences. Based on the results from both chapters, it would be tempting to simply conclude that opinions of multiculturalism simply are not an effective measure of VM Canadians' perspective on ethnocultural diversity. However, as chapter three will demonstrate, there is more to this variable than meets the eye initially. With the attitudinal

factors accounted for in the regression analysis, a good number of socio-demographic factors' effect also got adjusted. Conversely with the economic ideological variables, VMs with higher incomes also tended to be more likely to identify most closely with the Conservative party. And while this finding seems surprising seeing as the traditional literature on class voting seems quite clear in rejecting any notion of class voting directly affecting vote choice (Gidengil et al., 2012), it should be remembered that one's income is not the same thing as one's perception of their place in the class hierarchy. What this finding suggests is that richer VMs will tend to have a stronger preference for the CPC as opposed to their counterparts with weaker income. Combined with the economic attitudinal findings, the results suggest that VMs who support the CPC tend to be economically better off and, possibly, more ideologically right-leaning. This portrait of the VM Conservative partisan very much fits the image of the party as a fiscally right-leaning party and provides some evidence of ideological salience for VM Canadians in regards to Conservative politics.

Another social factor, regionalism became even more relevant with both the Quebec and Alberta variables now statistically significant whereas previously only the Quebec variable was. The adjusted finding further justifies the continued relevance of regional factors in Canadian politics, even among VMs. And moreover, as noted in the previous section of this chapter, provides evidence that VMs experience a different political socialisation depending on their province.

Looking at the overall effects of socio-political attitudes on VMs' opinion of the Conservatives, it is quite apparent that the picture developed by the statistical analyses is very different than when looking at Liberal support. Whereas attitudes had little effect in predicting VMs' opinion of the Liberals, some of those same attitudinal factors did in fact have a significant influence on Conservative preferences. For instance, social attitudes had no effect with Liberal support, but increased social conservatism was, on the other hand, linked with a greater likelihood of identifying with the CPC. Similarly, right-leaning economic ideology also seems to have some potential effect in increasing Conservative support whereas it had no effect on Liberal support levels. These two findings hint towards the idea that very different partisan dynamics motivate Liberal partisans and Conservative ones. The increased variety of relevant socio-attitudinal factors behind underpinning Conservative partisanship suggests that VMs supporting

the Conservatives do so for more varied reasons compared to their Liberal supporting counterparts. They were not only more susceptible to the influence of regionalism in shaping their own attitudes, but their partisan preference was also noticeably more affected by their own personal social and economic attitudes. This is in stark contrast to Liberal partisans that seem more willing to overlook their ideological inconsistencies with their party, preferring instead to emphasize their communities' interests which they likely view as being best represented by the Liberals. Perhaps then the difference in attitudes between Conservative and Liberal VM supporters is mainly dependent on whether they prioritise their own personal values and interests or instead those of their community. However, while attitudinal factors seem to hint towards this being the case, only an analysis of Conservative support which includes the ethnic solidarity factor as a measure of communal attachment would be sufficiently conclusive. What the last analysis in Table 15 also highlights is that there is a small negative gap of 7 points in Conservative support between VMs and other Canadians which is not explained by the factors already included in the analysis. Perhaps ethnic factors can shed some light on the motives underlying VMs' Conservative preference as it did for Liberal support in chapter one.

Section III – An Individualistic Partisan? Conservatives and Ethnic Consciousness

The findings of section II reveal that VMs with Conservative partisan tendencies are much more influenced by attitudinal factors and socio-demographic factors than it was the case with the Liberal party. Indeed, whereas Liberal VM partisans seem to be primarily driven by their emotional attachment to their community and its interests, it is possible that Conservative supporters might be instead more attentive to their personal attitudes. However, this notion of a communally-driven Liberal partisan and an individualistic Conservative partisan can only be verified if communal factors are included in addition to the already tested attitudinal and social factors. Hence, to test this idea I once again use the ethnic contact and ethnic consciousness variables to assess for the influence of ethnic factors. As we expect Conservative partisans to be more individually-oriented, we should in theory expect a weaker sense of community attachment and perhaps even a weaker amount of ethnic contact. And while ethnic contact as the basis of the Columbia approach did not seem to explain VMs' Liberal support, we might perhaps observe a

negative effect whereby individualised and communally detached VMs with less ethnic contact might be more open to the Conservatives.

As was the case in chapter one's analyses, the notion of communal attachment was measured in a two-fold way: both in attitude and in practice. As the emotional attachment variable, ethnic consciousness was measured via a question asking respondents if they considered criticism made against their ethnic community as a personal insult. The measure assesses the emotional link made by respondents between themselves and their community: respondents in agreement with the question were interpreted as having a strong sense of ethnic consciousness or solidarity whereas those who disagreed were viewed as being more individualistic and detached from their ethnic community. Ethnic contact, as the practical expression of communal attachment, was quantified as the number of non-family social contacts respondents had with individuals of the same ethnic group.

While still controlling for previous social and attitudinal factors, I added in the ethnic consciousness and ethnic contact variables into the logistic regression looking at Conservative support (Table 16). Similarly to the findings in chapter one, ethnic contact has no significant effect on partisan support levels. It would seem that communal effects on partisanship, if present among VMs, is not primarily transmitted through increased social contact as the original Columbia model theorises. Then again, this measure does not include family members despite them arguably having a disproportionately large influence in socialising other members of the family. In this sense, the variable's operationalisation can be considered to be fairly limiting.

On the other hand, the ethnic consciousness variable was, however, found to have a significant negative impact on the likelihood of identifying as a Conservative. In practice this means that visible minorities with a weaker sense of attachment to their ethnic communities tend to identify with the Conservatives; conversely, those with a stronger sense of solidarity with their co-ethnics are more likely to support the Liberals as demonstrated in chapter 1. Respondents who expressed a very high degree of ethnic consciousness were thus almost 17 percent point less likely to identify as a Conservative versus someone who was very weakly attached to their ethnic group.

Table 16– Visible minorities' Conservative attitudes with all controls and ethnic variables

	Coefficient	SE
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.66	.69
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.31	.71
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.25	.68
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	.27	.31
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	.09	.32
Female	.02	.24
Education level	-.02	.07
Income	.09	.03**
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-1.52	.34***
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	.53	.26*
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.26	.28
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.50	.32
Lowering taxes vs social programs	.21	$.13^T$
Private sector in health care	.33	.13*
Government has too much influence	.05	.15
Social conservatism	.22	.06**
Multiculturalism	.05	.08
Ethnic contact	.09	.14
Ethnic consciousness	-.35	.14*
Constant	-2.97	1.12*
Ethnic consciousness support gap	.19	
Pseudo R-Square	.12	
n	819	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; T $p < 0.1$

Based on this finding and results from chapter one, it seems evident that ethnic consciousness, and likely an understanding communal interests, plays a significant role in shaping and explaining VM Canadians' partisan preferences. A stronger attachment to the community goes hand in hand with a prioritisation of its interests, perhaps even at the expense of personal preferences. The communal motivation can therefore explain the key contradiction in VM voting which has puzzled past works on the subject, namely the paradox of VMs' conservative social attitudes and their continued support for a fairly progressive party like the Liberals. The factor of ethnic consciousness thus acts as a key differentiating factor between

VMs loyal to the Liberals and those willing to support the Conservatives. More precisely, we might expect the former to be more attuned to their community's collective interests by supporting the Liberal party – seen as the defender of minority rights. The latter might instead prefer to stay true to their own individual values and preferences as they do not prioritise communal interests above theirs as a result of having a weaker sense of ethnic consciousness.

Looking at the results of the previous logistic regressions, we note a general consolidation or persistence of the existing effects I have discussed up until now. Confirming the initial results on regionalism, both VMs living in Alberta and Quebec had noticeably different attitudes towards the Conservatives than those living in Ontario who served as a reference point. While the Alberta variable had only been on the edge of significance, with the inclusion of attitudinal and communal factors the variable fell into the conventional limits of statistical significance. Like regionalism, the effects of economic ideology also became more significant, with opinions on private healthcare and on decreasing taxes developing a clearer effect on Conservative attitudes. The taxation variable was, however, only on the margins of significance. Consistent with previous analyses, skepticism vis-à-vis the role and influence of government still had no relationship with partisan attitudes. Social conservatism remained a relevant factor even with the inclusion of communal factors with its effect remaining just as significant.

Overall, it is clear that the factors driving Conservative support versus Liberal support are different among VMs. In stark contrast to the straightforward effect of ethnic consciousness on Liberal support, the results of the analyses of this chapter uncover a far more complex portrait of Conservative VM partisans. Like their Liberal supporting counterparts, ethnic solidarity also had an important role in underpinning their rationale to support the CPC; however, the key distinction is that unlike Liberal partisans, Conservative partisans tended to be more weakly attached to their community. Without that sense of linked fate driven by an emotional attachment to the wider ethnic community, it is arguable that Conservative partisans are more likely to prioritise their personal interests and values above those of their ethnic community. This is not to say that VMs who prefer the Conservatives are naturally more selfish and self-centered, but that their partisan choices are less affected by their ethnic communities' interests. In fact, it could even be argued that the ethnicity, as a dimension of political preference, simply does not matter as much for these VMs.

As a measure for issue ownership, the link between ethnic consciousness and Liberal attitudes also seems to suggest that most VMs still view the Liberals as the best choice for their community. On the other hand, for Conservative-leaning VMs this factor does not matter as much since their personal values and ideologies take precedent in influencing their choice of political party. The profile of Conservative VM supporters, as described by the results, seems to be one of a more individualistic and less ethnic community-oriented partisan, motivated by personal attitudes and social background as opposed to defending their ethnic in-group's minority interests. Conversely, Liberal partisans of a VM background seemed to be far more concerned with defending their ethnic group's interests as they identified more closely with their co-ethnics. This concern for the collective remained strong almost regardless of personal attitudes and other social-demographic traits. Hence, even if many VMs are noticeably more social conservatives than other Canadians, their concern for the group's collective well-being overshadowed the fact that their personal values on questions like abortion or prostitution were at odds with the Liberal party's positions. In this sense, Liberal VM partisans can be viewed as being *ethnically-oriented* partisans whereas Conservative VM supporters can be described as being more *individualised* and, arguably, not that much different from other Canadian voters. Indeed, it is important to recall that the presence of a distinct VM effect in regards to Conservative support was much smaller and much less significant than it was for Liberal support. That means that belonging to a visible minority does not have as much of a significant effect in differentiating VMs' attitudes towards the Conservatives as opposed to their opinions on the Liberals. The presence of a VM effect for Liberal support and its absence when looking at Conservative support suggests that VMs' partisan attitudes are more so characterised by Liberal propensity rather than Conservative aversion.

Whereas VMs' Liberal attitudes are underpinned by the fairly unconventional factor of ethnic consciousness with most conventional controls failing to explain the gap in support, VMs' attitudes towards the Conservatives do not seem, in contrast, to be that much different from other Canadians. In fact, by comparing the social and attitudinal factors underpinning other Canadians' opinions of the Conservatives with the results of the VM-only analyses, a number of significant similarities arise. In both cases, individuals with higher income tended to be more pro-Conservative. Reflecting the influence of regionalism, VMs and non-VMs alike living in Quebec were less likely to support the CPC versus those who lived in Ontario. Those living in Alberta

were also considerably more likely to identify as a Conservatives. Looking at attitudinal factors, social conservatism was positively linked with Conservative support for both groups of respondents. Some evidence of convergence can also be found with economic ideology with positive opinions of privatizing healthcare and taxation being linked to CPC preference but only on the margins of statistical significance for VMs. The similarities in factors of support between VM Conservative partisans and other Conservative partisans suggests a dynamic of convergence with mainstream Canadian views. As such, contrary to the more *ethnically-oriented* Liberal partisan, VM Conservative partisans' political motives resemble those other Canadians much more closely. Indeed, as more *individualistic* partisans, we would expect conventional factors related to personal background and attitudes to be more important in determining their political allegiances. In that sense, pro-Conservative VMs are not actually that different than other Canadians in what their motives.

Chapter Three – Visible Minority or Visible Minorities?

Section I – The Case and Methodology for Breaking Up the Visible Minority Category

Up until now the analyses I have conducted have looked at VMs as one monolithic group, this simplification is of course fairly detached from reality where VMs are divided along ethno-cultural and religious lines. And while VMs do share the experience of being an ethno-cultural minority in Canada, it remains that there is massive heterogeneity in religion, culture, and values between these minority communities, all of which are further compounded by the distinct migration history these communities have each experienced and adapted to. We might for instance expect that members of a more "settled in" minority community like Chinese-Canadians might have different attitudes when compared to VM Muslims who are more recent arrivals and face considerable difficulties in acculturating within Canadian society. And while immigrant status has shown to have little effect at an aggregate VM level up until now, the same might not be true for all VM communities. In fact, it is arguable that communities' migration history and cultural context matter immensely in shaping minorities' understanding of their relationship with Canadian society and politics.

Methodologically, the approach taken by this chapter remains similar to the previous analyses of this study. The emphasis remains on developing a more detailed and sophisticated portrait of the VM partisan by going into the individuals' social background as well as their socio-political stances. Likewise, I retain the incremental analysis approach which first assesses the effect of control factors followed by attitudinal indicators like multiculturalism and, finally, ethnic community dynamics. What changes is the inclusion of ethnic and religious factors to account for the ethnic heterogeneity found among VMs. This more detailed assessment of VM respondents' social background will allow inter-communal differences to shine through better compared to when using the rather clumsy "visible minority" category. By looking at ethnicity and religion as opposed to just amalgamating all non-White minorities together essentially allows for greater detail and specificity. While the *PDP*'s VM sample is large enough to accommodate for an analysis of ethnic and racial factors, it remains that I cannot assess all categories as some communities are just simply too small to provide relevant inferential results (n<165). Consequently, I limit myself to assessing two groups of VMs with fairly distinct attitudes and which have sufficiently sample sizes in the *PDP*: Chinese-Canadians (n=799) and

VM Muslims (n=250).[10] While the latter is not a traditional sub-category of VM, it remains that VMs of Muslim faith deserve specific attention due to the hostility and discrimination they face in Canada (Helly, 2004). By accounting for both communities' political dynamics in comparison to the rest of the VM sample, I can effectively assess for any heterogeneity in partisan attitudes. As we will see in the partisan preference breakdown later on, the case of Chinese-Canadians and Muslims are of particular interest compared to other VMs which warrant them being our two case studies.

Section II – Distinct Minorities: Political Heterogeneity Among Visible Minority Canadians

I begin with a simple descriptive analysis of VM Canadians of Chinese origin and Muslim faith compared to other VMs (Table 17). Based on the results of this analysis, we see the traditional pattern of VM partisanship replicate itself among non-Chinese and non-Muslim VMs who express a preference for the Liberals (46%) as opposed for the Conservatives (24%). In the case of Muslim VMs, that Liberal preference was even stronger than the average of other VMs with over 67 percent supporting the party. The case of Chinese-Canadians, however, runs counter to the general pattern of VM preference observed up until now. Unlike other VMs, Chinese respondents expressed a much weaker sense of Liberal attachment, with only around 36 percent of Chinese respondents feeling closest to the LPC. The proportion of Liberal supporters is, in fact, almost the same as those who support the Conservatives (35%). It is clear that Chinese respondents express a considerably greater level of openness towards the Conservatives than most other VMs, which itself is a considerable finding seeing as Chinese-Canadians accounted for over 20 percent of the VM population in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2019). On the basis of this analysis, the cases of Chinese-Canadians and VM Muslims clearly stand out when compared to other VMs' partisan preferences. Indeed, the other major VM groups (notably blacks and South Asians) are significantly more alike in terms of their partisan preferences for the two main

---

[10] The size numbers are unweighted and is an upward maximum, actual analyses will see lower number of respondents as some respondents did not answer some questions and were thus excluded from those analyses.

parties (see annex).[11] Additional analysis is, however, necessary to understand the reasons underlying this attitudinal heterogeneity.

<u>Table 17– Visible minorities' partisan attitudes</u>

	Chinese	**Muslims**	**Other visible minorities**	**All visible minorities**
Conservatives	35%	6%	23%	24%
Liberals	36%	67%	46%	46%
NDP	23%	19%	25%	24%
Other Parties	6%	9%	6%	6%
n	541	174	649	1,364

To uncover the reasons underlying each community's partisan attitudes requires more detailed and sophisticated analyses. I do so by adding in two additional binomial variables accounting for Chinese and Muslim respondents into the regression analyses looking only at VM respondents. By also accounting for social-demographic, attitudinal, and ethnic factors like in previous chapters, the analyses will be able to effectively capture any distinct effect found within the two groups. Looking at the results (Table 18), we see that the Muslim variable is statistically linked with higher levels of support for the Liberals while there is no distinct effect among Chinese respondents. Even when controlling for other social factors, Muslims are still 15 percentage points more likely to support the Liberals compared to VMs of all other faiths (57% versus 42%). Interestingly, gender was also linked with an increase in Liberal support, a factor which likely deserves greater attention in future research.

Despite accounting for social conservatism and opinions of multiculturalism accounted for alongside economic ideology, none of these factors were significant. As with the results in chapter one, it would seem that social attitudes as well as opinions of multiculturalism cannot effectively explain Liberal attitudes among VM partisans. As for the ethnic factors included in the analyses, ethnic consciousness becomes another significant factor to consider. Still, despite all these factors being controlled for, 15 points in Liberal preference could not be accounted for

---

[11] The exception are Arab respondents who displayed a similar pattern of preference to Muslim VMs. However due to the significant overlap between Arab and Muslim respondents and the Muslim VM category being larger, it was preferable to look at Muslims specifically as opposed to Arab-Canadians.

in the analysis. As for Chinese respondents, there seems to be no appreciable gap in Liberal preference specific to that ethnic group. These findings suggest that while Chinese-Canadians Liberal partisans support the party for fairly similar reasons compared to other VMs whereas VMs of Muslim faith were particularly more supportive for ulterior reasons not accounted for in the analysis.

Table 18 – Visible Minorities' preference towards the Liberal Party accounting for Chinese and Muslim-specific effects

	Coefficient	SE
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	.31	.54
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	.54	.56
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	.73	.56
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	.13	.25
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	-.25	.26
Female	.40	.20*
Education level	.01	.06
Income	-.01	.03
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	.36	.24
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	-.27	.24
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	.01	.23
Catholic (ref: other religions)	-.02	.25
Muslim (ref: other religions)	.62	.30*
Chinese (ref: other VMs)	-.36	.22
Lowering taxes vs social programs	-.00	.10
Private sector in health care	-.08	.10
Government has too much influence	.00	.13
Multiculturalism	-.04	.06
Social conservatism	-.08	.05
Ethnic network	-.05	.11
Ethnic consciousness	.24	.11*
Constant	-.81	.99
Muslim predicted values gap	.15	
Pseudo R-Square	.04	
n	819	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

Looking at Conservative support levels with all control and indicator variables (Table 19), we see that both the Muslim and Chinese variables are statistically significant. Conversely with the analyses on Liberal support, Muslim respondents were much less likely to support the Conservatives compared to other VMs with a considerable 24 points gap (7% versus 24%). Surprisingly, but in line with the results of the descriptive analysis, Chinese respondents were more likely to support the Conservatives than other VMs by 8 points (29% versus 21%).

With ideological and attitudinal factors accounted for, we see that Chinese respondents were still more likely to support the Conservatives whilst Muslims were less likely. In fact, both groups' gap with other VMs slightly increased: Muslims are now 25 points less pro-Conservative whereas Chinese-Canadians were 9 points more likely to identify with the party. This increase in the unexplained gap suggests that if it were not for those other factors, Muslims and Chinese-Canadians' gap with other VMs would be even greater. However, with ethnic contact and ethnic consciousness accounted for, the gap for Muslims does slightly decrease to 24 points while the Chinese gap remains more or less at 9 points; essentially both gaps remain largely the same regardless of the other variables accounted for. This means that there is something inherent to Muslim and Chinese respondents that pushes them to develop different preference patterns compared to other VMs.

Moreover, with ethnic factors accounted for, we also see a greater variety of relevant dynamics emerge among control variables compared to the analyses looking at Liberal support. Whereas only gender and ethnic consciousness were relevant for the latter, Conservative partisan identification was influenced by economic status, regionalism, social conservatism, attitudes on privatization, and ethnic consciousness. In line with the findings of previous chapters, Conservative VM partisans seem to be motivated by a wider range of factors compared to their Liberal counterparts.

Table 19 – Visible Minorities' Conservative partisan attitudes accounting for Chinese and Muslim-specific effects

	Coefficient	SE
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.77	.69
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.45	.71
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.37	.69
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	.25	.32
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	.21	.33
Female	-.00	.25
Education level	-.01	.07
Income	.07	.03*
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-1.38	.35***
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	.58	.26*
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	-.41	.28
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.36	.32
Muslim (ref: other religions)	-1.44	.53**
Chinese (ref: other VMs)	.56	.25*
Lowering taxes vs social programs	.19	.13
Private sector in health care	.33	.13*
Government has too much influence	.14	.16
Multiculturalism	.07	.08
Social conservatism	.22	.07**
Ethnic network	.11	.14
Ethnic consciousness	-.32	.14*
Constant	-3.14	1.19
Muslim support gap	.09	
Chinese support gap	.24	
Pseudo R-Square	.15	
n	819	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

Section III – The case of Chinese-Canadians: the nuance of diversity politics

While these analyses demonstrate the presence of an unexplained gap in partisan preference between Muslims and Chinese-Canadians compared to other VMs, the results do not explain *why* those two groups are the way that they are. And indeed, with the factors included in this study, the gap cannot be fully explained. What can be done, however, is having a dedicated analysis looking specifically at respondents of those groups will be able to provide interesting insight into the political dynamics of Chinese partisans.

For the Chinese community, social conservatism was the key factor in increasing Conservative support whilst undermining Liberal support (Table 20). Hence, as Harell (2013) argued for all VMs, the effects of progressive social values in pushing Liberal support and undermining Conservative attitudes does seem to be present among Chinese respondents. Highlighting the effect of economic attitudes, Chinese respondents who were more open to private healthcare were more likely to support the Conservatives. Interestingly, skepticism of the influence of the state was actually linked with increased Liberal closeness, but only on the very margin on significance. Why this is the case might perhaps rest on the idea of the Liberals acting as a potential warden against state encroachment on minority rights.

However, what is perhaps most interesting is the fact that, against all expectations, Chinese-Canadians' views of multiculturalism is actually positively correlated with Conservative support. Conversely, the same was not the case with Liberal attitudes. This finding runs against the conventional wisdom that associates multiculturalism and diversity with the Liberal party (Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010) and suggests that Chinese-Canadians have a radically different view of which party best represents Canadian multiculturalism.

Looking at the effects of communal attachment on Chinese, no statistically significant effect was observed in regard to Liberal attitudes for Chinese respondents. The effect of ethnic consciousness on Conservative support was, however, much clearer. In line with chapter two's results, Chinese-Canadians with stronger links to their community tend to prefer other parties than the Conservatives whereas their co-ethnics who aligned with the Conservative party were more individualised and less attached with the broader ethnic group.

<u>Table 20 – Chinese-Canadians' partisan preferences with all variables</u>

	Liberal support		Conservative support	
	Coefficient	**SE**	**Coefficient**	**SE**
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	.91	.86	-2.16	1.09*
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	.98	.87	-1.66	1.07
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	1.48	.86^T	-1.82	1.09^T
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	-.14	.37	.51	.43
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	-.55	.44	.50	.49
Female	-.37	.33	.05	.36
Education level	-.06	.13	.12	.12
Income	.10	.06^T	-.09	.05^T
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	1.38	.70*	(omitted)[12]	
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	-.13	.38	.47	.40
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	.51	.36	-.53	.38
Catholic (ref: other religions)	-.23	.41	.12	.48
Lowering taxes vs social programs	.01	.16	.24	.18
Private sector in health care	-.24	.17	.62	.20**
Government has too much influence	.45	.23^T	-.17	.25
Social conservatism	-.04	.09	.27	.12*
Multiculturalism	-.29	.09**	.39	.09***
Ethnic contact	.21	.17	-.12	.22
Ethnic consciousness	.28	.20	-.46	.20*
Constant	-2.45	1.58	-1.4	1.59
Pseudo R-Square	.12		.17	
n	280		263	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1

The analysed effects of ethnic consciousness and views of multiculturalism develop a nuanced portrait of Chinese Conservative partisans. They value diversity and multiculturalism, but seemingly not out of a particular concern for communal interests. The fact that Chinese-Canadians view the Conservatives as *the* party of multiculturalism is surprising in that it severely disrupts the traditional view of the Liberals as the party of diversity. Moreover, it seems to

---

[12] There were no Chinese respondents living in Quebec who also supported the Conservatives in this sample.

suggest a more individualised view of diversity in framing partisan opinions, one which is more general without necessarily being tangibly communal in nature. In a sense, this attention to diversity and multiculturalism is a seemingly more detached and shallow sentiment which is more so dependent on one's personal impression of a party's rhetoric on diversity. This is in contrast to the more communally-driven partisanship found among Liberal VM partisans.

As I have argued in chapter two, more individualised VM voters might not overall be too different from other Canadians. Just as other Canadians will *view* the Liberals as the party of multiculturalism primarily because of the party's history and rhetoric, it is possible that Chinese-Canadians who support the Conservatives might *perceive* the party to be pro-diversity while not necessarily being most concerned about communal interests at a more tangible level. This is in contrast to most other VMs who, on the other hand, expressed a strong personal link with their ethnic community and support the Liberals possibly as a matter of upholding community interests.[13]

Section IV – The case of Muslim Canadians: determined Liberals

As the analyses' result suggest, Canadians of Muslim faith seem to express particularly strong anti-Conservative attitudes compared to other Canadians and even other VMs. Moreover, if we look at Conservative attitudes of VMs separately from VM Muslims, we see that VMs' Conservative support level is practical identical to other Canadians'. In this sense, Muslim VMs actually slightly skew aggregate VMs' level of Conservative partisanship. As such, if we understand Muslim VMs as separate case from other VMs, it would perhaps explain why the VM variable was not statistically significant in the analysis combining VMs with other Canadians' Conservative attitudes (Tables 14-16). Why Muslims hold such opinions remains to be explained, however. The fact that the analysis sample size of VM Muslims shrinks considerably to around 121 respondents (even less when looking at Conservative support) with the addition of control and indicator variables makes a dedicated analysis of this community rather impractical.

The hostility expressed by Muslim Canadians might be in large part due to the

---

[13] A multinomial logistic regression further breaking down Chinese respondents' partisan preferences shows that the Liberal-Conservative divide over ethnic consciousness did not extend to the NDP. Other parties (BQ and the Greens) were however on the margins of significance.

Conservatives' perceived targeting of Muslims. Most infamously the Harper government sought to outright forbid Muslim women from wearing of religious veils during citizenship ceremonies in 2011 which likely had a strong negative effect on Muslim Canadians' views of the Conservatives. We can imagine that this political aversion towards the Conservatives could only have intensified in the lead up to the 2015 general election with the Harper government further politicizing the wearing of the niqab during citizenship ceremonies and, infamously, pushing the idea of a "barbaric cultural practice hotline" which many felt was targeted against Muslim Canadians. The targeted rhetoric and discrimination Muslims have faced seem to have had noticeable effects in shaping political attitudes within the religious community.

The presence of such a potent religious cleavage is particularly striking in a context when religion seemed to have been on the decline in explaining Canadian electoral behaviour. Whereas traditionally the cleavage was centered on the divide between Catholics and Protestants (Blais, 2005; Gidengil, 2012), that cleavage's influence seems to have suffered a serious decline with the collapse of Liberal support among Catholics following the sponsorship scandal (Gidengil et al., 2013b). The case of Muslim Canadians therefore constitutes an interesting exception to what seems to be an increasingly secular political space. Of course, when compared to Christians who make up over two-thirds of the Canadian population, Muslims form a very small minority at 3.2 percent (Statistics Canada, 2011). Consequently, the overall effects of this religious cleavage are fairly limited overall. Yet, as the composition of Canadian society continues to evolve and diversify, we might see this cleavage's influence grow. Indeed if we draw a parallel with VMs' electoral influence here, André Blais concluded in 2005 that the effect of Canadians of non-European origin on electoral outcomes was still quite limited due to their small demographic weight when fewer than 17 percent of Canadians were from a VM background in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2013). Within a decade, this demographic of Canadians had grown considerably: the 2016 census revealed that around 22.3 percent of Canadians now identified as a VM, with the current trends Statistics Canada (2017a) projects that VM would by 2036 represent upwards of 35.9 percent of Canadian society. This is not to mention that VMs, including those of Muslim faith, tend to be more geographically concentrated and as such can have a considerable electoral influence despite their small demographic size. As such, like the case of VMs, the potential of demographic growth of Muslim Canadians could also drastically reshape Canadian elections in the future.

However, as this study is unable to convincingly demonstrate the root causes of this pattern of partisan preference among VM Muslims, additional research on this topic is needed to understand the partisan predispositions of VMs of Muslims faith. I suspect there is much to explore in relation to the position of Muslims in Western countries more broadly and the relationship with partisan politics those contexts encourage. More specifically, could the systemic targeting of Muslim minorities lead to that religious community being particularly sensitive to topics of minority rights and diversity? Conversely, could this specific issue sensitivity lead them to be particularly strong proponents of the Liberals which can be viewed as a defender of minority rights? Suffice it to say, the intricate detail behind the community's partisan positions will require additional research beyond the data and methodological limits of this study.

Section V – Cultural Communities as Opposed to Just Being "Visible Minorities"

As most results of this chapter suggest, the idea of VMs being a single unified group quickly falls apart. Instead, some communities had different motivations and factors underpinning their political attitudes. However, due to the smaller number of respondents of the analyses in this chapter, the findings and conclusions described in this chapter should not be seen as a definitive work, instead they should be viewed as an exploratory work, a first attempt at going beyond the VM category in the field of Canadian voter behaviour.

Still, what this chapter provides evidence to is that there is indeed considerable heterogeneity among VMs' political attitudes. As such, there is a necessity to study VMs at a more detailed level so as to find the nuances and particularities within each community. As this chapter demonstrates, there are not only appreciable differences in attitudes between communities, but even differences in how each groups' attitudes translate into political choices. There are, however, similarities which provide a shared experience among VMs deserving further discussion and analysis. The factor of ethnic consciousness was a particularly key factor in shaping communities' partisan preferences, yet even that factors did not lead to the same partisan outcome. Suffice it to say, more specific research on individual communities' political behaviour is necessary to fully understand the dynamics at play within those groups. Relying on aggregate analyses looking at VMs as an entire group simply is not refined enough to notice the

fine details within the VM category. Moreover, relying purely on individual-level factors will likely be insufficient to fully understanding the individual communities' attitudes. Instead, future research should also account for community-level factors such as migration history and communal relationships when looking at non-White minorities. There is a wide range of dynamics which have yet to be fully researched or even theoretically fleshed out (despite this chapter's attempt) which deserve greater attention. What is clear however is that future research cannot take for granted the ideas that VMs constitute a homogenous category when studying non-White Canadians.

Theoretical Implications, Limits, and Conclusion

One of the questions this research contended with from the onset was if visible minority Canadians can still be considered "Liberal partisans" despite years of Liberal decline and Conservative governance. The answer this study provides based on its results and findings is a meek yes: while VMs as a whole continue to be considerably more pro-Liberal than other segments of the Canadian population, but there are clear signs that this is not true for all VMs. The case of Chinese-Canadians, the second largest VM community in Canada, alone depicts a deviating trend from the traditional image of VMs as a stalwart Liberal supporter. This is a stark contrast from the early 2000s when VMs were overwhelmingly behind the Liberal party with over 80 percent of them voting for the Liberals in the 2000 election and still over 50 percent voting for the LPC in the 2004, 2006, and 2008 elections (Gidengil et al., 2012). In line with the decline demonstrated by Gidengil et al., this study shows that the advantage Liberals once enjoyed among VMs seems to have declined with only 45 percent identifying first and foremost as a Liberal. And while applying vote choice numbers to a study looking at partisan attachment is methodologically inaccurate as it does not allow for a perfect apple to apple comparison, it remains that the two factors are quite strongly correlated together (Harell, 2013) and do provide a general idea of Liberal decline prior to the 2015 election.

The second and much broader avenue of inquiry taken by this study was to identify the factors behind VMs' partisan attitudes while also examining the gap between VMs and other Canadians similarly to how Blais (2005) had done it. Like Blais, I assessed the impacts of more conventional factors such as economic ideology and social conservatism, but also more immigrant and minority-centric factors like views of multiculturalism and the length of residence, in all cases these variables could not fully explain VMs' Liberal propensity compared to other Canadians. A comparative assessment having failed, I switched and looked at VMs only so as to assess the relevant factors affecting their partisan positions. Doing so, a key communal factor, that of ethnic consciousness or how closely VM respondents felt to their community, was introduced. When looking at Liberal support, ethnic consciousness was the only factor which could predict VMs' attitudes, even with all socio-demographic and other attitudinal factors controlled for. Not even attitudes on multiculturalism seemed to have an effect contrary to what the literature on Liberal issue ownership on diversity suggests. Conversely, when looking at

Conservative levels, the picture changed drastically. While ethnic consciousness was still significant, albeit inversely with pro-Conservative attitudes, a myriad of other factors also had an effect. Similarly to other Canadians, factors like regionalism, income, social attitudes, and even economic ideology all had an effect in shaping VMs' opinion of the Conservative party.

Based on these findings, I conclude that while Liberal-supporting VMs continue to support the Liberals out of a concern for defending communal interests, Conservative VMs are on the other hand motivated by a wide variety of individually-driven attitudes and characteristics such as socio-economic status, regionalism, social conservatism, and even economic ideology. In this sense, while Liberal VMs continue to be something of an exception within the Canadian electorate, Conservative VMs' political attitudes do not seem to be that distinct from other Canadians. What this also suggests is that there is a link between defending one's ethnic community's interests and the Liberal party, thus providing evidence for the issue ownership argument proposed by Bilodeau and Kanji (2010).

The third area this study looked at were differences within the VM category. Indeed, as VM Canadians come a wide-ranging number of cultural backgrounds, many having quite little to do with one another, it is arguable whether it is wise to group all these minority Canadians into one single category for the simple reason that they are non-White. In order to study the heterogeneity which exists among VMs, I examined the case of the two VM sub-categories in Canada, namely Chinese-Canadians and Muslims by reapplying the same statistical analysis model. My results showed a considerable level of heterogeneity in regard to their partisan motivations for the Liberals and the Conservatives. Perhaps most importantly however, the results did differ from community to community thus suggesting the presence of heterogeneity within the VM category. Moreover, the results on a community basis did not perfectly reflect the dynamics suggested by the aggregate VM analyses thus suggesting considerable variance between different VM groups' political attitudes.

The theoretical implications of diversity and ethnic interests as key partisan factors

As demonstrated by the evidence in this study, VMs and other Canadians do care about issues of diversity and multiculturalism. This provides considerable evidence for Bilodeau and

Kanji's (2010) hypothesis as well as White and Bilodeau's (2014) notion of diversity-focused "issue publics" whose partisan choices are fundamentally dependent on a party's position and willingness to uphold ethno-cultural diversity. Building on this, I suggest a new theoretical conception of diversity-oriented partisanship. Specifically, I refine the idea of diversity "issue publics" by distinguishing between two types of diversity-minded partisans. Firstly, the category of partisans which I define as *multiculturally-minded* comprises those Canadians, VM and non-VM, who value diversity as a general political principle without necessarily having any direct stake or interest in issues of diversity, almost as if it were an apolitical idea. The second partisan category, which I define as *communally-minded*, are in contrast much more involved in topics of ethnocultural diversity as a matter of defending their ethnic group's interests at the political level. The *communally-minded* could thus be characterised by a sense of direct linkage with the politics of immigration and diversity, whereas the more detached *multiculturally-minded* partisan might view those topics as a matter of general preference and socio-ideological leanings. Conversely, the *communally-minded* partisan is one whose communal belonging and ethnic identity are crucial in shaping his partisan leanings while his *multiculturally-minded* counterpart views himself more so as an individual and prioritises personal values and ideologies in partisan decisions.

Indeed, the case of Chinese-Canadians is particularly noteworthy as it drastically differs from other the case of other VMs. Not only were Chinese-Canadians considerably more open to supporting the Conservatives when compared to other VMs, their motivations for supporting that party also differed considerably. Most notably, unlike other VMs where multiculturalism had little to no effect on partisan attitudes., Chinese respondent's view of multiculturalism was in fact linked to their propensity to support the Conservatives. This not only runs against the trend set by other Canadians who associate multiculturalism with the Liberals, the case of Chinese-Canadians also severely challenges the idea of Liberal issue ownership of multiculturalism. Yet, if support for multiculturalism is positively linked with Conservative support among Chinese-Canadians, how can this finding be harmonised with the fact that ethnic consciousness – this study's second measure for diversity sensitivity – was, in fact, negatively correlated with Conservative support? These seemingly contradictory findings reinforce the idea that there are two types of diversity-minded partisan. On the one hand, you have the category which most VMs fall under labelled as *communally-driven* partisans who prioritise their community's interests and

who continue to view the Liberals as the defender of minority interests. On the other hand, you have the category which most Canadians and Chinese Conservatives fall under who are *multiculturally-minded*. This category can be characterised as more individualistic and less driven by the concerns and interests of their ethnic community and while they do still care about topics of diversity as a sort of quasi-valence issue. Nonetheless, it is arguable that their stake in these issues is considerably less salient than the *communally-driven* whose communal interests are directly tied to the partisan process. In this sense, the more individualized partisans, like most Canadians and some Chinese-Canadians, who emphasize multiculturalism at a more symbolic level seem to be the norm; in fact, the exception seems to more so be the case of *communally-minded* partisans like most non-Chinese VMs who support parties who best represent them as a minority group.

Hence, far from being the homogenous group we might have thought, visible minorities are in fact characterised by in-category heterogeneity, not only in socio-cultural backgrounds but also in attitudes. We see that different groups can share the same opinions on a topic like multiculturalism yet develop drastically different partisan attitudes based on that opinion. Indeed, while most respondents were quite positive about the effects of multiculturalism, that shared opinion did not create the same sort of partisan link for everyone. For majority Canadians, the link between multiculturalism and the Liberals was very clear as we would expect, but for VMs this link was absent despite the extensive literature associating VMs' opinion of diversity to Liberal support (e.g. Bilodeau and Kanji, 2010; White and Bilodeau, 2014). However, the case of Chinese-Canadians shows that there seems to have been a considerable shift, among some VMs, in their perception of which political party truly is *the* party of ethno-cultural diversity. And, if anything, this result provides the strongest evidence of success for the Conservatives' outreach campaign to win the hearts and minds of visible minorities. It is quite plausible to think that symbolic gestures such as having Jason Kenney frequently attend Chinese cultural events and the government officially apologising for the head tax might have gone a long way in convincing Chinese-Canadians that it is indeed the Conservatives, and less so the Liberals, who have minorities' well-being at heart.

Then the question arises as to why this effect seems limited to the Chinese community and does not extend to other major VM communities. One potential explanation which is related

to Dahl's (1961) model of political assimilation as a succeeding step to social assimilation would be that of community establishment which relies on the fact that the Chinese community is one of the oldest VM group to have settled in Canada. The idea would be that as Chinese-Canadians have been in the country for far longer than most other VMs, their sense of having "settled in" or "fitting into" Canadian society is perhaps much stronger. With that sense of establishment perhaps comes a stronger sense of entitlement, boundaries between the ethnic group and the host society become increasingly meshed in. There may thus be a weakened perception of differences between being Chinese versus being Canadian, the two identities in a sense merge - where inter-group boundaries are more of what Alba (2005) would define as "blurred" as opposed to clearly separate or "bright." This blurring of boundaries might potentially lead to a more communally-detached and more individualized perception of one's place in Canadian society as one sees themselves as Canadian and less so as a member of the Chinese community. And while, the evidence provided by this study is insufficient to fully prove the existence of such a dynamic, it does at least provide a starting ground for future research on the topic. The existing literature on long-term community adaptation might also provide some important guiding ideas. However, the literature on immigrant minority acculturation seems fairly muted in response to this topic. Indeed, while a number of works on the topic of immigrant minority acculturation have emphasized the importance of retaining one's culture and ethnic network to successfully adapt to new societies (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Massey, 1999). Likewise, Berry (2005) argues that "integration" as an acculturation strategy depends on the maintenance of one's culture whilst being willing to be in contact with the majority society. Yet, few-if any - have discussed the characteristics of community evolution after the initial acculturation process, or how the community develops after "settling in."

Perhaps the starting point of ought to rest on the idea that minority newcomers often face hostility and resistance when they first arrive in Canada; one needs only think about the restrictive immigration policies imposed on the Chinese in the early 20th century. These "bright" barriers of integration are, however, often overcome with time, thus allowing minorities to integrate into mainstream society and even flourish in spite of continued adversity. And while ethno-communal solidarity likely was essential to the integration success of minority communities, successful acculturation with the host society brings with it greater economic and cultural harmonization which in turn diminish the necessity of traditional ethno-communal

bonds. If anything, it might be the success of communal solidarity in integrating its members into the host society which ultimately undermines its necessity. As the memory of past struggles fade, a sense of entitlement and even complacency might establish itself among minorities who have "made it." With this shift in mentality might come a weakening in one's sensitivity to communal interests and other topics of ethnocultural diversity. While the latter remain important to the political attitudes of all minorities, for those "who have made it" these topics become less of a priority and more of a general ideological principle whose influence is largely relegated to the background.

Hence, Chinese-Canadians' distinct attitudes towards diversity in relations to partisan positioning may have much to do with the community's sense of being "settled in" and a lessening importance of ethnic belonging when compared to other VM communities. This is despite the fact that communal solidarity and mobilisation were essential to the historical development of the Chinese community in Canada. The history of Chinese immigrants' struggle for equal rights in the 20th century provides one such example of ethnic solidarity. Confronted by racially discriminatory policies such as the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act and the head tax, Chinese immigrants mobilised and formed communal associations like the Chinese Benevolent Association to fight for their interests at the policy level (Madokoro, 2012). By pressuring the Canadian government, these discriminatory policies were mostly abolished in later decades, thus paving the road for the Chinese community to establish itself and thrive. In the face of adversity, communal solidarity was essential in not only weathering discriminatory treatment by the rest of Canadian society, but also to uphold and defend communal interests. Community solidarity and organisation were thus essential in times of hardship and exclusion.

Yet, over time, as the community rooted itself ever deeper into Canadian society, the need for community mobilisation was not as strong as Chinese people did not face existential challenges to their presence in Canada as was the case historically. The community could feel "settled in" and, consequently, priorities shifted away from communal interests as the memories of past struggles faded. The emphasis went towards more personal considerations as opposed to more communal ones. The decline in ethnic bonds as a key partisan motivator might have led Chinese-Canadians towards a more individualised partisan mentality more in line with other Canadians. It remains that as VMs, Chinese-Canadians retain a sense of importance for ethno-

cultural diversity as a general principle, not least because Chinese-Canadians' place in Canadian society depends on that core pillar. This *multiculturally-minded* mentality is, however, less focused than communally-driven political interests. While the former is more so anchored on defending the principles of the status quo, *communally-minded* mobilisation is concerned about fighting for the group's collective interests on specific subjects as was the case when the Chinese fought against the injustices of the head tax and restrictions on family reunification.

Limitations and future research

Having discussed the findings, theoretical implications, and the more speculative implications of this study, it is important to reiterate the limitations of it. While this study does seek to depict a more long-term portrait of visible minorities' partisan attitudes using survey data from 2014, the results here are not the product of longitudinal data stretching many years. Moreover, while partisan identity affords a stronger and more stable measurement of partisan opinion, it is crucial to remember that it is not the same thing as vote choice which is instead much more volatile and short-term. The methodology of this study of public opinion is also one which is anchored at an individual level of analysis, the focus of this study is thus not mainly centered on political parties and their strategies even though those do provide a useful interpretation of the data. Moreover, as quantitative study, it is worthwhile to acknowledge the inherent issues of this approach in that it does not allow the subjects of study to express themselves in their own terms. And while survey data provides a strong and fairly accurate way to assess public opinion, it remains that the conclusions I derive from the data are ultimately those I superimpose onto the numbers.

If anything, the findings and conclusions of this study do demonstrate the need for additional research on visible minorities' political preferences in Canada, be it from a quantitative or qualitive perspective. This study, for instance, highlights the influence of ethnic consciousness, little to no recent works exist on the subject of community dynamics on voter behaviour, especially among non-White minorities. Additionally, as chapter three of this work somewhat demonstrates, much remains unknown when looking at minority communities by themselves without resorting to an aggregate categorisation. The chapter demonstrated that the case of Muslim VMs is quite distinct from other VMs but is unable to determine the reasons behind this dynamic. Similarly, the case of the Chinese-Canadian community deserves more

attention, not only because of its strong deviation in partisan preference compared to other VMs, but also to better understand the effect of long-term acculturation within Canadian society. Moreover, this study also develops a number of theoretical conclusions spurred on by the limited empirical results of the first three chapters. As such, while this study proposes the idea of there being two types of diversity-minded partisans, one who is *communally-minded* while the other is *multiculturally-minded*, additional empirical research is necessary to validate these more speculative claims. Lastly, while this study's methodology provides some insightful and novel findings, it remains that most of the analyses' (even the more complete ones) r-squared scores are all fairly weak relative to the number of variables included. This means that the overall explanatory power of the analyses is generally quite weak. The complete VM-only analysis of Liberal support (Table 11) only managed a rather pathetic 3 percent of explained variance; meanwhile its counterpart looking at Conservative support (Table 17) manages a somewhat better but still underwhelming r-square of 12 percent. This means that additional factors need be examined to develop a more complete picture of VMs' partisan preferences.

As this section has emphasized, there is a necessity for additional research as this study is not to be seen as conclusive piece of work. And indeed, as visible minority communities continue to grow in demographic weight, the importance of properly understanding these social bases of vote and of developing relevant research literature on the topic becomes evermore essential. As this work has demonstrated, there is not one visible minority partisan so much as there are many visible minority partisans, each of which's political preferences deserve to be understood. Future research should therefore account for this heterogeneity among VMs while seeking to develop and understand the characteristics of the VM Canadians as political partisans.

Works cited

Alba, Richard. 2005. "Bright vs. Blurred Boundaries: Second-Generation Assimilation and Exclusion in France, Germany, and the United States." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28(1), 20-49.

Baglay, Sasha. 2017. "Is Canada a Model for Compassionate Migration Policy?" In *Compassionate Migration and Regional Policy in the Americas*, eds Steven W. Bender and William F. Arrocha. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bélanger, Éric and Bonnie M. Meguid. 2008. "Issue salience, issue ownership, and issue-based vote choice." *Electoral Studies* 27, 477-491.

Berry, John W. 2005. "Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 29, 697-712.

Bilodeau, Antoine. 2009. "Residential Segregation and the Electoral Participation of Immigrants in Australia." *The International Migration Review* 43, 134-159.

Bilodeau, Antoine, Stephen White, and Neil Nevitte. 2010. "The Development of Dual Loyalties: Immigrants' Integration to Canadian Regional Dynamics. *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue canadienne de science politique* 43(3), 515-544.

Bilodeau, Antoine and Mebs Kanji. 2010. "The New Immigrant Voter 1965-2004: The Emergence of a New Liberal Partisan?" In *Voting Behaviour in Canada*, eds. Cameron D. Anderson and Laura B. Stephenson. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Bilodeau, Antoine, Mebs Kanji, and Thomas J, Scotto. 2012. "Appendix: Four Decades of Publications Based on the Canadian Election Studies." In *The Canadian Election Studies: Assessing Four Decades of Influence*, eds. Mebs Kanji, Antoine Bilodeau, and Thomas J. Scotto. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Bilodeau, Antoine, Luc Turgeon, Stephen E. White, and Ailsa Henderson. 2015. "Seeing the Same Canada: Visible Minorities' Views of the Federation." *IRPP Study* 56.

Bilodeau, Antoine and Luc Turgeon. 2015. *Voter Turnout among Younger Canadians and Visible-Minority Canadians: Evidence from the Provincial Diversity Project*. Accessed at http://inspirerlademocratie-inspiredemocracy.ca/rsch/yth/vot/p1-eng.asp (25 November 2017).

Bird, Karen. 2005. "The Political Representation of Visible Minorities in Electoral Democracies: A Comparison of France, Denmark, and Canada." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 11, 425-465.

Blais, André, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau, and Neil Nevitte. 2002. *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory*. Orchard Park: Broadview press.

Blais, André. 2005. "Accounting for the Electoral Success of the Liberal Party in Canada: Presidential Address to the Canadian Political Science Association London, Ontario June 3, 2005." *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue canadienne de science politique* 38(4), 821-840.

Castonguay, Alec. 2013. "The inside story of Jason Kenney's campaign to win over ethnic votes." *Maclean's*. Retrieved from https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/welcome-to-my-world/.

Clark, Campbell. 2006. "PM offers apology, 'symbolic payments' for Chinese head tax." *The Globe and Mail*. Accessed at https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/pm-offers-apology-symbolic-payments-for-chinese-head-tax/article711245/.

Clarke, Harold, Lawrence LeDuc, Jane Jenson, and Jon H. Pammett. 1979. *Political Choice in Canada*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited.

Dahl, Robert. 1961. *Who Governs*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Gabriel, Richard A. 1972. "A New Theory of Ethnic Voting." *Polity* 4(4), 405-428.

Garcia, John A. 1982. "Ethnicity and Chicanos: Measurement of Ethnic Identification, Identity, and Consciousness." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 4(3), 295-314.

Gidengil, Elisabeth, André Blais, Neil Nevitte, and Richard Nadeau. 2004. *Citizens*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Gidengil, Elisabeth, André Blais, Joanna Everitt, Patrick Fournier, and Neil Nevitte. 2006. "Back to the Future? Making Sense of the 2004 Canadian Election outside Quebec." Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue canadienne de science politique 39(1), 1-25.

Gidengil, Elisabeth. 2012. "An Overview of the Social Dimension of Vote Choice." In *The Canadian Election Studies: Assessing Four Decades of Influence*, eds. Mebs Kanji, Antoine Bilodeau, and Thomas J. Scotto. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Gidengil, Elisabeth, Joanna Everitt, André Blais, Patrick Fournier, and Neil Nevitte. 2013a. "Explaining the Modern Gender Gap." In *Mind the Gaps: Canadian Perspectives on Gender and Politics*, eds. Robert Lexier and Tamara Small. Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

Gidengil, Elisabeth, Neil Nevitte, André Blais, Joanna Everitt, and Patrick Fournier. 2013b. *Dominance & Decline: Making Sense of Recent Canadian Elections*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Gidengil, Elisabeth, and Jason Roy. 2016 "Is There a Racial Divide? Immigrants of Visible Minority Background in Canada." In Just Ordinary Citizens? Towards a Comparative Portrait of the Political Immigrant, ed. Antoine Bilodeau. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Grant, Tavia. 2018. "Hate crimes in Canada rose by 47 per cent last year: Statscan." *Globe and Mail*. Accessed on 19 July 2019. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-hate-crimes-in-canada-rose-by-47-per-cent-last-year-statscan/

Harell, Allison. 2013. "Revisiting the 'Ethnic' Vote: Liberal Allegiance and Vote Choice among Racialized Minorities." In *Parties, Elections and the Future of Canadian Politics*, eds. Amanda Bittner and Royce Koop. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Helly, Denise. 2004. "Are Muslims Discriminated Against in Canada since September 2001?". *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 36(1).

Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1987. "Networks in Context: The Social Flow of Political Information." *The American Political Science Review* 81(4), 1197-1216.

Kim, Jiyoo, and Andrea M.L. Perrella. 2008. "Beyond the Liberal Party: Immigrant Voting Behaviour in Canada." Retrieved from https://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/papers-2008/Kim-Perrella.pdf.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F., Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet. 1965. *The People's Choice: How the Voter Makes up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lenoir-Achdjian, Annick, Sébastien Arcand, Denise Helly, Isabelle Drainville, and Michèle Vatz Laaroussi. 2009. "Les difficultés d'insertion en emploi des immigrants du Maghreb au Québec." *IRPP*.

Madokoro, Laura. 2012. "'Slotting' Chinese Families and Refugees, 1947-1967." *The Canadian Historical Review* 93(1): 25-56.

Malloy, Jonathan. 2013. "The Relationship between the Conservative Party of Canada and Evangelicals and Social Conservatives." In *Conservatism in Canada*, eds James Farney and David Rayside. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Marwah, Inder, Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos, and Stephen White. 2013. "Immigration, Citizenship, and Canada's New Conservative Party." In *Conservatism in Canada*, eds. James Farney and David Rayside. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Massey, Douglas S. 1999. "Why Does Immigration Occur? A Theoretical Synthesis." In *The Handbook of International Migration: The American Experience*, eds. C. Hirschman, P. Kasinitz, and J. DeWind. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Messina, Anthony M. 2007. "The Logics and Politics of Immigrant Incorporation." In *The Logics and Politics of Post-WWII Migration to Western Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 194-223.

Nadeau, Richard and Éric Bélanger. 2012. "Quebec versus the Rest of Canada, 1965-2006." In *The Canadian Election Studies: Assessing Four Decades of Influence*, ed. Mebs Kanji, Antoine Bilodeau, and Thomas J. Scotto. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

New Democratic Party. 2019. *A New Deal for People: New Democrats' Commitments to you.* Retrieved from http://xfer.ndp.ca/2015/2015-Full-Platform-EN-PRINT.pdf.

New Democratic Party. 2019. *A New Deal for People: New Democrats' Commitments to you.* Retrieved from https://action.ndp.ca/page/-/2019/Q2/2019-06-19_Commitments-Doc_EN.pdf.

Reitz, Jeffrey G. and Rupa Banerjee. 2007. "Racial Inequality, Social Cohesion and Policy Issues in Canada." In *Belonging? Diversity, Recognition and Shared Citizenship in Canada*, ed. Keith Banting, Thomas J. Courchene and F. Leslie Seidle. Montreal: IRPP.

Saggar, Shamit. "British Citizens like Any Others? Ethnic Minorities and Elections in the United Kingdom." In *Just Ordinary Citizens? Towards a Comparative Portrait of the Political Immigrant*, ed. Antoine Bilodeau. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Schwartz, Mildred. 2012. "Theoretical Perspectives in the Canadian Elections Studies." In *The Canadian Election Studies: Assessing Four Decades of Influence*, eds. Mebs Kanji, Antoine Bilodeau, and Thomas J. Scotto. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Simpson, Laura. 2018. "Violent victimization and discrimination among visible minority populations, Canada, 2014." Accessed at https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2018001/article/54913-eng.htm.

Statistics Canada. 2011. National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no.99-010-X2011029.

Statistics Canada. 2013. "Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada – National Household Survey, 2011." Accessed at https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x2011001-eng.pdf.

Statistics Canada. 2017a. "Immigration and ethnocultural diversity: Key results from the 2016 Census." Accessed at https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025b-eng.pdf?st=B7M0Qlwj.

Statistics Canada. 2017b. "Police-reported hate crime, 2016." Accessed at https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/171128/dq171128d-eng.pdf?st=FO_72Qpu.

Statistics Canada. 2019. "Data tables, 2016 Census." Accessed at https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/dt-td/Rp-eng.cfm?LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GID=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=110531&PRID=10&PTYPE=109445&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2017&THEME=120&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=.

Stoke, Donald E. 1963. "Spatial Models of Party Competition." *The American Political Science Review* 57(2), 368-377.

Taylor, Zack, Phil Triadafilopoulos, and Christopher Cochrane. 2012. "On the Backs of Immigrants? Conservative Politics and New Canadian Voters. *CPSA*.

White, Stephen, and Antoine Bilodeau. 2014. "Canadian Immigrant Electoral Support in Comparative Perspective." In *Comparing Canada: Methods and Perspectives on Canadian Politics*, eds. Luc Turgeon, Martin Papillon, Jennifer Wallner, Stephen White. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

White, Stephen. 2016. "Do Younger and Older Immigrants Adapt Differently to Canadian Politics?." In Just Ordinary Citizens? Towards a Comparative Portrait of the Political Immigrant, ed. Antoine Bilodeau. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Wolfinger, Raymond E. 1965. "The Development and Persistence of Ethnic Voting." *American Political Science Review* 59(4), 896-908.

Annex

Summary of hypotheses

Hypotheses	Measurement	Expected relationship
H1: VM status	Dummy variable indicating if a respondent is a VM or not	If VM status is significant then that means that there is a meaningful difference for being a VM on party preference
H2: Economic ideology	Three variables looking at respondents' position on taxation versus social spending, private healthcare, and the role of the state	Right economic ideology should be linked with Conservative support
H3: Social conservatism	Scale built on a series of question relating to homosexual marriage, abortion, legalisation of marijuana, etc.	Stronger social conservative views should be linked with weaker Liberal support and, potentially stronger Conservative support
H4: Views on multiculturalism	Variable measuring respondents' views of multiculturalism having a positive, negative, or no impact on Canadian identity	Positive views of the impacts of multiculturalism should be linked with a greater likelihood of supporting the Liberals
H5: Ethnic networks	Variable measuring extent of one's contact with members of the same ethnic background	Respondents with more frequent contact to their ethnic community will be more likely to support the Liberals
H6: Ethnic consciousness	Variable assessing respondents' ethnic solidarity	Respondents with a stronger emotional attachment to their community will be more likely to support the Liberals

Variable codification

Variables	Question(s) used	Adjustments
Party identification (DV)	"Thinking about federal politics, which party do you usually feel closest to?"	
Visible minority status	"You may belong to one or more racial or ethnic groups on the following list. You may select more than one. Are you…"	
Generations (Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, Traditionalist)	"What year were you born?"	Generation was determined via respondents' age

		using the formula 2014 − (age indicated by respondent). Reference category were respondents born before 1945 (Traditionalists).
Sex	"Are you Male or Female?"	
Education	"What is the highest level of education that you have completed?"	
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	"For how many years have you been living in Canada?"	Dummy variable (0= immigrants; 1= born in Canada)
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	"For how many years have you been living in Canada?"	Dummy variable (0=those born in Canada or those having lived in Canada for longer than 15 years; 1= immigrants who lived in Canada for 15 years or less)
Income	"Which of the following best indicates your annual household income before taxes?"	
Province of residence	"In which province do you live?"	Provinces (coded into dummy variables using Ontario as a reference
Religion (Catholic and Muslim)	"What is your religion?"	Catholic and Muslim variables were coded as dummy variables with respondents of other religions or without religion being used as a reference category
Lowering taxes vs social programs	"We should invest more in social programs rather than reducing taxes." (Strongly agree/somewhat agree/somewhat disagree/strongly disagree)	Reversed the order of answers so that respondents so the variable could assess the effect of stronger right-wing views

Private sector in health care	"The private sector should play a bigger role in the delivery of health care." (Strongly agree/somewhat agree/somewhat disagree/strongly disagree)	
Government has too much influence	"Governments play too big a role in our lives." (Strongly agree/somewhat agree/somewhat disagree/strongly disagree)	
Social conservatism	Index of five questions (Strongly agree/somewhat agree/somewhat disagree/strongly disagree): 1. "Gays and lesbians should NOT be allowed to marry in Canada." 2. "It is too easy to get an abortion nowadays." 3. "Canada should legalize the consumption of marijuana." 4. "Canada should decriminalize prostitution." 5. "Society would be better off if more women stayed home with their children."	The questions on marijuana and prostitution had the order of their answers reversed so as to fall in with the other variables' coding direction in the scale.
Multiculturalism	Index of three questions "Do you think the policy of multiculturalism of the Government of Canada has a positive, negative or not much of an impact on...?" 1. "...how well immigrants integrate?" 2. "...Canadians' tolerance toward different ethnic groups?" 3. "...Canadian identity?"	Negative impact was coded as -1, no impact as 0, and positive impact as 1
Ethnic contact	"For each of the following activities, would you say you do them every week, once or twice a month, only a few times a year or not at all? Spend time with people of the same ethnic background as you (aside from your family)" (every week, once or twice a month, only a few times a year, never)	Reversed the order of answers
Ethnic consciousness	"Please tell us whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat	Reversed order of answers

disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements. When someone criticizes people of my own ethnic group it feels like a personal insult."	

Ethnic breakdown of visible minority respondents

	n
Chinese	799
South Asian	349
Black	267
Arab	164
Latin American	115
Filipino	105
Southeast Asian (e.g. Vietnamese, Cambodian)	102
Japanese	65
West Asian (e.g. Iranian, Afghan)	39
Korean	36
n	2,041

Level of education

	Visible Minorities	**Other Canadians**
Undergraduate degree and above	58%	35%
Less than an undergraduate degree	42%	65%
n	2,031	3,403

Religion of VM respondents

	n
Catholics	19%
Other Christians	21%
Muslim	15%
Hindu	8%
Sikh	4%
Other religions	9%
No religion/atheist	24%
n	1,517

Age

	Visible Minorities	**Other Canadians**
Average age	39	50
n	2,041	3,420

Gender

	Visible Minorities	**Other Canadians**
Female	52%	51%
Male	48%	49%
n	2,041	3,420

Income

	Visible Minorities	Other Canadians
Less than $20,000	13%	9%
$20,000-$29,999	11%	8%
$30,000-$39,999	9%	11%
$50,000-$59,999	9%	11%
$60,000-$69,999	11%	9%
$70,000-$79,999	9%	8%
$80,000-$89,999	8%	8%
$90,000-$99,999	5%	7%
$100,000-$109,999	6%	6%
$110,000-$119,999	5%	3%
$120,000-$149,999	4%	6%
$150,000-$199,999	5%	4%
$200,000 or more	2%	3%
n	1,800	2,970

Regional distribution of respondents

	Visible Minorities	Other Canadians
Quebec	13%	31%
Ontario	57%	42%
Alberta	9%	13%
British Columbia	21%	14%
n	2,041	3,420

Other visible minority groups' partisan preferences relative to the general trend

	South Asians	Blacks	Arabs	Other visible minorities	All visible minorities
Conservatives	14	23	8	23%	24%
Liberals	50	53	62	46%	46%
NDP	27	17	20	25%	24%
Other Parties	8	8	10	6%	6%
n	235	175	119	649	1,364

Canadians' Conservative attitudes with social and attitudinal controls

	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
Visible minority status (ref: non-VMs)	-.19	.19	-.44	.19*
Millennials (ref: Traditionalists)	-.83	.21***	-.82	.21***
Gen X (ref: Traditionalists)	-.61	.21**	-.66	.22**
Boomers (ref: Traditionalists)	-.52	.18**	-.50	.19**
Born in Canada (ref: immigrants)	-.13	.19	-.05	.19
Recent immigrants (<15 years)	.02	.26	-.14	.26
Female	-.25	.12*	-.31	.12*
Education level	-.06	.03^T	-.04	.04
Income	.06	.02***	.07	.02***
Quebec (ref: Ontario)	-1.56	.17***	-1.56	.17***
Alberta (ref: Ontario)	1.02	.13***	.99	.13***
British Columbia (ref: Ontario)	.01	.14	-.01	.15
Catholic (ref: other religions)	.01	.14	-.08	.15
Lowering taxes vs social programs	.58	.07***	.56	.07***
Private sector in health care	.45	.06***	.44	.06***
Government has too much influence	.05	.08	-.03	.08
Multiculturalism	-.06	.03^T	-.05	.03
Social conservatism		---	.30	.03***
Constant	-2.72	.46***	-3.68	.49***
Visible minority variable's margin	-0.03		-0.07	
Pseudo R-Square	.19		.23	
n	3,143		3,143	

2014 Provincial Diversity Project
Binomial logistic regression
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; T p < 0.1