

**Conceptualising Party Political Ideology:
An Exploration of Party Modernisation in Britain**

Katharine Dommett

Department of Politics
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Sheffield

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'No statesman can stand the strain of modern political life without the inner serenity that comes from fidelity to a number of guiding convictions. Without their steadying influence he is blown about by every passing breeze. Nor is cleverness and political agility a substitute for them. It has always been for me a painful spectacle when some Labour spokesman tries to justify a piece of Socialist legislation on exclusively "practical" grounds. There are at least two considerations to be kept in mind when making policy. Its applicability to the immediate situation certainly; but also its faithfulness to the general body of principles which make up your philosophy. Without the latter, politics is merely a job like any other' (Aneurau Bevan, 1952).

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Abstract

Ideology in political parties has been studied in a variety of different ways. From accounts which emphasise the decline of ideology to scholars attesting the centrality of ideas, the interaction between parties and ideology is often far from clear. In this thesis I set out to explore this relationship in greater detail, arguing that ideological analysis is relevant to understanding parties, but that existing modes of investigation should be tailored to reflect the specific circumstances of political parties. In advancing this contention I introduce the concept of party political ideology as a means for schematising my own study of this area; offering a model in which parties are seen to both possess and project an ideology.

In operationalising this approach I concentrate on ideology as projected, arguing that to understand parties' contemporary relationship with ideology it is informative to consider how the public view this interaction. This leads me to examine ideology through rhetoric, exploring parties' communicative utterances to discern the way in which ideology is conveyed, the form of ideological change and the apparent relevance of ideology vis-à-vis other party motivations.

In applying this approach attention is directed to the Labour Party between 1982 and 1997 and the Conservatives between 1996 and 2010, exploring these periods to examine ideology, ideological change and the indicators of modernisation. Whilst characterising ideology in both of these cases, and developing my own narrative of ideological change and modernisation, I also use this analysis to exhibit the capacities of my theoretical and methodological approach. This leads me to examine how parties' ideological messages are likely to be decoded and how notions of ideological irrelevance arise; insights which help to explain perceptions of ideology in relation to contemporary party politics.

In this regard this thesis engages in a theoretical, methodological and applied analysis of the relationship between political parties and ideology. This multi-stranded inquiry is used to assert the relevance of ideology in the field of party politics and the need to advance, under the banner of party political ideology, a form of analysis capable of appreciating the nuanced interaction between these concerns.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Ideology in political parties has frequently been depicted in negative terms, portrayed as 'outdated' (Blair, 1996b, p.5), dogmatic (ibid., p. 48; 56; 159; Blunkett, 11th May 2012; Maude, 7th March 2012), and concerned with the 'past' (Cameron quoted in Dorey *et al*, 2011).¹ Politicians across the political spectrum have asserted their determination to govern in accordance 'with a practical desire to sort out this country's problems, not by ideology' (Cameron, 31st December 2010), entrenching a vision of ideology as 'a closed intellectual system with aspirations to explain all aspects of human behaviour which, in so doing, squeezes reality to fit its precepts' (Fielding, 2003, p.58). In this vein parties have come to be depicted as more concerned with appearing as 'a proficient alternative administration rather than an ideologically inspiring but potentially fissiparous crusade' (Bale, 2010, p.365), being focused on 'valuology' and pragmatism rather than ideology (Reeves, 27th September 2004).²

Whilst prominent within the realm of party politics these depictions of ideology reflect particular interpretations of the term. Whilst originally coined by Antoine Destutt de Tracy to connote a science of ideas (1817), the concept has mutated, producing alternative meanings from Marxist notions of false consciousness (Engles & Marx, 1955, p.541 – for a discussion see Cheal, 1979; Giddens, 1979), Teun Van Dijk's notion of a system of ideas (1998, p.307) and Andrew Vincent's account of emotive theorising (2010, p.12).³ These contributions (and others beside) offer different diagnoses of what it means to be ideological and have led to a wide ranging debate over the form and pertinence of inquiry in this area. Whilst some dismiss the term (as above) and others have claimed ideology to have ended, many scholars continue to assert the importance of ideology and the insight to be gained through analysis at this level. Yet, as the above examples reveal, within the realm of political parties pejorative and dismissive depictions have come to dominate understanding. Parties are widely deemed to have converged on the centre ground (Alesina, 1998; Downs, 1957a; Hay, 1997a; Thomas, 1980), betrayed ideology in favour of marketing publically appealing policies (Butler & Collins, 1994; Lees-Marshment 2001a; 2001b; Lilleker & Lees-Marshment, 2005), or pursued abstract visions

¹ These examples typify the public depiction of ideology, but a range of other negative critiques have also been advanced which cite, for example, the doctrinaire nature of ideology and the need for a more common sense politics. Scholars have also asserted the irrelevance of ideology when seeking to understand party politics.

² For more see Kavanagh *et al*, 2006; Christoph, 1965. It is also notable that only 13 per cent of those surveyed in 2005 agreed that the 'difference between parties is great' as compared with 88 per cent in 1987 (Curtice, Fisher & Lessard-Phillips, 2007, p.125) – suggesting that the public accord with the idea that parties are less (or non-) ideological.

³ To appreciate these different definitions it is informative to examine: Gerring, 1997; Hamilton, 1987; Huaco, 1971; Jost *et al*, 2009; Knight, 2006; Schmind, 1981. For a discussion of the difficulties of examining ideology see Kennedy, 1979; Sartori, 1969.

(Sánchez-Cuenca, 2004). In this regard the realm of party politics is dominated by narrow accounts of ideology.

In this thesis I aim to rehabilitate ideology in political parties, arguing that ideas and ideology are relevant, and that ideological study has much to offer when seeking to understand party behaviour and development. To advance this idea I introduce the concept of party political ideology, a frame which allows me to move beyond existing accounts to develop an analytical and methodological framework tailored to the specificities of political parties in Britain today.⁴ Such inquiry is vital as whilst a range of scholars have asserted the relevance of ideology and the value of ideological inquiry (Atkins, 2011; Buckler & Dolowitz, 2000; 2012; Freedon, 1996) negative and irrelevant depictions remain pervasive. In positing my party political ideology approach I seek to draw inspiration from existing accounts and adapt them to reflect the specific circumstances of party politics. This is required because whilst scholars such as Michael Freedon, Anthony Downs and Ian Budge – the thinkers drawn primarily upon in this thesis – have offered a range of insightful interventions illustrating the value of ideological inquiry, their accounts are abstracted from the party context and the unique way in which ideology is manifest in this environment. This has allowed room for pejorative accounts and notions of ideological irrelevance to dominate. In reaction to this I present party political ideology as a means by which to demonstrate the pertinence of ideological study and to explore how ideology is apparent in parties. This leads me to pose two initial questions:

1. How is ideology manifest in the party context? and,
2. How can it be studied?

By exploring these topics and applying the method developed in the course of my analysis I argue it is possible to not only appreciate the relevance of ideology, but also to gain a greater understanding of parties' relationship with ideology. In this sense I aim to move away from the depiction of parties as ideologically converged and increasingly pragmatic, offering an alternative mode of ideological study which asserts the value of studying ideology in parties. In pursuing this analysis I also pose a third question which inspires my application of the party political ideology approach, namely:

⁴ This inquiry is focused substantively on two political parties; the Labour Party and the Conservative Party in the periods 1982-1997 and 1997-2010 respectively, yet this framework does have broader applicability for other cases/time periods. This kind of investigation is deemed necessary because whilst accounts such as Robert Leach's (2009) have emerged which contend the relevance of ideology, these are not focused specifically on party politics and the ideological dynamics encountered there.

3. How can we characterise parties' ideology in periods of ideological change and modernisation? And what insights about parties' behaviour and ideological identity can be gleaned through such analysis?

By exploring these questions in relation to two contemporary cases (specifically the Labour Party and the Conservative Party) I demonstrate not only how ideology is manifest in parties and how it can be studied, but also how a party political ideological approach can advance knowledge of parties' behaviour and identities. Accordingly in the course of this thesis I engage in theoretical, methodological and applied analysis of ideology in political parties, developing an innovative analytical framework tailored to this context.

In embarking on this project I first outline my definition of ideology, distinguishing my approach from the array of other conceptions of this term. I see ideology to be 'a set of political beliefs about how society ought to be and how to improve it, irrespective of whether those ideas are true or false or good or bad' (Adams, 2001a, p.2). In this regard an ideology works to 'map the political and social worlds for us' (Freedon, 2003, p.2), it represents a way of understanding society and politics which is not limited to passive description but rather attempts to exert influence, giving it an action-oriented characteristic (Minogue, 1993, p.7). Hence, ideology is intrinsically related to interpretation, but unlike discourse I argue that for an ideology to emerge it is necessary for judgements to stand in conflict with another vision, offering a different diagnosis of human interests.⁵

To expand on this distinction; discourses are seen here to act as shortcuts for human understanding, providing the means by which, as Jacob Torfing states, 'our cognitions and speech acts... become meaningful' (Torfing, 1999, pp.84-5; cf. MacDonell, 1986).⁶ They reflect different, yet widely accepted social practices; so a discourse of the school would evoke teachers, classrooms, students, playtime, packed lunch, pencil cases, maths and learning, linking together ideas and objects to guide understanding. There can be more than one discourse on a certain topic as, for example, a student of a Steiner Waldorf school may have a different school discourse to a student attending a Church of England school. These differences are not

⁵ I view interests to be, not real, but rather constructed, echoing Hay's schema (2010); see also: Béland, 2010; Blyth, 2002 cf. Connelly, 1972). Hay argues '[i]nterests do not exist, but constructions of interests do', continuing '[s]uch constructions are inherently normative and subjective/inter-subjective conceptions of self good - of what it would advantage the individual to do or have done either on her behalf or inadvertently by others' (Hay, 2010, p.79; see also: Eagleton, 2007). This view stands in contrast to path dependent depictions of interests as rational and externally determinable (Lukes, 1974), and other accounts (Benton, 1981; Hindess, 1982).

⁶ Although discourses are necessary for human interaction it should also be acknowledged that discourses are not static but rather have 'different structurations that change over time' (Torfing, 1999, pp.84-5). For an extended discussion of the relationship between discourse and ideology see Purvis & Hunt, 1993.

problematic so long as they are widely accepted and seen as equivalent, meaning that discourses can co-exist in the absence of direct conflict. However, when one discourse tries to claim dominance over another (e.g. when one head teacher asserts the superiority of their schooling philosophy) I argue that ideology emerges.

This differentiation is not uniformly upheld in existing literature with theorists such as Terry Threadgold (1989) and Brian Paltridge (2008, p.45) viewing the terms as commensurate, and others imbuing discourse with the very action-orientated conflictual traits seen here to define ideology (Maurer Lane, 1999; Schmidt, 2011). However, this trait defines my approach to study as I see ideology to rest upon disagreement and antagonism. It marks an attempt to dislodge prevalent discourse(s) and re-envisage society by effecting to sustain, reproduce or extend a particular perspective. For this reason ideology is related to power as actors' attempts to bring about change or to maintain the status quo require persuasion as they attempt to justify and normalise a particular perspective. Within a democratic party system this exertion of power occurs predominantly at the ideational level, thus in developing my account of power I ascribe to the logic that:

'...ideas and discursive frames can help actors convince the general public and specific groups that the existing state of affairs is inherently flawed, and that major reforms are necessary to solve the perceived problems of the day, which are largely ideational constructions themselves' (Béland, 2010, p.148).⁷

Whilst other forms of power such as status (i.e. at the elite), agenda setting and access are equally relevant, the use of ideas to exert power over others by persuading and neutralising counterarguments is the central currency of ideology. Following Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony ideological actors strive to achieve:

'...moral, intellectual and political leadership through the expansion of a discourse that partially fixes meaning around nodal points. Hegemony involves more than a passive consensus and more than legitimate actions. It involves the expansion of a particular discourse of norms, values, views and perceptions through persuasive re-descriptions of the world' (Torfing, 1999, p.302).

⁷ Indicative accounts of other manifestations of power are provided by: Boulding, 1989; Clegg, 1989; Galbraith, 1983; Haugaard, 1997; Hay, 1997c; 2002; Lukes, 1974; Smith, 2009.

In this sense an ideological actor attempts to exert power (for example over a public audience) by articulating and entrenching certain perspectives of the world. When conceived in this way ideologies' ultimate aim is to obtain the status of a discourse whereby a set of ideas become so entrenched that contestation dissolves, creating the total dominance of one perspective (Mouffe, 2000, p.104; 2005).⁸

Due to the interpretative process central to ideological thought I view ideology first and foremost as an individual construct because it is inherently related to the process by which individuals come to hold ideas.⁹ This does not belie the presence of group ideology, rather it acknowledges that for group ideology to emerge individual ideologies are first required, making analysis of the individual the most basic level of ideological analysis (for more see pp.36-37).¹⁰ Far from being a marginal activity I argue that ideological thought is endemic to human existence as individuals are constantly making judgements about the world, encountering problems in existing narratives and acting on the basis of those judgements to invoke change – a process which I view to be inherently ideological.

In conceiving ideology thus I move away from the negative depictions which see it as a form of distortion (Mannheim, 1936; see also Turner, 1995, p.719) or false consciousness which leads individuals to 'speak in a mistaken way' (Drucker, 1974, p.15; McDonough, 1978). But in so doing I do not ascribe to the idea that '[i]n its most fundamental sense ideology is a positive phenomenon' (Thompson, 1984, p.174). Instead I see ideology to be neutral, arguing that whilst it can be used by actors for positive or negative purposes, it is not, of itself, intrinsically normative.

This definition offers an expansive conception of ideology, envisaging it to arise when conflict occurs between the interpretations of two people, two countries and a range of groups, institutions and actors in between. Viewed in this way the negative depictions of ideology in relation to political parties appear puzzling as in attempting to form electoral coalitions parties strive to persuade voters (exerting power), and project (in most, but not all instances) distinct visions of society at odds with other accounts – traits which on this account make parties

⁸ Within parties this process is focused on obtaining the dominance of aspects of their ideological position as the expansive nature of parties' ideological programmes makes it virtually impossible for them to entrench their entire perspective (and eradicate other ideologies). Thus parties attempt to normalise specific ideas such as an approach to public spending, social intervention or taxation.

⁹ For a discussion of different theories of ideological formation see: Kumlin, 2006.

¹⁰ This theorisation differs to accounts which focus on ideology as a group construct. Whilst such depictions are valid - as ideology is most readily encountered amongst groups – I argue that it is necessary to understand the individual interpretative processes which lie behind the construction of ideologies and the affiliation to group ideologies. This is because the impetus for ideological change within a group often stems for individual dissatisfaction and pressure deriving from competing interpretations and diagnoses of the status quo. For more see p.37.

ideological. Hence my own understanding of ideology differs to the pejorative depictions detailed above, leading me to pursue a different form of analysis. Yet in tailoring this perspective to the party context I do seek to engage with such depictions by attempting to cast light on why these accounts emerge and gain purchase in the party context, and how they can be challenged – leading me to study the way ideology is conveyed to an audience.

In examining parties a plethora of different definitions and modes of inquiry are apparent (Ball, 1981; Duverger, 1954; Fisher, 1996; Garner & Kelly, 1998; Kavanagh, 1998; Levy, 2004; McKenzie, 1995; Sartori, 2003; 2005; Strom, 1990) but here Alan Ware's conception is taken as a useful point of departure. He states:

'[a] political party is an institution that (a) seeks influence in a state, often by attempting to occupy positions in government, and (b) usually consists of more than a single interest in the society and so to some degree attempts to 'aggregate interests' (Ware, 1996, p.5).¹¹

Whilst other organisations do possess ideology and are active in the political sphere this definition foregrounds two traits which I argue define political parties' relationship with ideology as distinct from other collective bodies.

First, unlike other political organisations parties pursue power by standing for office, a characteristic which leads them to aggregate support (and which distinguishes them from pressure groups and voluntary organisations). Whilst parties do not all have the capacity to obtain office, those incapable of reaching government attempt to exert influence by using electoral campaigns and success to push issues onto the political agenda. The universality of this electoral focus is significant in terms of parties' relationships with ideology because it incentivises them to widen their appeal to forge the widest possible electoral coalition. This in turn can lead parties to pursue policies and promote ideas which do not necessarily accord with their ideological vision. Hence it is possible for a pro-European party which ideologically favours open borders to state the need for restrictions on immigration in order to court public opinion. Such an example reveals how parties' status as electoral bodies can directly impact upon their relationship with ideology, making it vital to study party context when seeking to understand their behaviour.

¹¹ I accord with Ware (1996) and Lipset (1996) in seeing parties to be institutions because they are governed by a set of rules and norms. However it is important to note that this term is highly contested (Blondel, 2006, p.717) with a range of competing definitions in existence (Lawson, 1985; Offe, 2006; March & Olsen, 1989; Parsons, 1954; Scott, 1995).

Second, as bodies which aggregate interests and values, possess a membership and occupy government, parties exhibit a range of ideological identities. As electoral bodies they project a persuasive ideological message, as membership bodies they are founded on a range of competing yet overlapping ideological positions, and as governing (and indeed electoral) organisations they are defined by the left-right wing spectrum and comparisons with ideological traditions.¹² Whilst other organisations such as pressure groups do exhibit a similar membership structure and can be sites of ideological diversity, such organisations do not display parties' ideological heterogeneity.¹³ In this sense parties have a multifaceted relationship with ideology distinct from that apparent in other bodies in the political system, making it vital to explore the interaction between these facets when seeking to advance understanding in this area.

In recognising these traits I assert the value of developing a conception of ideology in political parties which reflects the specificities of that environment, tailoring understanding to consider the impact of elections, context and audience on party behaviour. In so doing I seek to move away from the kind of depictions of political parties and ideology offered by the dominant catch-all and cartel party theories (Bolleyer, 2005; for a discussion see: Koole, 1996). In such theories parties compete but 'do so in the knowledge that they share with their competitors a mutual interest in collective organisational survival' (Katz & Mair, 1997, p.112; 1995; 1996), hence they face an active incentive to converge in order to create the cartels which secure their future. This approach has resulted in ideological conflicts being depicted as 'transformed into amorphous differences in general left-right orientation' with 'parties in effect bidding for support from voters by promising more services (especially on the left) and lower taxes (especially on the right)' (Katz & Mair, 2009, p.757; Blyth & Katz, 2005). This vision of parties and ideology inspires accounts in which parties are seen as less or non-ideological (for an example see: Driver, 2011, p.212), underplaying the role of ideas in favour of electoral motivations. I seek to challenge such depictions as whilst parties are undoubtedly concerned with electoral factors such as obtaining office and maintaining their time in government, they are also preoccupied with a range of other motivations; of which ideology is but one. In this regard my party political ideology approach is an attempt to reflect upon the diverse range of factors which affect party behaviour, reintegrating analysis of ideology alongside those concerns.

¹² A vigorous debate has raged around the calculation of ideological position within parties and beyond. For more see: Budge, 2003; Enyedi, 2008; Heath, Evans & Martin, 1994; Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976; Ray, 1982, or in a different tradition Bobbio, 1996.

¹³ In this sense other organisations are seen to be founded upon competing ideological interpretations, but parties exhibit not only diversity in membership ideology, but also ideological heterogeneity in regards to the different political ideologies which shape their historical position (and can influence future trajectory). This makes their interaction with ideology uniquely diverse. For more see pp.35-38.

Recognising the place of ideology in party politics is vital because far from representing an abstract set of principles or an attempt to deceive the public, ideology provides the ideas which – alongside other variables - condition actors' behaviour and direct parties' policy agendas. In this regard whilst politicians can disavow their ideological credentials it is the beliefs and values they possess which lead them to favour one course of action over another. Hence by studying the ideas they espouse and the decisions they make it is possible to gain an understanding of their likely behaviour; rendering a study of ideology highly informative for those interested in parties. So, ideology is relevant because, as Martin Selinger asserts: 'there is no politics without ideology... there are no policies which are conceived and executed without some relation to ideas that embody moral judgements in favour of the justification, emendation or condemnation of a given order' (Selinger, 1976, p.99). This assertion leads me in the analysis which follows to demonstrate the pertinence of ideological inquiry and the insights which can be gained at this level.

In developing a party political ideology approach I am also seeking to react against notions of party decline and assertions that Britain is in a 'post- party' age (Involve, 2006; see also Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002; Dennis, 1996; Fieschi, 2007; Fisher, 1980; Lawson & Merkl, 1988; Schmitt & Holberg, 2002; Selle & Svasand, 1991; Sutherland, 2004; Young, 20th December 2001; Wattenberg, 1990). Such analysts hold that 'parties are shrunken organisations. They play tiny parts in community life' (Young, 20th December 2001), undermining the relevance of study at this level. I add my voice to a number of rebuttals (see Poguntke, 1993; Webb, 1995; Needham, 2005; Thomas, 1980; Richards, 2000; Yanai, 1999; Ignazi, 1996; Rogers, 2005), asserting that far from being redundant, parties continue to be dominant within Britain's political system. Indeed, they remain the only currently available method of aggregating public support *and* offering a comprehensive programme of government. Whilst interest and pressure groups advocate specific policies and actions they do not offer a viable alternative to parties as they do not present a comprehensive manifesto or possess the organisational structures necessary for government. Accordingly, whilst there may be flaws with parties and the party system of politics these organisations continue to remain the only currently available option for a system of representative government. This makes it vital to gain a greater understanding of party behaviour and change, rendering ideological inquiry at this level to be informative.

In this regard my theorisation of party political ideology is a reaction against existing modes of ideological and party analyses. In positing an alternative I draw on the work of existing scholars, specifically taking inspiration from Freedman's theoretical mode of ideological analysis, Downs' focus on electoral context, and Budge's examination of party outputs. These scholars hail from different traditions of analysis but when taken together their accounts draw attention to parties'

ideational *and* electoral status, making them exceedingly informative. In recognising this duality I seek to map the complex array of factors which affect parties' relationship with ideology, leading me to posit my own model of this interaction in chapter two. In so doing I direct analysts to consider ideology as something *used* by parties as a persuasive device and well as something which drives behaviour. This principle leads me to distinguish between two different levels of ideological analysis, with the latter explored in two case studies presented in the thesis to contend the value of studying ideology and contest narratives of ideological irrelevance.

Method

Adjoined to this theoretical re-appraisal of how ideology is understood in political parties I also advance an innovative methodology by which to study this area. In so doing I detail a textual mode of analysis capable of considering how ideology is communicated by parties, how it can be mapped, and how change can be discerned.¹⁴ This model is informed by Freedman's morphological framework of ideological analysis, but I tailor his conceptualisation to take account of the electoral and contextual influences identified through analysis of Downs' and Budge's work and other facets of the party context. In this regard my theoretical analysis forms the foundation for my own methodological approach, offering an integrated mode of party political ideology analysis.

In applying this approach I focus on the vision party elites' project when trying to persuade an audience, examining rhetorical statements past and present to detect conflictual visions and monitor change and overlaps between different party ideologies. Through such analysis it is possible to map the changing dynamics of contemporary political parties, discern their past ideological identities and demonstrate the relevance of ideology; offering a range of insights for those seeking to study party ideology. However, in presenting and operationalising my party political ideology approach I by no means profess to offer a perfected mode of ideological analysis, rather I provide a template which has deliberately been developed to enable future adaptation by scholars in different traditions. For this reason the conceptual and methodological principles presented here should not be seen as the last word on morphological investigation, but rather as a potential catalyst for future innovation in this area. In stating this intent I nevertheless advance my own framework for analysis, offering an applied investigation to illustrate the potential insights to be gained from this approach.

In addition to offering and applying these principles I also study how and why parties can appear non-ideological. By viewing ideology as something projected by parties I direct attention

¹⁴ Text here is taken to encompass any form of document be it a report, speech, media interview or other form of communication.

to public understanding of party position, acknowledging that party utterances and behaviour are not always seen to be motivated by ideology. This leads me to consider the likely form and relevance of ideology as conveyed through elite party rhetoric, developing a methodological framework which considers the context of speeches, alternative party motivations and ideological consistency in the application and justification of ideas. Through this prism I discern whether ideology is likely to be seen as the most apt explanation for party behaviour, enabling me to examine whether there may be a rhetorical drive for negative perceptions of party ideology. This additional analytical dimension distinguishes my approach from much existing analysis, allowing me to explore not only trends in the form of parties' ideological pronouncements, but also how the presentation and enactment of those ideas is likely to affect public attitudes towards ideology in parties. This produces a very different form of ideological inquiry to that advanced by political theorists (Žižek, 1999) philosophers (Vincent, 2010), scientists (Budge, 1994; Downs, 1957a), analysts (Blyth, 2007; Hay, 2004a) and historians of ideas (Skinner, 2002), which recognises how the specific circumstances of parties affect ideology and ideological study.

Application

As noted above, within this thesis I supplement what could appear to be an abstract theoretical and methodological model for the study of party ideology with applied analysis in order to demonstrate the capacities of this approach. In so doing attention is focused on periods of party modernisation, studying two cases: firstly, the Labour Party between 1982 and 1997, and secondly the Conservative Party between 1996 and 2010. In examining these cases I consider whether both parties' ideology changed in this period,¹⁵ how that ideological change can be characterised, how change was likely to be perceived by the public, and whether parties modernised; using these insights to contend the pertinence of ideological analysis. In selecting these cases it is important to note that different time spans and/or party foci could offer an equally informative application of the party political ideology approach. However these cases and the confines chosen here are seen to be most apt because they reflect widely perceived periods of change and both focus on periods of opposition, ensuring comparability.

Leaders' conference speeches are used as the basis of this analysis because as annually produced texts they provide a longitudinal data source which is available for virtually all mainstream parties. Whilst other texts could be used their frequency, audience and purpose often differ dramatically, obscuring the form of long term comparative analysis sought within

¹⁵ As John Zaller noted 'ideological change must...have a central place in the study of ideology' (2009, p.78). For more on the process of ideological change see Buckler & Dolowitz, 2009.

this thesis. In addition to this point the provenance of these texts is insightful as they are formulated by a small elite within political parties and hence reveal the kind of image that a party, and specifically the leaders of that party, are trying to project (for more see p.48). As persuasive texts they also facilitate a study of ideology as the points of conflict portrayed within these speeches and the ideas voiced reveal the form of the party's ideological message as conveyed to the public. Accordingly, whilst other speeches and texts are amenable to the form of party political ideology analysis outlined here, conference speeches are seen to offer an informative illustration of the capacities of a party political ideology approach.

In focusing on these specific cases and sources a range of additional questions about the process of change in parties more generally arise, making it highly insightful to examine modernisation alongside ideology. In pursuing this analysis I develop a schema of different forms of modernisation, using this to assess the relationship between parties' stated programme of change and the ideological shift apparent in party rhetoric. This leads me to distinguish between progressive, responsive and perpetual forms of modernisation, arguing that modernisation processes are not identical and that a coherent, consistently pursued strategy for change is vital if parties are to be seen to have modernised. This secondary focus is therefore seen to advance understanding of parties and party change but, more pertinently, it provides a backdrop to my examination of ideology and ideological change, revealing the insights to be gained from a party political ideology approach.

In studying these specific cases I seek to contribute to understanding of contemporary party politics, arguing that between 1982 and 1997 the Labour Party did undergo a process of modernisation (exhibiting a progressive rationale) and display evidence of ideological change. Furthermore, in studying the nature of that change I conclude that the party was ideologically innovative, combining insights from a range of different ideological traditions rather than drawing exclusively on one pre-existing political ideology. In contrast, whilst evidence of change is apparent in the Conservative case, I conclude through my own analysis that the party cannot yet be seen to have modernised or dramatically changed its ideological perspective. Whilst it is apparent that a range of new ideas were injected into the party's agenda from 2005, the continued presence of traditional ideological principles and the lack of a clear modernisation strategy is seen to undermine perceptions of change. Hence, whilst some evidence of an innovative ideological position is apparent, conclusions of change cannot be conclusively drawn.

In terms of the findings drawn from these cases concerning ideological relevance, I argue that whilst the Labour Party did offer a consistent and convincing account of ideological change,

from 1994 New Labour is seen to have engaged in a form of ideological quietism¹⁶ which could be seen to indicate the irrelevance of ideology – suggesting the pertinence of rhetoric to prevalent conceptions of ideological relevance. Similar findings are reached in the Conservative analysis as a lack of consistency and coherence in party message under David Cameron is shown to have jeopardised public perceptions of the credibility of ideological change. In this regard a rhetorical analysis of ideology is seen to offer a range of insights when seeking to understand why perceptions of ideology as irrelevant and/or negative have emerged and how they can be overcome. Accordingly in developing my party political ideology approach I do not only seek to offer an alternative model of ideological conceptualisation and study, but also apply this schema to demonstrate the range of insights which can be gained. In this regard I entwine theoretical, methodological and empirical analysis of ideology in parties to advance understanding of the relationship between ideologies and parties and to contribute to broader questions around parties' ideological identities, ideological change and the relevance of ideological inquiry.

Research Approach

In pursuing this innovative form of investigation it is insightful to note that I adopt a problem driven rather than method driven approach, a form of analysis which frees me from a commitment to certain predefined 'techniques of data-gathering and analysing' and allows me instead to reflect 'the empirical phenomenon under investigation' (see Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p.167). In this sense the problem of how to understand and study ideology in parties leads me to develop my own theoretically and methodologically innovative mode of inquiry inspired by existing conceptions. This analysis could be seen, in Bent Flyvbjerg's terms, to be phronetic as I focus on 'both the actor level and the structural level, as well as on the relation between the two in an attempt to transcend the dualisms of actor/structure, hermeneutics/structuralism, and voluntarism/determinism' (2007, p.167). By examining party structures and norms, and their interaction with actors and ideas I seek to transcend these dualisms. In this regard I attempt to move beyond specific methodological precepts and theoretical approaches to offer analysis which reflects the challenges posed by investigation of this area.

In detailing my approach to research it is also useful to note that in adopting a case study approach I am not seeking to construct a general theory or to extrapolate broader theoretical insights from these cases (cf. Gerring, 2004, p.342). Rather, I accord with Michel Foucault's dictum that when conducting theoretical analysis it is important to 'never lose sight of reference

¹⁶ Ideological quietism is used here to refer to instances in which parties articulate a message which contains a clear vision for society, but which does not convey the conflictual dynamics seem here to communicate ideology (for more see chapter 3). In this sense a party deemed to exhibit ideological quietism is seen to act in accordance with common sense or managerialist rationale rather than ideology.

to a concrete example' (Foucault quoted in Flyvbjerg, 2007, p.135). In this sense I use these cases primarily to illustrate the virtues of my mode of analysis, exploring them to develop understanding and conduct comparative analysis against which my 'proto-explanation' can be assessed (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p.202).

Informed by this approach I seek to make a number of contributions to the existing literature to advance understanding of the interaction between ideology and political parties. These can be summarised under four headings:

Theory: Through the notion of party political ideology I seek to illustrate how parties' multifaceted characterisations affect their behaviour, rendering ideology but one relevant dimension of analysis. By drawing on the traits seen to define ideology and party activity I develop a new model of the interaction between these two areas.

Method: In operationalising this approach I examine ideology through party rhetoric, reflecting the way in which parties communicate their message to the public and the difficulties of interpretation therein. By offering principles for morphological analysis I seek to provide the foundations upon which future studies of ideology can build, detailing a methodological schema which is amenable to development.

Analysis: Analytically I seek to unpick the relationship between political parties, ideology and modernisation. My primary concern is offering the means by which future analyses of ideology and modernisation can occur; providing a tool kit for other researchers interested in this area. Yet, I also seek to advance understanding of the two cases explored here, presenting my own account of modernisation and ideological change in relation to the Labour and Conservative parties in these periods. Through this applied analysis, and a comparative evaluation of my conclusions, I furthermore seek to contemplate the requirements for future attempts at ideological change and/or modernisation.

Ideological Relevance: Returning to the negative ideological perceptions which introduced this chapter I seek to demonstrate the virtue of ideological inquiry and examine how the dynamics of contemporary politics may have contributed to negative perceptions or notions of ideological irrelevance. By examining party rhetoric and the broader context of speeches I offer some tentative conclusions as to how these perceptions could be counteracted, asserting the need for politicians to re-evaluate the ideological implications of their rhetorical approach.

Thesis Structure

To advance these aims I structure the thesis as follows:

Chapter 2 - Existing Conceptions: Ideology and Political Parties

In the next chapter I turn my attention to existing analyses of ideology in political parties, drawing on the work of Freedman (1996), Downs (1957a;1957b) and Budge (1994) to explore different modes of ideological study in this context. By outlining the different foundations of investigation and critiquing these approaches I assert the need for a form of analysis able to reflect the diverse factors which affect parties' relationship with ideology. Building upon this contention I advance the concept of party political ideology, developing a model able to account for parties' status as electoral and ideational bodies, and the role of actors as active agents in the process of ideological formation and dissemination. By situating this model in relation to ideology and political ideology I clarify the form of my ideological analysis in order to distinguish my approach from other levels of ideological inquiry.

Chapter 3 - Party Political Ideology in Practice

In this chapter I bridge the gap between theory and practice, outlining the precise scope of my analysis and the methodological principles and processes which guide my investigation of party ideology. My preference for morphological investigation pursued through analysis of elite party rhetoric is outlined as are the principles by which ideological content is discerned from texts. Within this chapter I also justify and detail the attention given to public perceptions of ideology, contending that a more detailed understanding of ideology and ideological perceptions is obtained when examining the way in which a party's message is decoded by an audience. Through this chapter I therefore aim to equip researchers with the tools needed for the form of ideological inquiry I pursue, and preface my own analysis of party modernisation and ideological change in relation to the Labour and Conservative Parties.

Chapter 4 - Modernisation, Ideology and the Labour Party

In this chapter I foreground my own ideological analysis by examining existing depictions of Labour Party modernisation and ideology in the period 1982-1997. Drawing on the comments of modernisers and academics I examine the narrative of ideological change offered by the party and the stated rationale for modernisation. Through this analysis I conclude the presence of ideological change, and highlight evidence of modernisation – outlining the progressive rationale for modernisation offered by the party. Through detailed analysis of existing literature on the Labour Party I also present four categories of ideological change which offer different characterisations of the party's ideological position in this period. By appraising ideology and modernisation in this way I prepare the ground for my own analysis, detailing the debates into

which I intervene and establishing benchmarks against which my own research findings are assessed.

Chapter 5 – Modernisation, Ideology and the Labour Party: Applied Analysis

In this chapter I offer the first application of the theoretical and methodological framework presented in chapter three. As such, significant attention is spent detailing the form of outputs produced through my mode of analysis and presenting this data. In advancing my findings this chapter is structured in three parts: first I outline the longitudinal evidence of ideological change, discerning a clear rhetorical shift post-1994. Second, I examine ideological relevance, probing the likely reception of this shift to discern the pertinence of further ideological inquiry. This leads me to conclude that Labour is likely to have been seen as ideologically consistent, rendering ideology an informative guide to behaviour. Finally, I engage in comparative analysis to characterise the form of ideology evident from 1994, seeking to discern whether New Labour accommodated to Thatcherism, returned to social democratic ideas, were ideologically innovative or were non-ideological. Through this analysis I contend evidence of ideological change and modernisation, characterising the former change as ideologically innovative and the latter as underpinned by a progressive rationale.

Chapter 6 – Modernisation, Ideology and the Conservative Party

In turning to the second case study I once again trace existing literature on ideology, examining the rhetoric of Conservative Party leaders and academic texts to discern evidence of ideological change and modernisation post-2005. Due to the relative lack of literature on this case significant attention is paid to detailing the recent dynamics of the Conservative Party, concluding that there is scant evidence of consistent ideological change, and a confused narrative of modernisation. By examining party rhetoric I argue that whilst attempting to initiate a modernisation process the party elite have thus far failed to articulate a coherent modernisation strategy, and in so doing have undermined the party's receptivity to change. Ahead of my own analysis I also outline existing characterisations of ideological change, presenting four categories which guide my own subsequent analysis of the party's ideological position.

Chapter 7 – Modernisation, Ideology and the Conservative Party: Applied Analysis

Building upon the scepticism of the previous chapter I examine evidence of ideological change within the Conservative Party, dividing the chapter into three segments to assert that two distinct ideological phases are evident. First, I outline the presence of continuity and some change in party rhetoric, arguing that whilst the Conservatives did introduce a range of new

ideas in 2005, they remained committed to the principles which had previously directed their behaviour. However, from 2008 onwards I assert it is possible to see some form of ideological change marked by the redeployment of traditional ideas to new concerns; producing a complex picture. Second, I examine likely public perceptions of these shifts, contending that a range of different factors are likely to have undermined public attitudes towards the party's ideology and change therein in this period. By exploring the consistency of the party's message and the presence of alternative motivations I argue that the Conservatives are likely to have been seen to have an ambiguous relationship with ideology, undermining the pertinence of ideological assertions in the period of supposed modernisation. Third, despite this negative judgment on ideological change I nevertheless turn to explore Cameron's utterances, comparing his rhetoric to the four ideological categories outlined in chapter six. Through this analysis I explore existing characterisations of the parties' contemporary ideological position and offer my own account of Conservative ideology under Cameron. This tripartite analysis leads me to conclude that the Conservative Party did not change their ideology in this period and have not yet modernised, rather the party elite embarked on a programme of change which they have either been unable or unwilling to deliver.

Chapter 8 - Conclusion

In drawing these theoretical, methodological and analytical strands together I appraise the two case studies examined here, offering a narrative of ideological change and modernisation within political parties and detailing the successes and failures of each party. By studying not only the content of ideology but also the form of ideological communication I explore negative perceptions of party ideology, considering how these judgements arise and asserting the need for a different communicative approach if ideas are to be perceived as pertinent. In appraising these themes I outline the unique contribution of this work and routes for further analysis, asserting that party political ideology has the capacity to not only aid understanding of the relationship between ideology and political parties, but also to challenge negative perceptions of this area.

Chapter 2: Existing Conceptions: Ideology and Political Parties

Political parties can often appear to have a paradoxical relationship with ideology. On the one hand they are depicted as no longer pursuing:

‘...grand ideologies, reverently arguing for what they believe in and trying to persuade the masses to follow them. They increasingly follow the people...To survive in this new electoral market, where voters act like consumers, parties are acting like businesses’ (Lees-Marshment, 2001a, p.1).

Yet, on the other hand, scholars continue to map parties’ ideological positions with texts such as *British Party Politics and Ideology after New Labour* (Griffiths & Hickson, 2010) and *Party Ideology in Britain* (Tivey & Wright, 1989) appraising the ideological landscape of the British party system. This has led to significant confusion around the interaction between political parties and ideology, deriving from the very different ways in which the term ideology has been used.¹⁷ In this thesis I do not seek to reject depictions of ideology which cite the end of ideology (Bell, 1961; Clayton Thomas, 1980; 1995),¹⁸ or those which use the term pejoratively, rather I introduce a different framework of ideological study which attests the importance of ideas and ideology to party politics.

To facilitate my own investigation of this area, in this chapter I examine the existing accounts of party ideology offered by political theorists and scientists. In appraising these works I explore the question ‘how is ideology manifest in the party context?’, arguing for a more particular method of inquiry which recognises the specificities of parties and how the party environment can lead parties to behave in a non-ideological manner. By exploring the different literatures on party ideology I seek to offer a *via media* which recognises the contribution of a range of scholars and entwines their insights to offer a new theory and mode of study encapsulated by the term party political ideology.

Accordingly, within this chapter attention focuses primarily on the existing literature, exploring the work of Freedman, Downs and Budge. These scholars have been selected as indicative of much wider literatures, as each advances and/or refines a different approach to ideological study. Freedman’s ideological analysis emanates from the field of political theory and seeks to offer a

¹⁷ The confusion around the term ideology has been noted elsewhere, for an example see Mullins, 1972.

¹⁸ There has been an active debate around the end of ideology thesis. For more see: Hodges, 1967; La Palombara, 1966; Lemert, 1991; Lipset, 1966; Weltman & Billig, 2001.

theoretically inspired analysis of ideological traditions and conceptual configuration. His approach can be allied with scholars such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985), Slavoj Žižek (1989), and more broadly Colin Hay (2004a) and Mark Blyth (2007) due to an underlying commitment to the importance of ideas and ideology. Whilst used to study ideology in a range of forms Freedon's mode of investigation has been applied to assess the ideology of contemporary political parties, making his framework an ideal exemplar of the work of political theorists, political philosophers and historians of ideas.

The other two sources, Downs and Budge, hail from an entirely different tradition of political analysis, providing a point of contrast with Freedon. Whilst the trajectory of Downs' and Budge's analysis differs, both scholars work within the remit of rational choice theory.¹⁹ Their accounts can thus be situated amongst theorists of parties and party systems including Giovanni Sartori (1976), Sidney Verba and Leon Epstein (2000) where inquiry focuses on categorising, scrutinising and comparing the function (Scharrow, 1967), operation and internal structures (Epstein, 2000) of political parties both nationally and internationally. These two scholars offer great insight into the party context, as whilst Downs' focuses on parties' electoral strategising, Budge seeks to map their ideological position through policies, thus these scholars offer different approaches to the form and focus of ideological study.

Although the work of Freedon, Downs and Budge may appear incompatible due to the different epistemological and methodological assumptions underpinning their work, they nevertheless all inform my approach as they each inspire my analytical focus.²⁰ This is possible because rather than trying to reconcile their methods of study I draw analytical insights from these works, examining how they study ideology in parties and thus which aspects of party politics, the political system, and ideological theory are pertinent to a study of party ideology. In developing my own model I draw heavily on Freedon's approach to ideological analysis, complementing his principles of morphological inquiry with Downs' insights on electoral strategising (highlighting the presence of other motivations) and Budge's scrutiny of policy (which foregrounds the relationship between ideology and outputs). In this regard the existing literature is used to re-theorise parties' interaction with ideology and assert the need for a conceptually and methodologically distinct study of ideology in parties. Accordingly my *via media* navigates between the abstract, idealist and ideologically pre-occupied analysis of Freedon, and the grounded, instrumentally focused investigation of Downs and Budge to develop the notion of party political ideology.

¹⁹ Other scholars in this tradition include Enelow and Hinich, 1984.

²⁰ In this sense I do not seek to develop an amalgamated theoretical framework which seeks to reconcile different ontological and epistemological assumptions but rather draw insights from these works and utilise them within my own approach.

In offering my own account it is, however, vital to acknowledge that a plethora of work has already been produced on parties and ideology. This is important because without clarifying the form of my own contribution it is possible that the findings of this thesis could contribute to the confusion which surrounds the study of ideology rather than offering greater clarity. One of the main challenges encountered when surveying the existing ideological literature is the lack of common definitions and points of comparison or divergence, for this reason in conducting my own analysis I seek to offer such clarifications. My definition of ideology has been outlined in the introduction, but in this chapter I seek to situate my party political ideology approach by outlining the links between study at this level and more universal analyses of ideology and political ideology. Using the notion of an ideological ladder I outline the origins of my own approach, mapping the linkages between my work and other studies of ideology. This analysis helps to clarify the nature of my own contribution, but it also serves to demonstrate that far from attempting to supplant existing forms of ideological investigation, I rather seek to complement this analysis by tailoring study to the specific circumstances of party politics.

Following this rationale this chapter is structured as follows: first, I introduce my analytical focus, outlining the three approaches examined here in detail to illustrate how party ideology is currently understood and the relative merits and failures therein. In appraising these works I extract principles which inform my own analysis. Second, I draw on this literature to offer my own depiction of ideologies' relationship with political parties, entwining themes from the works examined above to develop a more particular mode of study. As part of this process I posit a model of party political ideology which maps the presence of ideology in parties and the pertinence of other considerations. Finally, I situate this approach within the broader literature, introducing the ideological ladder to depict how my party political ideology approach relates to other forms of ideological inquiry. Through this discussion I introduce a number of the analytical and methodological choices which guide my own analysis, prefacing the form of inquiry laid out in greater detail in the next chapter.

Political Theorists and Ideology: Michael Freeden

Turning first to the work of Freeden, in many ways it is clear that Freeden's account of ideology - as presented in his seminal text *Ideology and Political Theory* (1996) - echoes my own definition as he portrays the term as referring to: 'those systems of political thinking, loose or rigid, deliberate or unintended, through which individuals and groups construct an understanding of the political world they, or those who preoccupy their thoughts, inhabit, and then act on that understanding' (Freeden, 1996, p.3). In this regard he offers an action-oriented conception (Minogue, 1993, p.7), reflecting my own analysis. However, Freeden's inquiry is

distinguished by his notion of morphology, a theoretical principle he uses to explain and study ideology in parties and beyond.

The notion of morphology extends beyond the realm of ideological analysis, referring, for example, in biology to 'the form and structure of animals and plants especially with respect to the forms, relations, metamorphoses, and phylogenetic development of organs apart from their functions' (Merriam Webster). Yet, within the field of ideology morphology it is used to depict how certain ideas, manifested as decontested concepts (Freeden, 2008, p.2), connect to one another and interlink to form a multi-layered vision for society; leading Freeden to study ideology in the form of different conceptual webs.

Freeden's morphological framework is contingent upon the idea of decontestation and core, peripheral and adjacent concepts. Building on the idea of the essential contestability of concepts (Ball, 1999; Connolly, 1974; Gallie, 1956; Gray, 1977) Freeden presents ideologies as contingent upon decontestation, whereby concepts are imbued with fixed (though by no means permanent) meanings that help to shape the architecture of an ideology (Freeden, 1996, p.76) - something political philosophies may not choose to do (Freeden, 1994, p.156).²¹ In this regard two ideologies can draw upon the same concept by decontesting it differently, producing divergent meanings and thus subtly different ideologies.

Freeden complements this principle with the idea that ideologies are internally constructed of concepts which exist at either the core, adjacent or periphery of an ideological web. By determining the configuration of concepts Freeden argues it is possible to discern different ideologies as, for example, Liberalism and Conservatism will place different emphasis on certain concepts. The spatial composition of ideologies is crucial because they 'will display most, if not all, of the major political concepts within their system. The key lies in the relation of the units to one another, in their positioning vis-à-vis the centre and in the way units are made to interlock and support each other' (Freeden, 1996, p.162; p.4; for more see Freeden, 2001). To illustrate this point Freeden uses the metaphor of rooms, arguing that whilst all rooms contain furniture, it is the configuration of that furniture which tells us the purpose of the room. Thus he states:

[a] room with a table at its centre may be a billiard room, a dining room, or a study. It is unlikely to be a bedroom. If a table is surrounded by four chairs and a table cloth, rather than by strong arc lights, surgical equipment and an anaesthetised person, it is most probably a dining table, not an operating one. Now this is exactly the case with an ideology. If we find liberty, rationality and individualism at its centre, while

²¹ For more see Freeden, 1997; 2004.

equality – though in evidence – decorates the wall, we are looking at an exemplar of liberalism. If, order, authority and tradition catch our eye upon opening the door, while equality is shoved under the bed or, at best, one of its weaker specimens is displayed when the guests arrive, we are looking at a version of conservatism’ (Freeden, 1994, p.162).

Identifying an ideology thus involves pinpointing the concepts evoked, the meaning inscribed within them and their location in relation to other concepts, or in Freeden’s terms discerning the components of a concept, a concept, and a system of concepts (Freeden, 1994, p.155). This three pronged investigatory strategy is deemed important because conceptual inscriptions are not mutually exclusive, making it possible for both liberal democracy and social democracy to hold the same conception of democracy. Accordingly when seeking to study ideologies it is necessary to fully map conceptual configuration and inscription to distinguish different perspectives.

In tracing ideological architecture Freeden distinguishes between core, adjacent and peripheral concepts. The core defines an ideology, being central to its message and consistently deployed,²² whilst peripheral and adjacent concepts add nuance to the world view being advanced. This gloss is ‘essential to the formation of an ideology’ (Freeden, 1996, p.78) as it is only when a core concept such as liberalism is complemented by ideas such as human rights, democracy and equality that a full ideological perspective develops.²³

Two different types of concept constitute the periphery; marginal and perimeter concepts. The margin pertains to ideas and concepts whose importance to the core, to the heart of the ideology, is intellectually and emotionally insubstantial’ (1996, p.78), thus, for Liberalism, a concept such as ecology may register only as a secondary concern. Marginal concepts can change location allowing for the possibility that new ideas emerge, that existing concepts decrease in importance, and/or that certain ideas become further integrated into the ideological web, hence it allows for ideological dynamism.

In contrast perimeter concepts reflect the fact that ‘core and adjacent concepts are located in historical, geographical, and cultural contexts’ (ibid, p.79), in this regard they are the means by which ideologies reflect and assimilate ‘real world’ events (1996, p.79). For this reason perimeter concepts are often seen to be ‘specific ideas or policy-proposals rather than fully fledged concepts’ (1996, p.80; see also Finlayson, forthcoming), meaning that whilst ‘not

²² Core references can move towards the periphery, but widespread change in the core leads to what Freeden terms ideological ‘snapping’ where an ideologies’ identity changes (Freeden, 1996, p.82).

²³ For more on core concepts see Freeden, 2004; 2005b.

essential to the comprehension of the core or the survival of the ideology' (Freeden, 1994, p.158) they ground ideologies in contemporary circumstances and policy debates. In recognising these different forms of concept Freeden also asserts that conceptual configurations across an ideology are not entirely static and can change overtime, therefore 'a degree of fluidity will apply within any ideological grouping' (ibid., p.159), making it insightful to study not only different versions of ideological traditions, but also change within those visions.

This overview outlines the conceptual framework Freeden develops to account for ideology, detailing his focus on ideas and ideological architecture. This approach is appealing for a number of reasons, but primarily because it offers a highly accessible mode of ideological analysis – providing a clear, visual framework of ideological composition which accounts for differences between parties and can trace ideological change. By utilising this morphological approach it is possible to capture an ideological position at any point in time and compare contemporary and past ideologies. These capacities are conceptually and methodologically appealing as they foreground ideological analysis, not only asserting the relevance of ideological study in parties and beyond, but also providing principles by which to map and explain long term trends. However, Freeden considers ideology at a universal level, using his framework to examine ideology in a range of different circumstances rather than tailoring his analysis to the specificities of any one context (be it party or otherwise). This approach is not entirely compatible with my own, specific, form of study, indicating the need to adapt his framework.

In advancing this point it is, however, vital to acknowledge that Freeden has engaged in numerous classifications of parties' ideological positions, cataloguing differences between parties and monitoring their changing ideological commitments (for example see: 1999a; 1999b; 2005a). Indeed he characterised New Labour's ideology as 'located between the three great Western ideological traditions – liberalism, conservatism and socialism – though it is not equidistant from them all' (Freedon, 1999a, p.48). However, in conducting his analysis Freeden focuses on the 'recurring patterns of conceptual terms and arguments and associated policies created by public intellectuals and philosophers' (Zozaya, 2008, p.112), believing that '[i]deologies are rarely formulated by political parties. The function of parties in relation to ideologies is to present them in immediately consumable form and to disseminate them with optimal efficiency' (Freedon, 2003, pp.78-9; see also 2000, p.33). This approach overlooks the ideological agency of actors within parties, failing to acknowledge politicians' and party members' capacity for ideological innovation. In this sense ideology is not seen to be actively created by party actors, but rather disseminated by them, meaning that party ideologies are studied through the prism of existing political ideologies rather than as innovative constructs.

Whilst I accord with Freedden's model of ideological analysis this abstracted form of study is seen to overlook the role of actors as strategic decision makers arbitrating between ideology and a range of other motivations. Accordingly whilst I assert the utility of morphological analysis I move away from the precise form of Freedden's investigations, adapting his morphological approach to reflect my own understanding of party behaviour. In so doing it is also necessary to engage in methodological refinement as Freedden does not outline a framework for his investigation. This indicates the need to detail the methodological principles which guide my own investigation of ideology; presenting, for example, what renders a concept core or peripheral, an activity which occupies the next chapter.

In my own analysis I therefore extrapolate from this framework, tailoring the principle of morphological analysis to reflect the way in which political parties and ideology interact. By introducing the concept of party political ideology I seek to recognise how context affects ideological study, adapting this universal mode of investigation to those specificities. Some precedent for this form of inquiry does exist as Freedden's pupil, Carol Roman Zozaya (2008), has sought to overcome the abstraction of his method - developing the notion of participant ideology to integrate the observations of politicians and political actors into the morphological framework. Although foregrounding party actors this approach does not reflect upon the impact of context and alternative motivations, leading me to pursue my own adaptations.

Having asserted my determination to adapt Freedden's morphological framework I now turn to consider the literature on political parties, examining work broadly seen to lie under the heading of spatial mapping. In so doing I highlight a concern with electoral motivations and questions regarding the form of ideological study, indicating the need to clarify the mode and scope of investigation pursued in this thesis.

Mapping Party Behaviour: Spatial Modelling

The literature on political parties discusses ideology in a range of different ways but here I focus on two distinct approaches to study identified by James Adams within the spatial mapping literature (Adams, 2001b, p.121). The first is based on the work of Downs and considers the electoral rationale for ideological positions, whilst the second, typified by Budge, examines parties' policy proposals to discern their ideological ranking on the left-right scale. These approaches are studied to examine the conceptualisation and study of ideology in this tradition, seeking to extrapolate insights to inform my own approach.

Anthony Downs

Unlike Freedman, Downs works within the tradition of rational choice theory and in a manner befitting that approach conceives ideology to be not webs of ideas, but rather a strategic/instrumental tool. He asserts:

‘...lack of information creates a demand for ideologies in the electorate. Since political parties are eager to seize any method of gaining votes available to them, they respond by creating a supply. Each party invents an ideology in order to attract the votes of those citizens who wish to cut costs by voting ideologically’ (Downs, 1957b, p.142).

This conceptualisation places attention squarely upon electoral, vote maximising incentives, rendering ideologies a ‘means to power’ (Downs, 1957a, p.97) whereby external, contextual factors condition a parties’ position. Hence, for spatial modellers ideology is seen as a functional variable equivalent to an organising or electoral device.²⁴

In applying this conception Downs builds on the work of Harold Hotelling (1929) and Arthur Smithies (1941) which tracks rational behaviour. He centres on the motivations for different ideological positions, mapping on a left-right scale the rationale for parties’ behaviour by considering voters’ single peaked preferences, the confines of parties’ ideological movement and the potential for those at ideological extremes to abstain. Through these assumptions Downs offers explanations as to why political parties are not identical (due to the need to maintain support for voters at the extreme left or right), why they converge in a two party system (to maximise their vote), why new parties surface (emergence of new constituencies of voters) and why political parties adopt policies seemingly outside their ideological remit (to attract new support); positing explanations which are still applied to political parties today.^{25 26} In this manner Downs’ approach focuses on party positioning, offering an explanatory tool through which parties’ relative positions are theorised and convergence and divergence explained.

This depiction advances a range of points not addressed by Freedman as by concentrating on elections and the vote maximising incentives driving parties’ positioning Downs directs

²⁴ Downs’ conception appears to reflect his desired mode of inquiry, imbuing ideology with a meaning compatible with the epistemological commitments and methodological preferences of rational choice theorists.

²⁵ For example, New Labour is often seen to have moved to the centre ground in order to maximise their vote by extending appeal beyond the working classes and/or the left.

²⁶ For other examples of this type of analysis see Gunther & Diamond, 2003, pp.185-186; Webb, 2003, pp.284-285.

analysts' attention to the pressures upon parties to secure electoral success. This expands the purview of ideological analysis, detailing how contextual and electoral motivations can affect ideology, and indicating the need to look beyond concepts when seeking to characterise a party's position. In this sense Downs foregrounds those concerns specific to parties, indicating the presence of motivations beside ideology and thus the pertinence of a more expansive analytical framework. This insight is crucial for my own analysis but Downs' investigatory approach is not seen to provide a desirable template for two reasons.

First, in outlining parties' relationship with ideology Downs' depiction appears contradictory as whilst portraying ideology to be something used by parties to obtain a desired electoral outcome, his analysis proceeds on the assumption that parties have an ideology which is subsequently adapted to the electoral environment. In this sense the exploration of why parties move outside their ideological remit indicates the presence of a pre-existing position, and thus appears to contradict the notion that ideology is simply a tool used to attract voters. The ambiguity around this point undermines the appeal of this framework.

Second, in presenting his account Downs readily acknowledges the simplification which surrounds his discussion of parties. Whilst this facilitates his analysis it also glosses over many of the complexities which I deem fundamental to understanding parties and engaging in study in this area. To illustrate, initially Downs' defines parties as a '*coalition* of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by legal means' (Downs, 1957a, p.25, emphasis added), reflecting Jacob Narschank's definition of a coalition as 'a group of men who co-operate to achieve some common ends' (1954). Yet, subsequently he tailors this definition to see parties as 'a *team* of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election' (Downs, 1957a, p.25, emphasis added), conceiving 'team' to symbolise a coalition whose members have identical goals (Downs, 1957b, p.137). Whilst this shift may appear insubstantial it is made to 'eliminate intraparty power struggles from consideration' (ibid., p.137), and thus simplify the competing tendencies (ideological and otherwise) within parties. This change allows Downs to treat a party 'as though it were a single person' rather than as a heterogeneous organisation producing policies through 'a hodgepodge of compromise' (ibid., p.137), using anthropomorphisation to aid his investigation. Whilst methodologically convenient this shift suppresses the presence of ideological conflict within parties, a trait which I believe is crucial to understanding why party ideology differs from other ideological forms.

For these reasons I extract insights from this approach rather than drawing substantively upon this form of investigation, co-opting a concern with electoral motivations and an appreciation of how context can affect party behaviour. Yet, before exploring the implications of these points for

party political ideology it is useful to consider Budge's approach to spatial modelling and the form of ideological study he pursues.

Ian Budge

Whilst drawing from the same tradition of analysis as Downs, Budge defines and studies ideology in parties differently, seeing the concept not as an electoral, vote maximising device but as providing 'a broad conceptual map of politics into which political events, current problems, electors' preferences and other parties' policies can all be fitted' (Budge, 1994, p.446). Emphasis is placed upon how, in an uncertain political climate in which parties have scant and unreliable information, ideologies are 'often defined as a body of normative and factual assumptions about the world, relatively resistant to change, which produces plausible reasons for action of one sort or another' (ibid., pp.445-6). Ideology therefore 'provides a way of defining and partitioning policy space and of indicating the broad arena within which a particular party should take its position' (ibid., p.446). Accordingly Budge detects ideology in party outputs - specifically policies - offering a clear, though admittedly simple, conception of parties' relationship with ideology.²⁷

In applying his definition Budge maps the ideological content of party policy and the net ideological position of a party's policy programme. As part of a broader collective (the Manifesto Research Group (MRG) and later the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) e.g. Budge & Laver, 1986; Klingemann, Hofferbert & Budge, 1994; Klingemann & Lammers, 1984²⁸) Budge uses party manifestos to determine ideological position as follows. First, quasi-sentences are coded into 54 categories covering seven domains of political debate: 'External Relations', 'Freedom and Democracy', 'Government', 'Welfare and Quality of Life', 'Fabric of Society', 'Economy' and 'Social Groups' (Budge, Robertson & Hearl, 1987, pp.459-464), standardising the documents used to ensure compatibility (Bara & Budge, 2001, p.592). Second, this coding is re-classified in accordance with pre-defined left and right wing markers wherein certain policies are assigned an ideological position so, for example, human rights references are seen to convey right wing sentiments. Then third, by noting the frequency with which each left or right wing policy area is evoked, the ideological position of the document is discerned, reducing ideology to the summation of certain pre-defined ideological policy markers (so, for example, Thomas Quinn *et al* (2011) judge the Liberal Democrat manifesto to have an ideological rating of -3.0).

²⁷ In this approach a party's most recent articulation of its policy agenda (i.e. its manifesto) is ideologically indicative.

²⁸ For more on this approach see Evans & Heath, 1995; Gabel & Huber, 2000; Kitschelt & Hellemans, 1990.

Whilst this mode of analysis can be critiqued on conceptual and methodological grounds (see, for example: Dinas & Gemenis, 2010) it does produce an ideologically indicative number which allows longitudinal analysis. The outputs gleaned from this form of investigation have been highly influential in re-enforcing ideological narratives by appearing to confirm a period of post-war consensus (Adams, 2001b), ideological divergence under Thatcher (Adams *et al*, 2004), and convergence under New Labour's Third Way (Bara & Budge, 2001). The broad applications of this approach and the accessibility of its outputs are appealing as it offers an ideological narrative of politics and political parties. However I do not seek to adapt this approach as Budge's exclusive focus on policy positions and use of pre-defined, static ideological markers is seen to be problematic.

Whilst policy positions are linked to party ideology and can ultimately tell us much about a party's agenda and changes in publically admissible policy courses (offering insight not available through Freedon's form of ideological analysis), I do not view such outputs as synonymous with ideology as policy positions can be produced for a range of reasons (as catalogued later in the chapter: see p.31). The use of pre-defined ideological markers also overlooks this point, failing to recognise that policies can be enacted for non-ideological reasons. Budge's failure to engage with these possibilities means that once again a partial account of the relationship between ideologies and parties is advanced.

Despite this critique it is possible to draw some inspiration from this approach as in concentrating on party policy Budge foregrounds the relationship between parties' ideology and their behaviour. His analysis indicates that rather than drawing parallels between parties and political ideologies, or studying actors' own accounts of their ideological position, analysis can proceed through a study of outputs, suggesting a different form of investigation. Whilst Budge's precise mode of study is not favoured it is pertinent to further explore the ideological insights available through outputs when developing my own account. Furthermore, methodologically this form of inquiry illustrates the insights to be gained from longitudinal, comparative analysis when seeking to monitor ideological change, a form of investigation I seek to emulate in my own studies. In these ways the existing literature informs my own party specific approach to ideological study.

Summary

From this appraisal Freedon, Downs and Budge can be seen to lie in two vastly different traditions of ideological analysis which, whilst united by their focus on ideology in parties, present antithetical conceptions and vastly different investigatory approaches. Freedon offers a highly developed conceptual account of ideologies, yet in adopting a universal, abstract mode of

analysis he overlooks the particular circumstances surrounding ideology in parties and understates the agency of party actors, weakening the explanatory capacity of this approach for my purposes. Spatial modelling techniques display similar ambiguities as whilst demonstrating the relevance of the specific context of parties and raising questions about those outputs suited to ideological study, Downs and Budge offer simplified conceptions of the relationship between ideology and parties.

In responding to these difficulties I argue the case for a party political ideology approach which seeks to recognise how the specificities of political parties affect the conceptualisation and study of ideology in this context. To do so I tailor Freedon's morphological framework to the party environment, adapting his mode of analysis by integrating the party traits highlighted by spatial modellers and considering the impact of the party context on ideology. In so doing I re-envision the relationship between ideology and political parties, preparing the ground for an alternative form of study. In the remainder of this chapter I therefore draw inspiration from these approaches and the broader literature on parties to consider how the specificities of this context impact upon ideology. Particular attention is paid to how alternative motivations intersect with ideology, how actors in parties interact with ideology, and how this area can be studied. Answering these questions is by no means simple as it requires conceptual and methodological innovation, therefore in theorising the relationship between these variables I also sketch the form of analysis which guides my subsequent investigation of ideological change. In offering this framework I argue it is possible to gain a more nuanced understanding of ideology which considers whether parties offer a distinct ideological position, whether ideology offers an indicative guide to party behaviour, and whether a specific party's ideology has changed, capacities which are detailed further in the next chapter.

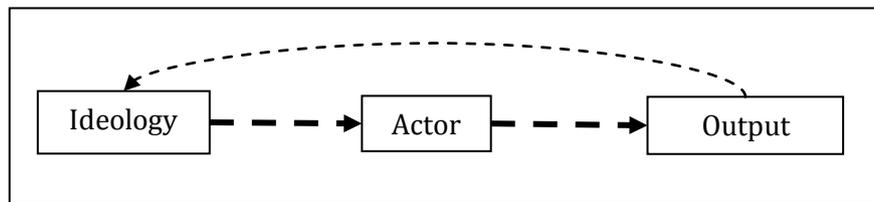
Theorising Party Political Ideology

In formulating my own approach I seek to react against the idea that parties either use ideology to maximise electoral incentives, to define the policy space, or to disseminate a message formulated elsewhere. Rather, I seek, like many other scholars (Moon & Bratberg, 2010) to depict parties as multifaceted, multi-motivational bodies which are affected by a range of external variables and which possess and pursue their own ideological vision of the world. This leads me to develop a more expansive conceptualisation of parties' motivations which acknowledges the strategic decisions actors take when faced with intersecting motivations and explores the consequences of this for conceptualising and studying ideology. In so doing I seek to move away from singular depictions of parties as ideologically (Freedon) *or* electorally motivated (Downs), instead presenting a framework with the capacity to acknowledge how a

range of other motivations affect ideology. In developing my conception I react directly against the forms of analysis advanced by Freedden, Downs and Budge, hence to understand my mode of inquiry it is useful to map the principles which underpin their frameworks. Accordingly I first reappraise these works by offering diagrammatic depictions of their approaches, focusing on their different theorisations of the relationship between ideology, actors and outputs. In so doing I foreground my own diagrammatic depiction of party political ideology, providing a visual representation of the way in which my approach differs to existing analyses.

In Freedden's account parties were depicted as conduits for ideological dissemination, with political ideologies formed elsewhere driving party behaviour. As my above critique has demonstrated this theorisation directs scant attention to the role of party actors, instead conceiving a linear relationship of the kind apparent in Figure 1 to exist.

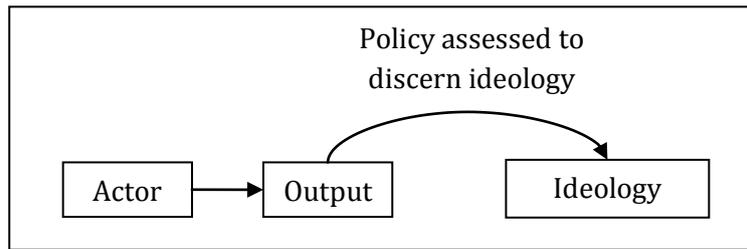
Figure 1: Freedden's Conception of Ideology and Motivation in Parties



In advancing his framework Freedden does acknowledge the impact of context, tradition and history on ideologies (1996, pp.110-111; p.116) but due to a lack of methodological clarity it is not possible to discern how he integrates these concerns into his own analysis. This criticism, and the others advanced above, leads me to place greater emphasis on how context and alternative factors affect ideology when developing my own model, and also prompt me to re-theorise the role of the actor in relation to ideology and inject other non-ideological considerations into the model.

Returning to Budge's account no theory of actors' relationship with ideology is advanced, instead analysis concentrates on discerning ideology through policy outputs with an extensive methodological framework offered but little theorisation of parties' interaction with ideology. In this regard Budge's analysis concentrates on outputs and ideology, not examining the drives behind actors' motivations as depicted in Figure 2.

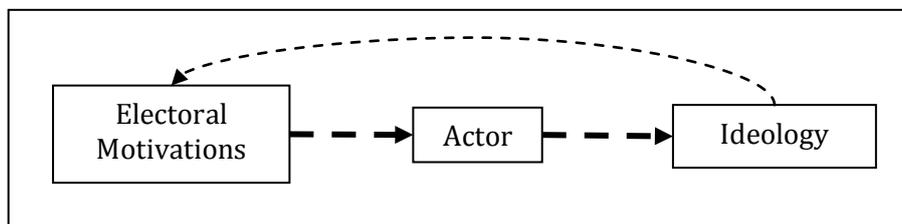
Figure 2: Ideology and Outputs in Budge



This renders agents’ relationship with ideology ambiguous, offering only a partial picture of ideology in this context. In developing this depiction I explore the possibility of extracting ideology from outputs but complement this with analysis of the impetus behind actors’ behaviour, considering how motivation affects the claims which can be drawn from output focused investigation.

Downs’ approach is in certain regards similar to Freedon’s as a linear relationship is seen to exist between electoral motivations, actors and ideology (as depicted in Figure 3), whereby electoral motivations influence actors to adopt the most viable (and feasible) ideological position (which in turn informs the electoral landscape and hence motivations).

Figure 3: Downs’ Conception of Ideology and Motivation in Parties



Whilst other party concerns are recognised in the form of electoral motivations these are not seen to complement ideological motivations, but instead are perceived to induce parties’ ideological positions. This model is therefore unable to account for instances in which parties forgo the most electorally rational, utility maximising position and act in accordance with other motivations because the frame of mediating variables is too narrow. For this reason I seek to complement this framework with a wider range of motivating concerns and examine in greater detail how ideology exists within parties.

These three accounts, and the limitations highlighted above, prompt me to develop an alternative model, but in so doing I also seek to integrate a range of other concerns regarding the working of political parties. Primary amongst these is Griffiths’ and Hickson’s assertion that in the policy making process parties are influenced by:

‘...professional and producer interests, the constraints imposed on politicians by the nature of the economy and society, the international context and of course electoral necessity’ (Griffiths & Hickson, 2010, p.2).

Such factors are highly influential in conditioning the choices politicians make as illustrated by a comment from Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg where he states:

‘...one of the great difficulties with politics is that the sheer velocity of politics, and the sheer velocity of decisions and responses you have to give in a sort of twenty four hour media environment, often means that you are kind of running before you have really thought through in your own conscience’ (Clegg, 29th October 2010).

For this reason I seek to recognise the impact of context (be it international, domestic or economic), elections and other external pressures on the decisions made by party actors, acknowledging that these traits can take precedence over and/or marginalise ideological concerns. In recognising the potential for a disconnect between ideology and policy/rhetoric I assert the need to revisit the insights which can be drawn from outputs, recognising that whilst parties possess an ideology this is not always reflected in outputs (cf. Budge). When remodelling parties’ interaction with ideology I reflect this point by making a distinction between party ideology as it appears in outputs and party ideology as a motivator of party behaviour; asserting that analysis at these two levels can produce very different understandings of a party’s position.

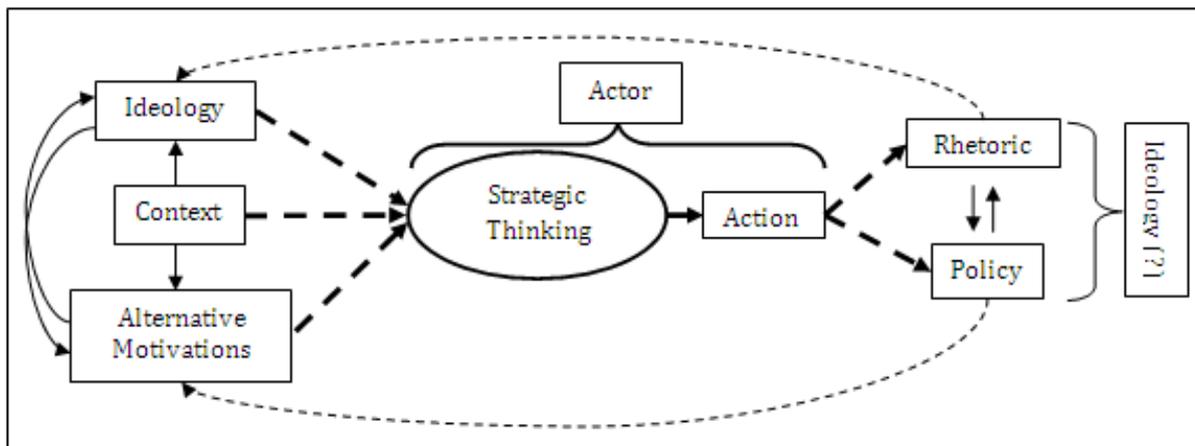
In developing my own model I also seek to recognise that parties are heterogeneous organisations. The diversity of political parties has been well documented (for example, see Whitely, Seyd & Richardson (2002) for a discussion of Conservative Party composition) but I seek to incorporate this insight into analysis of ideology, recognising that parties are composed of a range of individuals who have different ideological perspectives (be they members, intellectuals and representatives (for more see Cowley & Stuart, 2010; Rose, 1964)) and who seek to inform the ideological message projected by the party. In this sense I seek to acknowledge that parties are not only subject to external pressures, but are also affected by internal debates and problems, making it necessary to consider the factors within *and* beyond political parties that affect their strategic thinking and behaviour.

Collectively these points lead me to advance an alternative model of ideology in parties which recognises that:

- a) Alternative motivations and context exert an impact on actors and can originate from within or beyond a party (leading me to consider these factors alongside ideology when seeking to trace the impetus for party behaviour),
- b) Ideology is apparent within parties in different ways and can accordingly be studied at different levels within a party (leading me to offer a more complex model than apparent in the existing literature (see Figures 1, 2 and 3), and
- c) Parties are bodies which engage in collective strategic thinking to inform action (leading me to see parties as ideological creators and innovators).

This prompts me to advance an alternative model under the heading of party political ideology which reflects the specific context of parties, foregrounds the role of agents as ideological innovators and negotiators, and recognises the need for actors to discriminate between different motivations and pressures (from within the party and beyond). This form of investigation is reflected in my model of party political ideology (Figure 4) which whilst notably different from previous accounts (Figures 1, 2 and 3) is nevertheless informed by their insights.

Figure 4: Ideology in Parties: A Party Political Ideology Conceptualisation



In presenting this diagram it is useful to contemplate how parties come to take decisions, discussing the ways in which factors evident on the left of the diagram inform eventual outputs. Firstly, this party political ideology model acknowledges that parties are influenced by a range of different variables, with ideology complemented by contextual pressures and alternative motivations (a term which encompasses elections, context, lobbying, history and membership *etcetera*). These factors can originate internally within a party (voiced by different ideological factions or groups) or externally (prompted by global pressures or domestic opinion changes). Furthermore, as the linking arrows demonstrate they are not mutually exclusive and can

influence one another, making it possible for context to affect ideological prescriptions, and alternative motivations to affect perceptions of context.

When making decisions all of these factors are relevant and are negotiated by actors through a process of strategic thinking which results in action. As the middle of the diagram indicates parties are seen to be active agents as they do not simply disseminate ideological positions but rather mediate between ideological pressures, contextual pressures and alternative motivations. This allows for the possibility that parties can act solely in accordance with ideology, but can also entirely ignore this influence, taking decisions based on different combinations of influences.

Having engaged in strategic thinking parties take actions evident as policies and rhetoric, but these outputs should not automatically be seen as ideological because parties can (un)consciously make apparently non-ideological communications. In this sense a party can emphasise how global pressures rather than ideological convictions are prompting their actions. Nevertheless, it is through these outputs that parties attempt to persuade an audience and project ideology, making them informative for those seeking to study ideology. In considering the right hand side of the diagram it should also be noted that outputs are iteratively related and linked to those factors which direct party behaviour. This is because the process of articulation and action is ideologically constitutive (a dynamic conveyed by the arrows in Figure 4), informing subsequent perceptions of the current landscape.

This diagram therefore reveals parties to both *possess* an ideology and *project* ideology as a persuasive device. As institutions seeking power parties are therefore seen to be inspired by ideological visions, but they also use ideology by projecting a vision of society to the public in an attempt to accrue power and support. This distinction between ideology as something used and possessed echoes Henry Drucker's notions of doctrine and ethos where the former represents the ideological projection the public sees and the latter connotes the motivations which constitute that ideology (Drucker, 1979; see also Ware, 1996). Recognising these two manifestations of ideology is crucial as it indicates that it can be studied at different levels, examining either the ideas driving party members, or the ideas projected by a party.

In recognising this dual relationship the study of ideology is revealed to be rather complex as it is difficult to discern how the ideology a party possesses affects and is manifest in party actions. This is because the impact of context and alternative motivations is almost impossible to tease

apart from ideology as it is not possible to observe parties' process of strategic thinking.²⁹ Whilst party actors themselves can be interviewed to identify their rationale such analysis does not capture the unconscious influence of alternative motivations, or actors' incentives to conceal certain reasoning. In line with these points I do not focus on ideology as possessed but rather as projected, seeking to discern whether parties project an ideological message, what form that vision takes, and whether ideological change has occurred. This inspires my methodological examination of rhetoric and concern with public indicators of party ideology, topics considered further in the next chapter. However, here it is pertinent to direct further attention to the idea that parties can appear non-ideological.

The ideological status of parties is often overlooked but I argue that when attempting to study ideology it is important to note that parties can appear to be motivated by other, non-ideological drives. This point is discussed further in the next chapter but it is important to clarify here that I am not arguing that parties do not possess an ideology. Parties are founded on the conflictual visions seen here to constitute ideology, hence even if promoting a 'common sense' vision for society parties are seen to evoke hegemonic ideological positions. This makes 'neutral' or non-ideological behaviour impossible (Freeden, 2003, p.1) if parties are seeking to exert power. However, I argue that parties can give the impression that ideology is not relevant by foregrounding compulsion to act, expediency, or directing attention away from ideology. This possibility is seen to be exceedingly interesting when seeking to understand why ideology is perceived to be negative or irrelevant, hence when studying ideology I examine the message projected by a party to see how that message is likely to be decoded by an audience and interpreted ideologically.

In this regard this mode of theorisation not only reflects party traits, it also inspires an innovative research agenda which recognises the other variables at play in the party context, the electoral need for parties to persuade, and the role of actors as strategic thinkers arbitrating between ideological and non-ideological concerns. By integrating these points into my party political ideology framework I develop a model capable of advancing understanding of ideology in political parties. Within the next chapter the precise rationale for this form of inquiry and the principles of analysis are advanced but here it is possible to outline the basic principles.

In studying party political ideology I have drawn on Freedén's principle of morphological analysis, developing an investigatory framework capable of studying ideological composition

²⁹ It can be possible to gain some insight if policies and actions are widely discussed and reviewed in parties as policy forum documents and party debates can be documented – offering some insight into this process. However, most decisions are made by party elites behind closed doors, making ideology as possessed difficult to observe.

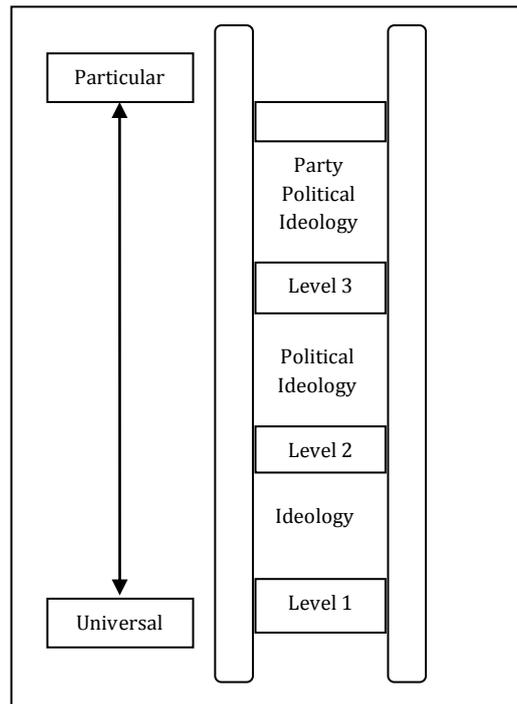
(and change therein) and how ideology is portrayed. This mode of inquiry is pursued primarily through analysis of rhetoric, context, alternative motivations, policies and policy justification, using these outputs to monitor ideological change and examine ideological relevance. The mechanics of this analysis are presented in the next chapter, but before turning attention to these concerns I first deconstruct the principles which underpin party political ideology in order to offer greater insight into the kind of analysis I pursue.

Situating the Party Political Ideology Approach

Party political ideology is a particular mode of study which seeks to recognise the multifaceted nature of parties by incorporating their desire for electoral success, their need to react to unanticipated events and to balance a range of often competing interests alongside ideology. In this way it focuses attention on the specific circumstances of political parties, highlighting the range of pressures that actors are subject to and the potential for a dislocation between ideology as possessed and projected. In offering this form of investigation it is, however, informative to note that party political ideology builds upon manifestations of ideology which are more universally apparent. In this sense to understand my approach I argue the need to appreciate political ideology and ideology. The value of studying these alternative ideological forms lies not only in grasping the foundations on which party political ideology is built, but also in situating this work within the existing literature. Due to the range of texts which have been published on ideology it is informative to outline in detail the form of investigation I pursue and to clarify that rather than dismissing existing studies of individual ideology or political ideology I seek to bring their insights to bear on the study of ideology in parties.

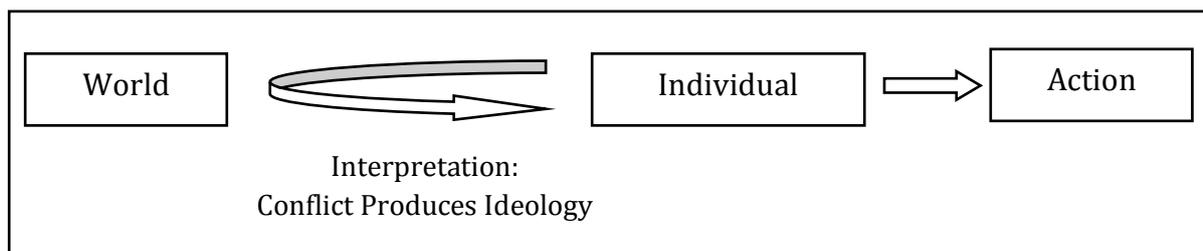
To advance these points I introduce the concept of an ideological ladder (Figure 5) through which it is possible to envisage party political ideology as a particular mode of study founded upon the interpretations made by individuals (ideology), and the political traditions and philosophies which have shaped party thinking (political ideology). By examining the links between the different forms of analysis depicted in this diagram it is possible to gain a greater understanding of how party political ideology fits within the wider ideological literature.

Figure 5: The Ideological Ladder



At the most basic, universal level ideology exists as an individual construct formed when an actor interprets the world and runs into conflict with the status quo. This process is epitomised by Figure 6 where, in line with my view that ideologies are action-orientated, an individual takes actions defined by their interpretations. This process is central to the formation of any ideology, even group ideologies.

Figure 6: Ideology



To expand, I argue that within parties each member or supporter experiences the interpretive process captured in the diagram above and decides to affiliate themselves with others who they believe possess the same ideological outlook. If founding a party this involves creating a collective ideology which draws on the perspectives of a range of individuals, or if a party is already established individuals are seen to align themselves with the party they perceive to most closely reflect their own outlook and aims. In this sense individual ideologies are central to the founding and perpetuation of group ideologies, but these positions are not synonymous, rendering analysis of group ideology distinct from the study of individual ideology.

The group/individual distinction is also important when studying change because in aligning with a party ideology individuals do not subsume their own individual identity, rather they continue to possess their own perspective (simply affiliating that with a set of broader ideas). Acknowledging this arrangement is informative because it allows for the possibility that an individual can agitate within a party for change, something frequently done through party factions. In this sense individual ideologies and the differences within parties are crucial because they provide, as Jenny Andersson details, 'the possible embryos of other political futures' (2010, p.14). These insights lead me in studying party political ideology to recognise the continued pertinence of individual ideology and the role that this can play in explaining ideological formation and change.

Turning to political ideology it is equally apparent that the political philosophies and ideational traditions which surround parties are relevant when seeking to understand party ideology as they can inspire ideological identity and frame party action. In relation to the first point, political ideologies provide ideological templates, offering archetypal visions for society from which political parties and individuals can draw inspiration. Whilst political parties often diverge from ideological positions, such as socialism, conservatism or liberalism, these frames can help position parties.³⁰ As Daniel Béland & Robert Cox assert 'ideas can have a long history' hence an examination of political ideology can offer insight into where party ideas come from, and which ideological tradition a party lies in (Béland & Cox, 2011, p.16).³¹

This notion of tradition as connected to political ideology is also significant because it foregrounds the way in which particular ideological traditions can constrain a party's actions and/or agenda. In this sense traditions can limit the range of actions deemed to be feasible by party members and supporters, making any attempt to move beyond the precepts of a particular political ideology potentially damaging to the party's identity (and thus support base). The impact of tradition on behaviour has been widely noted, (see for example Bevir & Rhodes 2003, p.34; see also 1999; 2005; 2006a; 2006b; 2008)³² but this point is particularly pertinent for ideological study as it indicates that parties do not start with a blank canvass, but rather draw on a range of pre-existing ideological models termed here political ideologies.

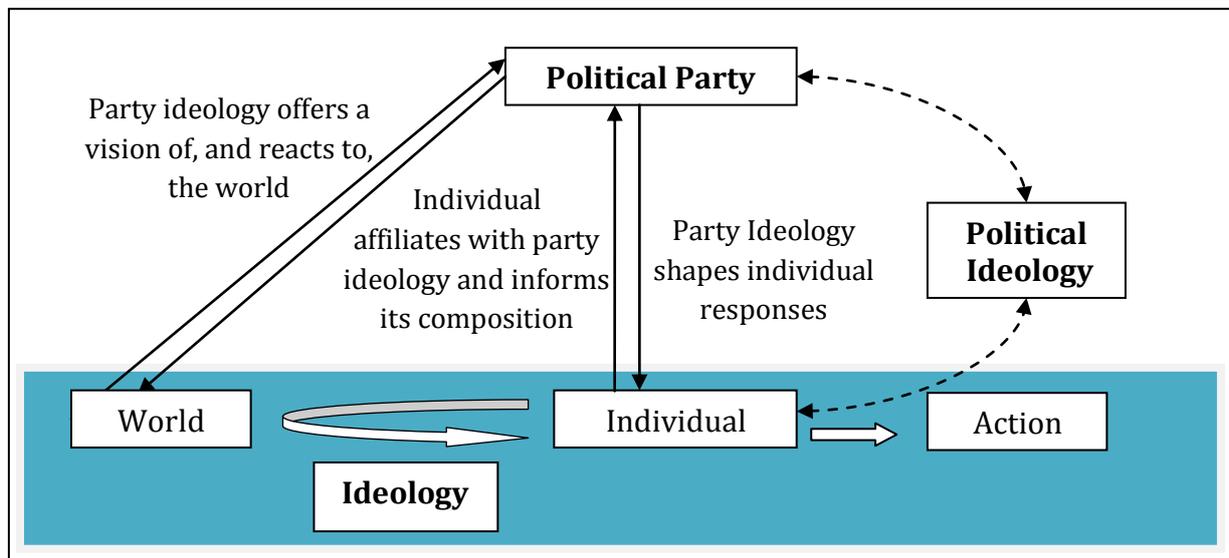
³⁰ Numerous scholars have adopted this form of analysis including Terence Ball & Richard Dagger (2006), Roger Eatwell & Anthony Wright (2001), Robert Eccleshall *et al* (2003), Freedon (1996), Gordon Graham (1986), John Hoffman & Paul Graham (2006), Andrew Heywood (1998), Caroline Kenny (2010) and Vincent (2010). This approach has, however, been critiqued by scholars highlighting parties' weak ideological ties and their abandonment of traditional positions in favour of triangulation and electoral success (Michels, 1962; Wilson, 1999).

³¹ This understanding differs from that offered by theorists such as Karl Loewenstein who use the term to connote systems of belief 'related to political power' (1953, p.691).

³² It should be noted that their conception of tradition has been critiqued, with Hay arguing that their expansive definition of the term empties it 'of all (explanatory) content and analytical power' (Hay, 2004b, p.146).

In making these points I offer a further model of party political ideology which traces the interaction between these different ideological forms. Figure 7 shows how ideology and political ideology inform parties' and thus why these concerns are relevant to analysis at this particular level.

Figure 7: Ideology, Political Ideology and Party Political Ideology



To briefly appraise, this diagram shows ideology to be pivotal to political parties, reflecting the above discussion of party aggregation (pp.6-7). In this sense individual ideology provides parties' ideological bedrock as it is through interpretation that actors furnish themselves with the beliefs and ideas that prompt them to join a party; thus someone who sees injustice in wealth inequality and feels strongly about civil liberties may identify with the Liberal Democrats, an association which would not be possible without that individual's own judgement. Similarly political ideology is also pertinent to party ideology as it informs traditions and precedents for party action and provides a frame through which individuals' position themselves on the ideological spectrum. This diagram therefore shows that ideology in parties is not a discrete area of study but is rather informed by ideology and political ideology. In advancing this claim I seek to clarify that rather than attempting to supplant other forms of ideological analysis I am adapting existing principles to reflect the specific concerns of the party context.

Conclusion

Within this chapter I set out to examine existing accounts of party ideology, scrutinising their theorisation of ideology in political parties and advancing the case for the re-conceptualisation of ideological study. In so doing I have demonstrated the very different ways in which party ideology has been analysed. Whilst Freedman offered a conceptual model of ideological

morphology, Downs was seen to depict ideology as determined by electoral impetus, and Budge focused on policy as ideologically indicative. In this regard each explored different aspects of parties' relationship with ideology and the wider political context. Whilst the three accounts discussed here were not seen to offer entirely satisfactory accounts of parties' relationship with ideology they did nevertheless inform my own approach to ideological study, indicating the need to study context, electoral motivations and parties' previous ideological ties. Accordingly this analysis has revealed ideology to be just one of a range of factors relevant to understanding party behaviour, indicating the possibility of different levels and forms of ideological analysis.

In advancing the concept of party political ideology I therefore seek to offer a *via media* between the previous modes of analysis examined here, combining an appreciation of ideas with analysis of the context and organisational traits which define parties and inform their behaviour. In this way I have sought to ground analysis of ideology in the party context, moving away from the often abstract analyses which have been prevalent in the existing literature. In so doing I have emphasised actors' ability to formulate a novel ideological position, depart from ideological rationale when acting, and project as well as possess an ideology; challenging many previous assumptions.

Given my concern with ideological relevance I have stated my focus upon the message a party projects as at this level it is possible to discern how a party's ideology is publically projected, how it is constituted, how it has changed from past ideological positions, and whether it is consistently advanced. As will be discussed further in the next chapter this form of analysis has the potential to greatly enhance understanding of ideology and the current dynamics of party politics. In pursuing this form of analysis I draw heavily on Freedman's theorisation of ideology, using his morphological approach as the template for my own form of ideological mapping. Inspired by Freedman's focus on core and peripheral concepts, and his emphasis on ideological inscription, in the next chapter I outline how a party's projected ideological position can be discerned through analysis of rhetoric, context, alternative motivations, policies and policy justification.

In advancing the notion of party political ideology I therefore seek to offer an innovative mode of ideological inquiry which far from supplanting existing modes of analysis builds upon existing understanding. As Figure 5 demonstrates I see party political ideology not as a standalone construct, but rather as one rung of an ideological ladder. In this sense it is the peculiarities of parties' interaction with ideology that informs this mode of study rather than a desire to discount other approaches.

This chapter accordingly offers the theoretical foundation for the mode of study pursued here, but in order to apply these principles to examine ideology in political parties it is necessary to outline the methodological processes which guide my investigation. Accordingly in the next chapter I detail and justify the precise form of party political ideology analysis.

Chapter 3: Party Political Ideology in Practice

This chapter provides the bridge between theorisation and practical analysis, depicting how the concept of party political ideology offered in the last chapter can be operationalised. In this sense it seeks to address the question, posed in the introduction, of how ideology can be studied. Certain methodological principles have already been established as I have asserted the appeal of Freedden's morphological analysis, argued that parties should not always be seen as ideological, and depicted ideology as something that parties both project and possess. In this chapter I develop these points, detailing how ideology can be discerned in text, how a morphological web is detected, and how ideological relevance can be determined.

In presenting the form of analysis I pursue and the methodological principles and processes which underpin this investigation it is important to note that although a range of approaches do exist, none of these is precisely compatible with the diverse range of insights I pursue (a point discussed further in this chapter).³³ This leads me to develop my own approach which, inspired by Freedden, discerns morphological maps of party ideology by examining the configuration and inscription of references made by parties. Given the aforementioned need for clarity in the conceptualisation and study of ideology (p.17), within this chapter I do not simply outline the form of my analysis, but also explain, at length, the coding choices and analytical process which underpin my subsequent investigations. In so doing I endeavour to outline a method which can be applied to any speech (or indeed any other persuasive text) from any given point in time, enabling historical and longitudinal analysis (of the kind conducted by Budge) of parties' rhetorical depiction of ideology.³⁴ Yet, in offering my own method I do not seek to supplant existing modes of discourse, rhetorical or communicative analysis, rather I seek to offer a framework which can be adapted to incorporate the insights of these different approaches. Whilst unconventional, this stance recognises the potential for other scholars to offer pertinent methodological insights, appending my method with techniques and concerns not examined here. In this way I offer my framework as a foundation upon which other scholars can build, recognising the wealth of other principles which could be used to inform the construction of morphological diagrams.

³³ For example, van Dijk (1995; 1998; 2006) and others offer a range of tools by which to examine ideology in language, but they have tended to focus on ideology as possessed by parties and accordingly do not offer the means by which to examine ideological projections and ideological relevance.

³⁴ In studying speeches to examine party ideology it is important to note the distinction between an individual politician's ideas and the ideology of the party. I do not seek to conflate these two different levels of analysis and accordingly focus my investigation on party leaders' formal, communicative rhetoric – texts which are produced not by the speaker alone but by a range of individuals within a party. Considering such documents allows this distinction to be transcended, but it should not be entirely overlooked when drawing insights from these documents as different speakers within a party can offer different representations of the party's position. For more see p.49.

In addition to outlining the principles of morphological analysis, within this chapter I also advance my second analytical concern, ideological relevance. As outlined in the last chapter parties do not automatically exhibit an ideology, making it infinitely possible for the public to view this dimension as irrelevant to the behaviour of parties. Within this chapter I explore this possibility in greater detail, asserting the need to consider context, alternative motivations, and the consistency and coherence of a party's message to examine relevance. By examining these criteria I offer analytical principles by which to consider whether an audience is likely to see the ideological vision espoused by a party as a credible explanation of their behaviour, or whether alternative non-ideological motivations are pre-eminent. These questions are often overlooked by existing studies of ideology hence by foregrounding this concern I offer a unique form of analysis which considers the way in which politicians' rhetoric and policy agendas affect public perceptions of party ideology.

Accordingly this chapter has extensive ground to cover as I outline the precise form of my analysis, detail the principles behind that approach, introduce the textual coding process, and discuss the applications of this framework. In structuring these contributions I first outline and justify the form of analysis pursued here, detailing the rhetorical focus of my inquiry, discussing how ideology is seen to be conveyed in texts, and justifying my approach. In this passage I further refine my analytical focus, introducing my concern with ideology as it is decoded by an audience, and distinguishing my approach from other prominent modes of textual analysis. Second I turn to the precise mechanics of my approach, outlining how I tailor Freedén's morphological analysis, how ideological references and inscription are discerned, and how ideological relevance can be examined. Finally, having outlined these principles I introduce the cases examined here, detailing my concern with periods of party change and modernisation and anticipating the insights available through analysis of party political ideology.

The Focus of Analysis

In embarking on this methodological overview it is vital in the first instance to clarify the form of analysis I pursue. As Figure 4 in the last chapter illustrates, the notion of party political ideology allows for ideology to be studied as something which parties both possess and project, reflecting parties' status as ideational and persuasive (electoral) bodies. In the remainder of this thesis I focus on ideology as it is projected to the public, a selection which is made for two reasons. First, as detailed in the last chapter, the opacity of strategic thinking and the tension between group and individual ideologies within parties makes it exceedingly difficult to study ideology as possessed. Whilst it is possible to examine individual positions within a party, this form of analysis is not seen to be representative of parties as a totality and hence is incompatible with

the form of inquiry I pursue. In addition to this point I, second, adopt this focus because ideology as projected more closely reflects my concern with ideological relevance as it allows analysts to concentrate on how ideas and ideology are conveyed to the public, and why perceptions of irrelevance many have arisen. These insights are unavailable when studying ideology as possessed, making this latter form most appropriate for my purposes.

Whilst studying ideological projections is by no means simple there is some precedent for this kind of work in the form of Stuart Hall's notion of encoding/decoding (1980).³⁵ This principle reflects the idea that an audience does not automatically receive the message intended by the producer because of their capacity to reach their own interpretations of a message. Hall mapped this possibility, drawing attention to the range of factors which affect interpretation of message (i.e. the same frameworks of knowledge, relations of production and infrastructure) and the need for equivalence between encoders and decoders understanding if the same meaning is to be extrapolated by the decoder as intended by the encoder.

This framework is pertinent not because it offers a template for my own analysis but because it foregrounds a trait I seek to recognise, namely that 'much of what is 'meant' when an utterance is realized (*sic*) either in text or in talk is implicit and hearers or readers have to make a certain amount of effort to interpret what might have been intended using many contextual cues and mutually shared knowledge' (Chilton & Schäffner, 2002, p.9; for more see Hay, 1995). This means that when interpreting a speech an audience attempts to anticipate meaning by considering whether context, motivations and/or ideology inform the pronouncements being made by parties. In this sense an audience considers the variables seen in the last chapter to direct strategic thinking (see Figure 4), making alternative motivations such as electoral pressures and lobbying, and contextual impetus such as economic conditions, global changes and shifting attitudes, informative to message decoding if they are readily apparent to an audience.

This conclusion is significant for my own work as it allows for the possibility that when decoding a message an audience may not deem ideology to be relevant as non-ideological motivations can be seen to direct party behaviour. To give an example, if in response to a crisis in the immigration system a political party started to project a vision prefaced upon a strong country, patriotism and national interest, and the crisis was readily apparent, then this rhetorical shift is likely to be seen as a reaction to context rather than as indicative of the increased ideological significance of these ideas. This leads me to tailor my morphological

³⁵ The notion of encoding has also been examined by linguistic scholars including Lee, 1992, pp.11-12.

analysis to consider how context and alternative motivations are likely to affect perceptions of an ideology.

In addition to this point I also assert the need to consider the consistency with which the party's message is portrayed, arguing that inconsistent and incoherent encoding is likely to jeopardise subsequent decoding. This reflects Judi Atkins' assertion, in relation to policy justification, that 'it is unlikely that an incoherent justificatory strategy will secure hegemonic advantage for a given policy' (2011, p.70). In this same sense if a party displays an inconsistent rationale within its rhetoric, and is inconsistent in the application of that rationale, their message is unlikely to be perceived as a reliable guide to behaviour. This point is relevant in relation to any form of justification, be it citing a compulsion to act based on external pressures or outlining a specific policy proposal, but it is particularly pertinent in relation to ideology. So, if a party is inconsistent when outlining its ideological vision its statements are unlikely to be interpreted as reliable indicators of party behaviour, undermining the relevance of ideology vis-à-vis other concerns. Accordingly, by studying ideology as it is decoded it is possible to grasp how ideology appears to the public, and how the decisions parties make in formulating their rhetoric affect perceptions of their ideological identity.

In studying ideology as decoded I therefore seek to examine:

- a) Whether a party projects an ideological vision,
- b) What form that vision takes, and
- c) Whether that vision is likely to be seen to be motivated by ideology as opposed to other factors.

This form of analysis allows me to understand parties' ideological positions past and present and through comparison explore how these have changed. It also enables me to consider why parties may be thought of as non-ideological and thus why analysis at this level has diminished. Accordingly party political ideology offers the capacity to describe the ideological position of parties, monitor change and explore relevance.

Ideology and Language

Within this thesis ideology is examined through language, specifically the rhetorical statements which politicians make when speaking to a public audience or justifying policy. This form of analysis is highly insightful because, as Paul Chilton asserts 'political activity does not exist without the use of language' (Chilton, 2004, p.6; Chilton & Schäffner, 2002, p.3) as it is through

language that actors both interpret and act within the political arena. In this sense language is integral to ‘speeches, demonstrations, statements, placards, debates, interviews, pamphlets, letters, tracts, newspaper columns, websites, posters and performances’ (Finlayson, 28th August 2009) as it allows opinions to be expressed, actions taken and different visions of the world to be articulated (Farr, 1995, pp.26-7; Groys, 2009, p.XV). When seeking to examine ideology these capacities make a focus on language ideal as it is through this medium that actors offer visions of the world (Beard, 2000), depict points of conflict, and attempt to persuade others of the virtues of their prescriptions.

Within this work I examine a specific form of language, rhetoric, in line with my desire to study moments when parties attempt to persuade an audience of the pertinence and appeal of their ideological position.³⁶ Rhetoric is ideally suited to such investigation as it reflects ‘the ways that speakers try to persuade audiences’ (Billig, 2005, p.221; 2001; Booth, 2004, p.xi; Finlayson, 2004b; cf. Freedman, 1996, p.35; 1999c; Eagleton, 2007, p.201), making the use of rhetoric ‘an attempt to make somebody give up one set of beliefs in favour of another by offering a more or less thoroughgoing *redescription* of the world which, on a pragmatic basis, presents the new set of beliefs as the more suitable, appropriate or likely’ (Torfing, 1999, p.68; Rorty, 1989, pp.3-22). In attempting to convey ideology and persuade an audience of the validity of one ideological vision politicians are therefore seen to use rhetoric, a form of language ‘infected by partisan agendas and desires’ (Fish, 1989, p.474). Party conference speeches and parliamentary performances are prime examples of rhetorical speech as in these contexts politicians consciously project a message they believe to be appealing to the public.³⁷ By studying such texts I argue it is possible to discern whether ideology is present and how it is conveyed through speech, using these insights to construct a morphological picture of the party’s ideological position.³⁸

³⁶ This approach has some precedent, for example Scarborough asserted that politicians appeal to voters using ideological arguments (1984). It does, however, differ to the form of inquiry pursued by Buckler (2007) as I use rhetoric to study ideology as conveyed by speakers. In adopting this focus it should be noted that I am accessing a particular account of ideology as I am not examining the ideas which motivated parties, but rather those ideas which actors are prepared to say motivated them. This means it is possible to gain different depictions of ideology *via* different sources and forms of analysis, a point which does not lessen the pertinence of this form of inquiry but which rather reflects the complex relationship between ideology and parties. For more see p.49.

³⁷ In interpreting conference speeches thus I differ with Christina Schaffner (1997) who sees them as indicative of internal political communication. Rather I seek to recognise the multiple audiences’ politicians are addressing in this forum, making them indicative of the image they seek to forge in the public and party mind.

³⁸ In exploring political communication I do not discuss political communication and ‘spin’ as these topics are beyond the scope of this study and have been extensively examined elsewhere. For examples see: Bewes, 2000; Lilliker, 2006; Moore, 2006; Negrine, 2008; Osborne, 2008; Stanyer, 2007; Watts, 1997.

In favouring rhetoric I draw a distinction between this level of linguistic study and discourse analysis. Whilst ideology has previously been studied through discourse this form of investigation does not align with my party political ideology approach because unlike rhetoric discourse does not mark an attempt to persuade, but rather conveys non-conflictual interpretations of the world. Returning to the distinction drawn in the introduction between ideology and discourse (p.4), the latter is seen to shape conceptions of the world, being created when humans attempt to put words together to convey meaning (making them ontological entities). In this sense they act as shortcuts for human understanding because, as Torfing states, 'our cognitions and speech acts only become meaningful within certain pre-established discourse' (Torfing, 1999, pp.84-5). Hence, discourses order human cognitions and convey widely accepted frames of meaning, giving then a decidedly different character to ideology. Academics who have studied ideology through discourse have focused on the common sense assumptions implicit in discourses, asserting, as Threadgold does, that 'texts are never ideology-free nor objective' (in Paltridge 2008, p.45; see also Baslow & Martin, 2003, p.10; Birch, 1989; Gee, 1990, p.131.). Whilst ideology can be implicit within texts – as once widely accepted ideological positions do become hegemonic (Western, 2008, p.146; Wilson, 1990, p.14) – such analysis concentrates on successful attempts to embed an ideology and accordingly overlooks contemporary ideological debates and identities.

For this reason whilst existing modes of discourse analysis, such as those in the post-Marxist tradition (Howarth *et al*, 2000; Talshir, 2006, p.9), school of critical linguistics (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p.448; Brown & Yule, 1983; Eggins, 1994 in Paltridge 2008, p.183; Fairclough, 1995; 1998; 2000; 2001; 2003; 2009; Fowler, 1979; Hodge & Kress, 1979; Kress, 2001, p.36; Wodak & Mayer, 2009), political/sociological model (Chadwick, 2000; Tilscher *et al*, 2000) or conversation analysis (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008; Psathas, 1995; ten Have, 2007) offer certain useful guiding principles for textual investigation, their different form of ideological study prevents me from importing their methods. Accordingly I develop my own mode of analysis which asserts that ideology is actively conveyed through party rhetoric in the form of directly conflictual assertions and non-conflictual statements which offer a clear vision of society at odds with the status quo. In recognising the different ways in which ideology is conveyed through rhetoric I explore how communication itself affects the message received by an audience; using ideological coding to offer further insight in this area.³⁹ These principles are expanded upon later in this chapter, but first I turn to discuss the rationale for a linguistic approach to ideological study, justifying my textual mode of investigation.

³⁹ Analysis of ideology through language is not unique as Aletta Norval (2002) reveals, yet my own inquiry does differ to the four forms of investigation outlined in her review article.

Justifying Textual Analysis

In conducting textual analysis I view language to be malleable; being constantly re-interpreted and re-inscribed in accordance with humans' changing experiences and understandings.⁴⁰ This renders human interpretation pivotal to language as it is actors' judgements that are reflected in the words we use and the linguistic connections we make. Hence as Ludwig Wittgenstein contends 'it is not words which mean things but men who, by words, mean things' (Seffler, 1974, p.105; See also Childe, 1973; High, 1967, p.56; Wittgenstein, 1958, p.432).

Inspired by these insights I do not examine language as conveying a direct, objective reflection of the material world, instead I view humans' constructed perceptions of that materiality to be conveyed through language, making this the ideal medium through which to study the ways in which actors interpret and envision the world. In analysing rhetoric I therefore accord with the constructivist notion that actors are fundamental to the formation of meaning and do not simply report on a material reality (Hacking, 2000).⁴¹ Because this process of reinterpretation is constant - as actors negotiate their understanding of the world - language provides a window into how discourses, and importantly for this thesis, ideologies, can change.

These theoretical underpinnings lead me to examine ideology through rhetoric as this form of language allows access to the unique and often innovative meanings that actors attach to ideas when constructing and adapting ideological visions. These capacities prompt me to contend that texts 'should be treated as data in their own right and not simply regarded as secondary sources' (Atkins, 2011, p.73), thus I eschew the tendency to see textual analysis as only a precursor or appendage to interview data or quantitative analysis and reject the claim that linguistic study is 'haphazard, careless and not systematic' (Black, 1999, p.2 - for more see p.49). On the contrary textual analysis can provide a range of unique and rigorous insights and is the method most suited to the kind of analysis I pursue.

Whilst interviews and quantitative analysis could be used to examine ideology these approaches are not favoured due to my focus on how the ideology projected by a party is decoded by an audience. If seeking to investigate decoding through interviews a range of problems are encountered. Whilst it is possible to ask audience members about their reaction to a speech and through interviews tease out how ideology is decoded by the public, this form of analysis is not feasible when seeking to study speeches twenty or fifty years ago. Even if attempting to replicate audience reaction by showing past speeches to interviewees the different context and the

⁴⁰ Debates over the form of insight offered through language are well established, yielding contributions from structuralist and constructivist (or post-structuralist) theorists (See: Baker & Hacker, 1984; High, 1967; Finlayson and Valentine, 2002; Petit, 1975; Saussure, 2006).

⁴¹ For more see: Hacking, 2002; Kukla, 2000.

impact of hindsight would produce less reliable data, undermining the comparability of outputs.⁴²

These practical problems are underpinned by a more substantial concern regarding actors' consciousness of the decoding process. Whilst individuals may be able to offer their impressions of a party's message they may not consciously recognise a party's ideology or associate the term ideology with a speech to which they are exposed. This makes it exceedingly difficult to assess one interviewee's impression of party ideology, or to compare interview data as analysts are at risk of misinterpreting data or equating judgements made according to vastly different criteria. It is also difficult to separate the impact of immediate events versus prior convictions on interview responses as numerous studies have shown previous partisan affiliations to condition responses to political speeches (see for example: Western, 2008). For these reasons I do not pursue my study of party ideology through interviews as these are seen to throw up a range of practical and theoretical problems.

Similarly whilst quantitative analysis of ideology can produce a range of insights by enabling longitudinal analysis of policy shifts and lexical changes, this method is not seen to be the most appropriate for my purposes. The tendency within existing quantitative analyses to reify certain concepts or policies as ideologically indicative (e.g. seeing human rights as uniformly right wing regardless of context) lacks the nuance of textual analysis and is unable to reflect the way in which the meaning inscribed within references changes over time. Furthermore, it is not able to provide the subtle insights regarding conceptual configuration offered by Freedon's analysis or consider questions of ideological relevance. Accordingly, in seeking to understand how ideology appears in parties and what affects perceptions of ideology, quantitative analysis is not seen to be appropriate.

For these reasons I therefore use rhetorical analysis, specifically examining leadership speeches made at party conferences as these texts mark, as Alan Finlayson and James Martin argue, a 'moment of ideological deployment and demonstration' (2008, p.454). Whilst other texts could have been selected and different documents used to complement this primary focus, due to constraints of space within this work conference speeches in the periods 1982-1997 and 1996-2010 alone are examined. In selecting a single speech as indicative of parties' rhetorical communication party conference speeches are ideal for two reasons: first, their collective authorship means they reflect the 'ideological assemblages at work across a party or governmental organisation' (ibid., p.449) – allowing insight not just into the leaders' ideas, but

⁴² Further to this problem, if seeking to screen videos of original speeches issues of access arise when looking back more than fifty years.

also the party's identity. And, second, they focus attention on the leader; a figure widely seen to be emblematic of party position and who is therefore instrumental in shaping public perceptions of party identity. Jointly these traits lead me to judge leaders' conference speeches the most apt medium by which to study party political ideology.

In indicating my preference for a textual study of ideology it is necessary to address issues of interpretation and reliability. These concerns have preoccupied scholars in the positivist tradition and have been the subject of vociferous debate with analysts seeking to determine the quality and reliability of textual analysis (see for instance Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007; Krippendorff, 2004; Strijbos *et al*, 2006); reflecting an 'objectivist epistemology that refers to an objective, knowable reality beyond the human mind and that stipulates a correspondence criterion of truth (Kvale, 1989; Salner, 1989)' (Sandberg, p.43). In offering an interpretivist style of textual analysis I reject these underlying assumptions, arguing that knowledge can never be truly falsified because the world is constantly being interpreted and reinterpreted; reshaping our understanding. In this sense objective knowledge is not seen to be obtainable (for more see Gadamer, 1977; 1989; 2000; Harrington, 2000; Rickman, 1990; Schwandt, 2000).

This stance has direct implications for the claims made of my own form of textual analysis as rather than seeking to offer an objective model of inquiry and provide tests for reliability and quality I seek to advance a set of principles open to individual researcher interpretation. Whilst I do attempt to clarify methodological processes to minimise radical differences in findings, I do not deem interpretative difference (in coding and conclusions) to be intrinsically problematic. This is because it reflects the breath of human experience and, indeed, reflects the different ways in which an audience can understand a speech/text. Rather than seeing these differences as indicative of poor coding practice I embrace interpretative divergences and argue that it is by confronting and debating alternative logics that knowledge is advanced and refined.⁴³ In this sense the following methodology aims to guide analysts and does not offer a prescriptive model of interpretation.

Having outlined and justified the principles of my analysis I now turn to detail the adaptations I make to Freedman's morphological approach, indicating the principles I extract and the extensions I make to his form of investigation.

⁴³ In making this point it is important to note that some degree of overlap should be expected in researcher coding. If researchers produce entirely divergent depictions of the same case study then issues of coder reliability do come to the fore.

Adapting Freedden's Morphological Approach

As detailed in the last chapter Freedden's form of ideological inquiry is seen to have a range of advantages as it offers a highly accessible mode of ideological analysis – providing a clear, visual framework of ideological composition – and through comparative analysis can be used to monitor the differences between parties and ideological change. These capacities lead me to echo Freedden's focus on the components of a concept, a concept and a system of concepts, and to produce my own diagrammatic depictions of parties' morphology (listed in appendixes 1 and 2). However, in producing these webs I adapt Freedden's principles to reflect my own research concerns. Accordingly, I focus on determining the meaning of references, identifying the references evoked, and discerning the emphasis placed upon references in a morphological web. By so doing I argue it is possible to detect the manner in which parties convey their message to an audience and the status of ideology therein.

As noted in the last chapter Freedden does not outline the process by which morphological analysis proceeds (p.23). Rather than echoing this approach, in what follows I seek to present, in detail, the process by which I determine ideological morphology. In so doing I am attempting to move away from the many existing applications of Freedden's morphological approach which do not engage with questions of method, and am seeking to ensure that unlike such works the entirety of a party's ideology (rather than simply the core) is mapped (for examples of the kinds of work I seek to move away from see: Atkins, 2011; Kenny, 2007; Laycock, 2006).

Yet, in offering this detailed methodological discussion it is important to note that I make adaptations to Freedden's approach which echo the precise insights I pursue. First, I expand Freedden's focus on concepts to include contextual references and motifs to reflect the different mediums through which parties convey their vision. And, second, I code references to distinguish between those which are directly conflictual, indirectly conflictual, valence (indirectly conflictual and non-conflictual), and non-ideological to explore the way in which parties' ideological message is conveyed. Using these additional frames I attempt to map not only what a party says, but also how it says it, and the ideological significance of those assertions. Such insights are exceedingly useful when seeking to grasp parties' relationship with ideology and the traits which may affect ideological relevance, making them pertinent to the study of party political ideology I pursue.

Looking Beyond Concepts

In the last chapter Freedden was shown to discern ideological position by studying the ways in which individuals or bodies decontest and emphasise essentially contested concepts. Whilst I

accept this basic principle I also seek to recognise the array of different techniques parties use to convey their vision to an audience, techniques which transcend the evocation of concepts. This leads me to direct attention to the other forms of reference by which parties (and indeed other actors) convey their vision, specifically examining contextual references and motifs.

To expand upon the difference between the kinds of reference I study it is useful to outline each category in detail:

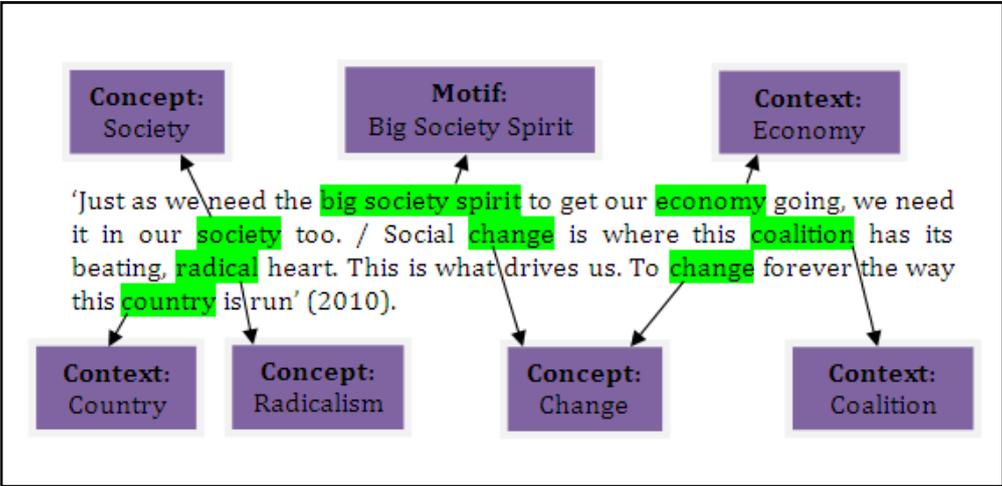
1. **Concepts:** This category follows Freedman's morphological approach to focus on essentially contested concepts such as liberty, fairness and justice. By examining the specific decontested meaning actors attach to these concepts and the emphasis placed upon these references, I examine their role in defining a party's ideological perspectives.
2. **Motifs:** This category refers to terminology used by parties to convey a vision of society which is not directly connected to concepts, but acts as an umbrella term which conveys their vision. Examples include age of achievement, giving age, moral majority or young country, with each term acting as a nodal point around which a number of concepts and contextual references are brought together. For example, age of achievement links together Britain, opportunity, universalism, equality, change and the economy – entwining many of Labour's themes under a heading divorced from previous (potentially negative) associations. In order to qualify as a motif references need to be consistently evoked throughout a speech, hence terms like broken society (voiced by Cameron in his 2008 and 2009 conference speeches) which linked together a number of themes but were used only fleetingly are not seen to lie in this category.
3. **Contextual References:** This category accounts for features of, and agents within, the political system such as the economy, Labour Party, Local Authorities, or the NHS. It also captures references to contemporary events such as an industrial strike or electoral victory. These references are often ideologically indicative as they reveal parties' positions on the issues of the day and schisms with other parties.

Distinguishing between these different forms of reference is a vital part of morphological analysis and in the early stages of investigation researchers should examine the way in which the author(s) presents each reference to detect the most appropriate category. Whilst many references, such as democracy (concept), transport (context), and moral majority (motif) are clearly aligned with one category there are instances in which references can appear under more than one heading. For example, community can be used as a concept and as a contextual reference. Such possibilities lead me to avoid generic coding (seeing, for example, community to

always be conceptual) rather I code each reference in accordance with the way it is evoked in that particular speech. Hence, whilst Tony Blair’s 1994 assertion that: ‘[c]ommunity is not some piece of nostalgia. It means what we share. It means working together. It is about how we treat each other’ (Blair, 1994) produced a conceptual coding, it is possible to envisage this term being used contextually. So, for example, Blair could refer to the importance of local communities in ensuring that crime stays low – a usage which conveys contextual rather than conceptual meaning. If different uses of a term are evoked within the same speech it is necessary to assign just one coding frame. In arbitrating between different references I place prominence on conceptual evocations, arguing that the associations concepts conjure in the public mind and the legacy that such references have when interpreting a speech make this coding most apt. The potential for overlap is only seen to occur between concepts and contextual references because motifs are distinguished from these categories by their prominence within speeches.

The process of distinguishing between these different references is inductive, with researchers forming judgements based on close reading of the text, a process depicted in Figure 8 which contains an extract from Cameron’s 2010 Conference Speech.

Figure 8: Discerning References within Texts



In this passage a number of different ideas are invoked, each of which is coded according to the above principles. Thus radicalism is coded as a concept, reflecting the essentially contested nature of this term, coalition is coded as a contextual reference, echoing the recent developments in British politics, and Big Society spirit is coded as a motif, as it appears repeatedly throughout the speech and links together the ideas of responsibility, community, individuals, and small government. The coding decisions listed here reflect those made of the entire 2010 conference speech, hence whilst the reference to society could be seen here to be

contextual, elsewhere discussions of society as a more abstract, contested notion warrant the conceptual coding recorded here.

The process of reaching these decisions is, as this example hints, time consuming as it requires detailed scrutiny of the hundreds of different references which appear in speeches. This process is nevertheless deemed worthwhile because it allows insight into the way in which a party's message is communicated and how that changes over time; offering tools which, as will be shown in subsequent analysis, can help reveal change and explain why ideology is often viewed as irrelevant. Having clarified this adaptation I now consider the way ideology is conveyed in these references, providing a further set of coding principles through which to examine speeches.

Ideology within Morphology

Unlike Freedon, my morphological investigation is founded upon the idea that parties can project a message which appears non-ideological. This proposition undermines the form of his analysis as rather than assuming all concepts to convey ideological content, I contend that ideology is apparent as conflict based visions for society, making it essential to examine the different ways in which conflict is evident in political speeches. In following this principle I discern two different forms of conflict to be potentially apparent; first, direct conflict where parties define themselves and their perspective against an 'other' to offer a distinct vision of the world, and second, indirect conflict where parties offer a vision of society defined against the current state of affairs. By mapping these different forms of communication I argue that it is possible to examine the ways in which parties convey ideology and hence consider whether politicians' rhetorical choices could be affecting perceptions of ideological relevance.

In operationalising these principles I offer five different coding categories which are applied to monitor ideological communication. These are:

- 1- Ideology conveyed through direct conflict
- 2- Ideology conveyed through indirect conflict
- 3- Ideology conveyed indirectly through valence references
- 4- Valence references
- 5- Non-ideological references

Each of the references discerned through textual analysis is coded under one of these five headings, with different visible coding techniques used to highlight trends on my morphological

diagrams.⁴⁴ Hence category one references are coloured red, category two are underlined, category three are coloured blue and underlined, category four is coloured blue and category five is blank. To enable the replication of this approach I now turn to outline the principles which distinguish these different coding frames from one another.

1- Ideology Conveyed through Direct Conflict - *Signified by red highlighting*

As detailed in my definition of ideology I view conflict to be central to this form of interpretation, with different visions of the world leading actors to attempt to secure power. In recognition of this belief I view statements imbued with conflicting visions to be the central medium through which ideology is conveyed to an audience. In this sense parties appear to be overtly ideological when they are contrasting their position with others and outlining clear visions of society at odds with the status quo. Under this category researchers are therefore looking for instances in which parties make conflictual utterances and hence appear ideological.

To illustrate the form of rhetoric scholars are seeking to detect it is useful to consider an example. Here an extract from David Cameron's 2008 speech is seen to be indicative:

'Gordon Brown's second big mistake was on government borrowing. / After a prudent start, when he stuck for two years to Conservative spending totals, he turned into a spendaholic. / His spending splurge left the government borrowing money in the good times when it should have been saving money'.

In this passage conflict is clearly evident as Cameron uses the concept of borrowing to define the Conservatives' position against Labour's. The emphasis on prudence, and the negative language of splurging and spendaholic associated with Labour, directly contrasts the two parties, providing a point of comparison which centres on the idea of low borrowing. In this passage Cameron therefore articulates the party's ideological position on the economy, directly conveying this through conflict. By discerning instances in which parties communicate their position it is possible to identify parties' willingness to directly express ideology and consider the likelihood that parties are seen to be ideological.

However, it is important to note that when forming such coding judgements the presence of antagonism alone is not enough; analysts are looking for disagreement underpinned by a different vision for society. To give an example of what is not sought it is pertinent to consider Blair's comment in 1996:

⁴⁴ The morphological diagrams are presented in appendix 1 and 2.

‘[a]nd then Nolan - cash for questions, and this morning more revelations. Do you know, the Tories changed the law to let Mr Hamilton put his case? Well, we will change the law to make the Tories clean up their act’ (1996a).

Here conflict between Labour and the Conservatives is apparent, with a clear condemnation of Conservative actions around the cash for questions scandal. However, rather than offering a different vision of society Labour attempt to discredit the opposition and buttress perceptions of their own capacities. Such utterances are not ideological, but, in this instance, evoke the valence notion of trust to indirectly convey an ideological point about Labour’s relative trustworthiness (for more see category 3).

Whilst the evocation of contemporary conflicts is key to parties’ ideological identity, this heading also encapsulates instances in which parties evoke traditional ideological divides by aligning their vision with specific concepts. As recognised in the last chapter (Figure 4) party ideologies are informed by political ideologies which offer different visions of society – visions which are publically recognised. In evoking concepts tied to different political ideologies, and defining their agenda through those concepts parties are therefore seen to be offering a further point of contrast with other parties, For example, in 1994 Blair asserted:

‘[t]hat is what we should be providing - a society of opportunity for all, guaranteed through a strong economy and strong public services’

In this passage a range of different references are used (society, economy, public service) but the reference to opportunity and the implicit reference to universalism stand out because they evoke traditional Labour themes of equality and justice. In this way the party is aligning its policy agenda with particular concepts seen to define social democracy. Such occurrences are not prolific within speeches as parties do not frequently align their programme with concepts, but they are, nevertheless, ideologically informative. Accordingly, when coding speeches it is necessary for researchers to be cognisant of the different political ideologies and traditions which surround the party concerned to discern whether such references are being made.

2- Ideology Conveyed through Indirect Conflict - *Signified by underlining*

In turning to the second category, I noted above that there are instances in which an ideological vision can be conveyed in the absence of direct conflict. This possibility reflects the capacity of parties to communicate a picture of the kind of society they want to see without evoking conflict. Such instances are insightful for this thesis as they indicate that parties can express a vision

without necessarily appearing to be ideological, a trend which can affect perceptions of ideological status. To illustrate this form of reference it is useful to consider an example from 2008 where Cameron asserted:

‘[w]e give our children more and more rights, and we trust our teachers less and less. We’ve got to stop treating children like adults and adults like children’.

In this passage rights are evoked but the reference is not defined in direct conflict with an ‘other’ (e.g. a political party), rather it is used to define the kind of society the Conservatives would like to see, calling for less emphasis on rights and more on responsibility. Such statements offer a clear depiction of the party’s vision and the kind of society they would like to create, but it does not appear ideological in the same way as through directly conflictual references.

Under this heading it is also possible to discern references used by parties which show their intent to exert power (and thus enact a particular ideological vision) but which do not outline the precise form of that change. Such references include reform, modernisation, tradition and continuity as these ideas indicate that the party has ideological objectives in regards to the status quo, but they are not directly ideological as they don’t outline the form or focus of change (and hence the conflict driving that vision). In this sense Blair’s assertion that ‘we can then reform and modernise our welfare state’ (1995a) is seen to be indirectly ideological as it indicates a desire for change (and thus the exertion of power), but the nature of that change (and thus how it conflicts with the status quo) is not overtly apparent.

By coding for these forms of indirect ideological reference it is possible to appreciate the way in which parties’ rhetoric can subvert the apparent relevance of ideology. This draws attention to the fact that an absence of conflict can undermine the apparent pertinence of ideology in public discourse (potentially leading to the kind of ideological characterisation evident in the introduction (see: p1-2)).

Valence References

In offering different coding frameworks which consider the way that parties communicate ideology and attempt to persuade it is informative at this point to introduce the notion of a valence reference. This form of reference can be used to evoke ideology or not - as detailed under the two headings offered below - but it is a specific type of reference which concerns ideas that are either ‘positively or negatively valued by the electorate’ (Stokes, 1963, p.373; see also Green, 2007; Schofield, 2005). By studying valence concepts it is therefore possible to

examine whether parties attempt to align themselves with common sense ideas rather than offering an ideological vision – providing a unique insight into the potential for parties to exhibit ideological quietism. Whilst no concrete list of valence references exists it is nevertheless possible to identify this form of citation by examining the way in which an author(s) tries to evoke positive or negative associations. Whilst different examples are given, valence references often refer to issues such as high crime, economic growth, increasing unemployment or even free money as these are topics which most people would agree to be positive or negative.

In exploring the use of this technique in speeches I distinguish between two forms of reference: valence references conveying ideology indirectly and valence references. Each is explored in turn to detail how this coding judgement is reached.

3- Ideology Conveyed Indirectly through Valence References - Signified by blue highlighting underlined

This first heading refers to instances in which a party evokes a common good or bad and uses this reference to make an indirect ideological point. The principles outlined in the last category are therefore applicable here. It is common to see parties using valence references to define themselves positively in contrast to another party, or to align a set of ideas that they prize to a perceived public good in an attempt to win support. To give an example, in 1996 Blair stated:

[a]sk me my three main priorities for government and I tell you:
education, education and education' (1996a).

This statement could appear fairly innocuous and devoid of ideological content but in citing education Blair is aligning his priority with an area of public policy that is not only seen to be a public good (i.e. positive), but which is also consistently deemed to need improvement. In this regard he aligns himself with a valence issue and attempts to display Labour's agenda as common sense and in touch with the people. This statement can therefore be seen to indirectly convey ideology as it offers a vision for society and implicitly contrasts Labour with the Conservatives.

A further use of valence references is evident later in this speech when Blair goes on to assert: '[e]ducation should not be about wealth' (1996a). Here Blair ties education, evoked as a valence issue, to an ideological objective in the form of equality of access, attempting to align his party's own agenda with common sense attitudes. By so doing he makes an ideological point, but does not appear overtly ideological – an outcome which, I argue, can contribute to perceptions of ideological quietism.

4- Valence References – *Signified by blue highlighting*

Valence concepts can also be evoked which do not convey an ideological message. For example, in 1996 John Major asserted: ‘I know that there can only be a peace in Northern Ireland if all its citizens, Catholic and Protestant alike, feel their traditions have a welcome place in the United Kingdom’. Here the concept of peace is evoked as a common sense good, indicating the virtue of pursuing peace in Northern Ireland, but ideological conflict is not evident and no distinct vision is offered. In this sense the valence reference is evoked discursively rather than ideologically and should not be seen to convey ideology.

Mapping parties’ reliance on such references is informative as it reveals the extent to which they avoid ideology (whether direct or indirect) when addressing a public audience, and hence facilitates analysis of the ideological status of parties’ communications.

5- Non-Ideological References - *Signified as plain text*

In addition to the valence category offered above I also acknowledge the possibility that parties can make references which are not ideological and are also not valence. In Labour’s rhetoric British people, America, allies, drugs, general election, overseas development and research and development are all recorded under this category as they are not used to present the party’s ideology or evoke common attitudes. Analysis of such references is insightful as it indicates the scope of the party’s agenda and the contextual influences which may be relevant at that point in time.

By considering such citations alongside valence references it is possible to examine the degree to which parties engage with non-ideological themes, and analyse - through longitudinal analysis - changing trends in parties’ articulation of ideology.

Coding Issues

As with the last category it is possible for references to appear in different ways throughout the speech, requiring researchers to arbitrate between these different evocations. Given my concern with ideology, I code references to reflect ideological content, privileging this dimension to record the most explicit way in which ideology is conveyed (the order of prominence is communicated in the numbering of these categories). Hence, a reference used to express ideology directly and indirectly would be coded in the former category, whilst a reference used as a valence citation and an indirect valence reference would be coded in the latter. As the appendixes (1 and 2) show, there are instances in which references are coded differently in subsequent years – for example opportunity – and as later analysis will show these changes in

usage can be highly informative in regards to (ideological) change within parties. For this reason I once again favour coding based on the precise context in which the concept is evoked.

What Insights do these Techniques Provide?

In considering the insights available through this additional coding framework it is once again pertinent to return to the idea that parties can appear non-ideological. By applying these five different categories to code texts I argue it is possible to gain an appreciation of the way in which parties communicate ideology and the impact that their rhetorical choices may have on public decoding of parties' ideological status. In seeking to discern the potential reasons for perceptions of ideological irrelevance/negativity such insights are vital as they allow an appreciation of the extent to which parties engage in ideological quietism (a point explored further in chapter 5). Furthermore, by considering the changing usage of these different techniques over time it is possible to examine whether – in the analysis conducted here – periods of party change and/or modernisation were accompanied by a shift in the mode of ideological communication. In this sense this coding framework offers a range of different insights for those seeking to examine the way in which ideology is communicated – points I exhibit in my own subsequent analysis of periods of ideological change.

Having clarified the adaptations I make to Freedden's morphological framework I now turn to discuss the process and principles of analysis, detailing how I produce morphological diagrams from analysis of text.

Data Analysis

In what follows I seek to equip analysts with two tools which reflect my dual concerns of producing an ideologically informative morphology and examining the apparent relevance of ideology vis-à-vis other concerns. These are:

- A technique for determining ideological morphology which can be applied to capture the picture of ideology conveyed through speeches and policy justifications, and
- A framework for discerning whether parties' rhetoric was likely to be seen as ideologically informative at the time.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Some techniques for rhetorical analysis are already apparent. For examples see: Charteris-Black, 2006; Finlayson, 2007.

In offering these tools I examine elite articulations, party policies, alternative motivations, context and consistency to map and analyse parties' ideological positions.

Tool 1: Detecting Ideological Morphology

The process of constructing a morphological diagram (see appendixes 1 and 2) is essentially simple, requiring analysts to identify references and determine their morphological configuration. Whilst I complement these processes with the two coding frameworks outlined in the last section, in what follows I focus on detailing how a morphological diagram is constructed, outlining first, how to identify references, and second, how to calculate the emphasis placed on references.

Identifying References

The process of identifying references is, as indicated above, inductive with researchers discerning explicit and implicit ideas within the text. As such no concrete rules are outlined here but researchers should seek to identify the different forms of contextual, conceptual and motif references discussed earlier. This leads to an examination of factors such as agents within the political system (such as other political parties, communities, individuals, other countries), policy areas or concerns (such as health, education, pensions), and values or ideas (such as opportunity, trust, fairness, universalism).

In extracting references from speeches researchers should draw up a comprehensive list, detailing each separate point and appraising usage throughout the speech (see appendix 3 for an example). This process, whilst time consuming, aids the task of ideological coding detailed in the last section as by noting how references are used and whether they are defined by conflict it is possible to discern their ideological credentials. In addition to identifying agents, policy debates and ideas attention should also be directed to discerning specific policy proposals, a level of analysis which links to Freedden's notion of perimeter concepts (see pp.21-22). Accordingly analysts should compile a separate list of policies and note any specific connections made between them and the aforementioned references; facilitating the construction of morphological diagrams (a process discussed in due course).

Having compiled this list references can be coded in accordance with the principles appended to Freedden's morphological framework. Accordingly, each reference should be distinguished as a concept, motif or contextual reference, and its ideological credentials should be noted - recording the appropriate ideological code (i.e. red, underlined, blue underlined, blue or blank).

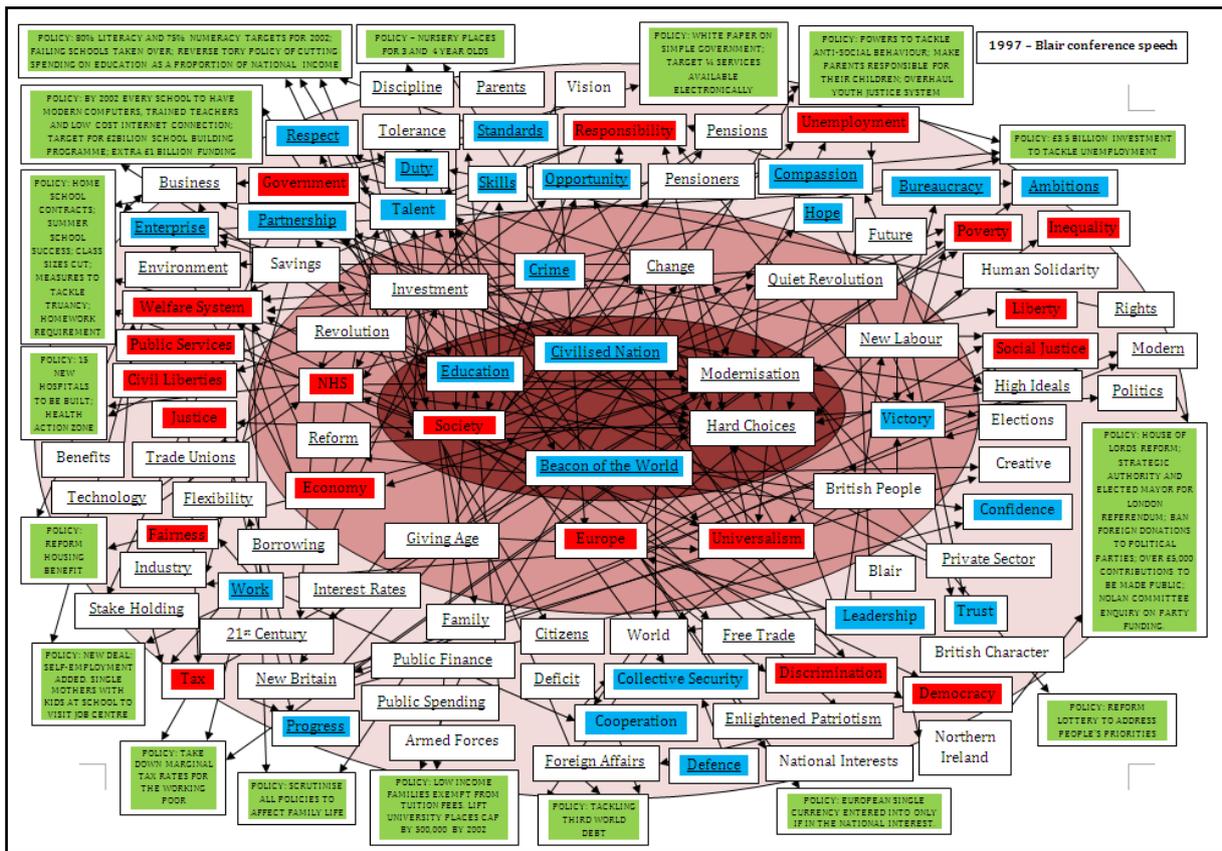
Determining Reference Morphology

Having identified the references made in speeches and the ideological credentials of those references I now return to the essence of morphological analysis by offering the means by which to discern the configuration of those references. Once again it is important to note that Freedden offers no guidance in regards to his own process of inquiry therefore whilst drawing on his principles I present my own two stage analytical process; first, identifying how references are linked - to identify those which act as nodal points holding the projected message together, and second, examining the linguistic techniques used to emphasise certain references. Using these two stages I construct a series of morphological diagrams which can be examined in appendix 1 and 2. To reiterate my earlier point, in presenting these principles I endeavour to outline a framework which can be appended, allowing for further methodological innovation in this tradition. Such adaptations may include analysis of the way in which rhetorical techniques such as *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos* are utilised by speakers, or examine how gestures and performance affect interpretation. In this sense I do not seek to offer an exhaustive framework but rather advance the case for this form of analysis.

Discerning References

The first stage of this process is relatively straight forward, requiring scholars to note the linkages between references and identify those which act as nodal points (i.e. those which are key to the message constructed by the author). In conducting this investigation the analyst is seeking to construct a visual map (such as that evident in Figure 9) of the way in which ideas interrelate. As this is the first glimpse of the kind of output I produce it is insightful to note that four different morphological levels or rings are identified, 1. the core, 2. the outer core, 3. the margin, and 4. the perimeter (policies – coded green); categories which echo Freedden's analysis.

Figure 9: Morphological Connections between References

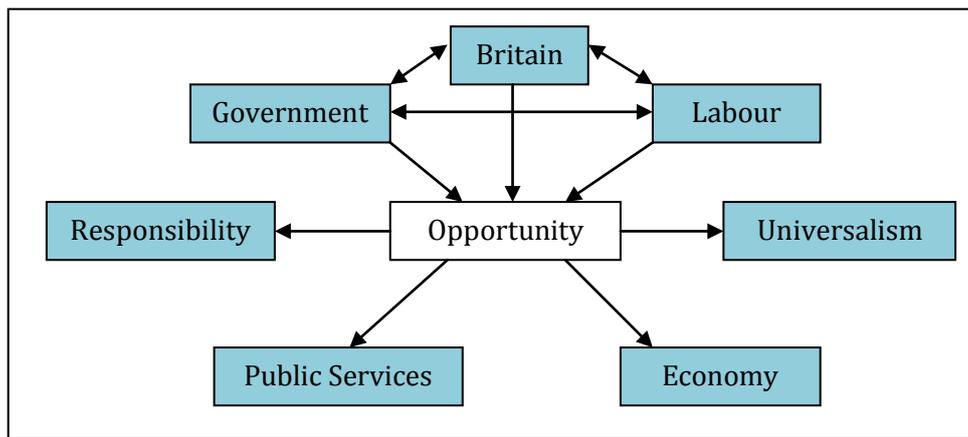


To discern linkages it is necessary to return to the text to identify the context in which references are introduced, noting the connections to other references. To demonstrate this process it is useful to examine a short passage, in this case from Blair's 1994 speech:

'[t]hat is what we should be providing - a society of opportunity for all, guaranteed through a strong economy and strong public services. But with opportunity must come responsibility'.

Here Blair is making a number of linkages: he implicitly cites Government/Britain/Labour through the use of 'we' and links this explicitly to opportunity, a (strong) economy, (strong) public services and responsibility. In this sense Government, Britain and Labour are all connected to opportunity, opportunity is linked to the idea of universality through the reference to 'for all' and is also connected to economy, public services and responsibility. These connections can be depicted thus:

Figure 10: Discerning Reference Linkages



By examining linkages in this way it is possible to identify those references, such as opportunity in this instance, which are central to the party's rhetoric. Across the whole speech analysts are therefore seeking to monitor the number of connections each reference exhibits, marking those which exhibit multiple connections with a (*).⁴⁶ In conducting my own analysis I did not adopt a prescriptive approach as to the number of nodal points which could be identified but around 10-20 per cent of references in each speech were accorded this status.

Having identified the references central to the party's message attention turns to the emphasis placed upon references, seeking to discern those prominent within the speech as a whole.

Determining Emphasis

In considering the emphasis placed on references attention here is directed to the linguistic techniques actors use to convey importance or marginality, focusing specifically on three linguistic techniques used by politicians. These are: triplet references (or three part lists), repetitions, and comparative pairs (also known as antitheses). By monitoring the use of these techniques it is possible to detect those ideas which politicians seek to foreground, offering another dimension by which to determine core or marginal status.

Triplet references are a widely acknowledged rhetorical technique used by speakers and authors alike to draw the audience's attention (Atkinson, 1994). As noted by Adrian Beard 'the three part list is attractive to the speaker and listener because it '...giv[es] a sense of unity and completeness' (2000, p.38). Three part lists are not only communicatively appealing, when constituted of three similar concepts they can also serve to 'strengthen, underline or amplify

⁴⁶ In discerning the number of linkages analysts can either produce a visual map as in Figure 10 or list the other references to which one reference links.

almost any kind of message' (Atkinson, p.60). To illustrate this technique I offer a range of examples:

'[m]arket forces cannot educate us or equip us for this world of rapid technological and economic change. We must do it together. We cannot buy our way to a safe society. We must work for it together. And we cannot purchase an option on whether we grow old. We must plan for it together' (1994).

Here the three repetitions of 'together' convey the centrality of the concept of co-operation to Labour's vision, a point compounded by the different examples of education and social security used to underline this point. To mark the emphasis given to this reference I record a (**) next to co-operation on the list of references produced through the first stage of morphological investigation.

To give another example, in his 2009 conference speech Cameron asserted:

'[t]his is my DNA: family, community, country. These are the things I care about. They are what made me. They are what I'm in public service to protect, promote and defend'.

Here two three part lists are used to draw attention to his beliefs, first portraying family, community and country as intrinsic concerns, and second underlining these commitments with a further three part list that demonstrates his desire not merely to protect but to actively promote these values. By using these techniques the initial three concerns are given greater prominence, revealing their centrality to Cameron's vision and thus their relative importance; a point coded once again with a (**) marker.

In addition to tripartite references repetition more generally is also used by politicians to draw emphasis. Hence in 2003 Ian Duncan Smith asserted:

'[g]overnment - always there when you don't need it. With its extra taxes and bureaucracy. Never there when you do. Never there in the fight against crime. Never there to give you and your family the schools and hospitals that you have paid for.'

In this speech the theme 'government - always there when you don't need it, never there when you do' is repeated. This is underlined in this passage through the repetition of 'never there', a technique which draws attention to the themes of crime, education and health in order to underline the party's own commitment to these areas. In this sense repetition serves to

emphasise certain ideas at the expense of others, offering an indication of morphological structure.

In addition to these two techniques comparative pairs are also informative (Beard, 2000, p.39). As the name reveals, comparative pairs are focused on utterances in which a contrast is drawn using semantic pairs, i.e. literal or metaphorical contrasts. To offer a famous example 'tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime' (Blair, 1994) offers a comparative pair based on the semantic injection of 'the causes of'. In this example Labour's commitment to fighting crime is emphasised as they compare their commitment to intervention and a tough on crime strategy with Conservative rhetoric.

Comparative pairs are also frequently used to emphasise a party's position by drawing a contrast with an 'other' or posing a counterfactual which underlines the virtue of their own position. This latter use is apparent in 1997 when Blair argued:

[w]e want a people's Europe: free trade, industrial strength, high levels of employment and social justice, democratic. Against that vision is the bureaucrat's Europe: the Europe of thwarting open trade, unnecessary rules and regulations, the Europe of the C.A.P. and the endless committees leading nowhere. But we cannot shape Europe unless we matter in Europe.'

Here Blair underlines the party's commitment to Europe, using a comparative pair to distinguish Labour from the Conservative critique of Europe as bureaucratic and unrepresentative. By directly engaging with criticisms he underlines Labour's determination to work with rather than against Europe, showing that even in the face of dissent Labour will pursue this policy.

Whilst other techniques for discerning emphasis could be deployed, these mechanisms underpin the form of analysis pursued here. When entwined with the former study of reference connections I use these findings to map those ideas which appear rhetorically prominent onto a morphological diagram. This is done by returning to the central list of references and noting which have been recorded as connectively important (symbolised by (*)) and which have been emphasised through linguistic techniques (indicated by (**)). References recorded as central on both the counts established here (i.e. coded with a (*/**)) are noted as core, those noted as significant in only one of these categories (i.e. either (*) or (**)) appear at the outer core, and those not listed under either of these headings exist at the margin. Finally, the policy proposals listed separately in earlier analysis appear at the very perimeter of the diagram (coded green).

Tool 2: Discerning Ideological Relevance

The morphological diagrams produced above can offer a range of insight into parties' relationship with ideology as voiced through communication. However, in order to understand the likelihood that an audience will see these speeches to be ideologically informed it is necessary to append this methodological process. Whilst the principles outlined thus far have offered some tools for considering ideological relevance, specifically directing analysts to contemplate whether the rhetoric used by politicians can contribute to perceptions of irrelevance, alone this analytical focus cannot explain why parties come to be seen to be acting in accordance with non-ideological rationale. Accordingly in what follows I consider how the decoding process by which audiences interpret a speech can result in judgements of irrelevance.

In considering this area I return attention to the role that context and alternative motivations (the other drivers affecting parties' strategic thinking) have on the interpretation of actors' intentions, seeking to discern the non-ideological factors which could be seen to drive party behaviour. I also additionally contemplate the impact that encoders can have on interpretation, discussing the importance of politicians making ideologically consistent and coherent pronouncements if their utterances are to appear ideologically reliable. These two factors are examined here in turn in accordance with the logic that whilst parties can exhibit a range of different motivations, when ideology is inconsistently advanced and incoherently formulated that its reliability as a guide to party behaviour is called into doubt. This principle is applied in my own subsequent analysis to explore the likely public reaction to Labour and Conservative Party claims to have ideologically changed, but this analytical frame can be applied to other cases, leading me to outline the investigatory process here.

Context and Alternative Motivations

In tracing context and alternative motivations analysts are looking for clues of those factors other than ideology which may have dictated party behaviour. This process requires a wide ranging analysis, considering media outputs and party/government documents contemporary with the original text, but primarily it is informative to turn to the text in question.⁴⁷ To illustrate this process I first consider context before discussing alternative motivations.

In detailing the process by which contextual pressures can be discerned it is informative to examine an extract from Michael Foot's 1982 conference speech where he asserted:

⁴⁷ Each speech is examined separately but if considering a run of consecutive speeches it can be fruitful to consider trends evident in previous years.

[s]ince 1979 Britain has lost 9 per cent of its jobs. Only Spain comes anywhere near, with 6 per cent. All other industrial countries, except Germany and France, have had increases in jobs over that period, and the loss of those two countries has been less than 1 per cent. This trend has continued unabated in the latest figures: in the last year for which such estimates are available, Britain continued to lose 3 per cent of its jobs; Spain 2 per cent; Germany and Canada 1 ½ per cent; Italy, France and Sweden 1 per cent; and the United States and Norway 0.5 per cent’.

In this passage a number of contextual pressures are apparent, specifically, the global context and unemployment in Britain. Such contextual references are evident throughout speeches and should be noted because they reveal alternative pressures (of which the public are aware) that may dictate party behaviour. Accordingly in this example it is possible to conclude that Labour’s policy prescriptions may be being influenced by international and economic pressures rather than ideology – a judgement which would affect the perceived relevance of this latter concern. In trying to identify contextual pressures it is also informative to examine other contemporary sources such as newspaper articles or historical accounts of the period. By so doing it is possible to identify other factors which could also be seen to affect party behaviour such as, in the context of Foot’s 1982 speech, the invasion of the Falkland Islands, and the success of the SDP-Liberal alliance.

In tracing such contextual events and pressures analysts are seeking to identify whether alternative contextual motivations for party behaviour were apparent, and thus whether a non-ideological explanation for party behaviour could be discerned. However, this form of analysis can also prove fruitful in ensuring the correct interpretation of references within speeches (as discussed in chapter five).

In regards to alternative motivations much the same process and goals are in evidence as scholars are seeking to determine whether other motivations, be they lobbying or party discontent, could be seen to drive party behaviour. Once again the original text offers a useful point of departure as, for example, in 1995 Blair stated: ‘1983 for me was a watershed. New Labour was born then of the courage of one man’ (1995a). This comment draws attention to the electoral defeat of 1983 and the party’s subsequent attempt to renew itself, indicating the presence of electoral motivations for the party to change. Claims identified in texts can be further explored through other documents to examine their significance, thus an analysis of election results and opinion poll data in this instance reveal significant pressure to change as Labour was facing the possibility of a fifth successive election defeat at the 1997 election.

By gaining an appreciation of the alternative motivations and contextual pressures which surround a text it is possible to grasp the range of factors which may have affected audience interpretation, and discern whether there were grounds for parties to be seen as acting non-ideologically. Whilst insightful, I argue that in order to judge whether ideology was likely to be seen as a secondary concern it is necessary to consider the consistency with which parties outlined and enacted their ideological vision.

Consistency

In examining consistency researchers are seeking to determine whether parties' appeared publically committed to their ideological visions as if not consistently advanced other variables could come to appear predominant. In view of this possibility I direct attention to consistency in the policies advanced by parties and the justification offered for those policies. This investigation could be appended with an examination of consistency in the ideas voiced by other contemporary speakers and different contexts, however due to constraints of space these dimensions are not pursued here.

In examining the policies advanced I consider parties' stated goals, studying whether the ideas outlined in one speech are consistently advanced across party utterances. Whilst some policies will change in line with context and/or a change in party leadership, if a party consistently alters its policy agenda it can appear either capricious – and thus not fully committed to its stated principles – or irresolute in the face of challenges to those principles (such as contextual pressures or lobbying). In this thesis I examine specific policy areas – a process detailed in chapter five and seven - but in a broader study attention should be directed to consistency across the whole policy spectrum.

As well as seeking to discern consistency in policy proposals it is also vital to examine the precise rationale given for a policy objective, applying the same logic as above. Hence, if parties display a range of different arguments for their proposals or offer an incoherent or contradictory account to the same audience,⁴⁸ their commitment to that stated ideology is cast into doubt, suggesting the dominance of other motivations. This leads me to compare the policy proposals and justifications offered in conference speeches with parties' general election

⁴⁸ Audience is significant because actors can use different persuasive techniques to 'sell' a proposal. For example; in New Labour's discourse it is possible to see equality justified in terms of fairness to a group of party members but explained in terms of efficiency to a group of business people.

manifestos, seeking to discern continuities or discrepancies in order to pass judgement on consistency (a process again apparent in chapters 5 and 7).⁴⁹

By combining these two stages of analysis I argue that it is possible to discern how an audience are likely to interpret party utterances and thus how the party's own rhetorical communications and policy programme can contribute to perceptions of ideological relevance. For example, if a party is inconsistent when presenting their ideological vision then other factors, such as electoral motivations, can be assumed to have been seen to have greater explanatory power for those seeking to understand party behaviour. In this way this extra dimension of analysis can help discern the likely public reaction to party rhetoric and hence offer some guidance as to how politicians can present ideological change convincingly. Accordingly, whilst unconventional, this additional analytical prism offers an interesting supplement for those seeking to study parties' relationship with ideology.

Summary

In appraising this mode of morphological analysis I have attempted to demystify my own process of inquiry and offer researchers a range of new analytical tools. In operationalising party political ideology I have provided the means by which to map a party's ideological position at any one point in time through rhetoric, engage in longitudinal or contemporary comparison, examine how ideology is communicated by parties, and consider whether parties are likely to be seen to be behaving ideologically. These capacities are vital to the form of analysis I pursue but they can also be adapted to study different questions, or appended to incorporate alternative analytical techniques or concerns. Accordingly whilst I offer a novel framework by which to study party political ideology I also allow room for the further refinement and development of this approach.

Applying Party Political Ideology

Up until this point party political ideology has appeared as an abstract theoretical and methodological construct, but here I operationalise this framework for empirical analysis, attempting to illustrate the breadth of its purchase and the mode of its application. To do so I focus upon periods of party modernisation, using these moments of change to demonstrate how party political ideology can help discern ideology and map ideological change (or lack thereof). In studying modernisation I focus on two widely recognised and studied periods of party

⁴⁹ Manifestos are interesting documents to examine because, as Freedman argues, they 'supply a list of the core values their authors believe should direct and constrain national policy and – on a more subliminal level – they unwittingly disclose some of the values their authors carry with them' (2008, p.3).

change. The first covers 1982-1997, explicitly focusing on the advent of New Labour between 1994 and 1997, whilst the second examines 1996-2010 and the changes made under David Cameron's leadership between 2005 and 2010.

These case studies are seen to offer the ideal medium through which to demonstrate the capacities of my party political ideology approach as it is possible to not only map parties' ideological positions, but also to examine whether and how parties changed in these periods. For these purposes the morphological diagrams produced offer a range of unique insights; casting light on the new ideas introduced into parties' rhetoric, the emphasis placed on references, and the overlaps between different ideological traditions both within and beyond the party. When applied longitudinally this method can also help to discern when change began and whether a new ideology was pre-formulated and implemented at a specific point in time or whether it developed organically; offering novel observations on the process by which parties change.

Periods of modernisation are also highly informative when seeking to examine ideological relevance because at these moments parties are attempting to redefine their image. This makes it interesting to examine not only whether ideological change occurred, but also whether ideology was seen to be a reliable guide to party behaviour (as opposed to, say, electoral concerns). In this way this focus allows an examination of the importance of party presentation and communication in these periods, indicating the need for decisive leadership and a clear vision for change (be it ideological or otherwise).

In exploring these questions these two specific cases are seen to be ideal because they have given rise to a wealth of existing literature which explores ideological and party change in these periods. Far from presenting a disincentive to study this area the mass of work on ideational change in the Labour and Conservative parties provides a benchmark against which to exhibit the capacities of my approach. In this sense these cases not only allow me to demonstrate my party political ideology approach, but they also enable me to compare my findings with the existing literature to illustrate the theoretical, methodological and analytical novelty of my approach.

For these reasons a study of these specific periods of modernisation is seen to be exceedingly apt. However, as noted in the introduction, the process of modernisation itself throws up a range of questions regarding the manner in which parties change and the relationship between party change and ideological change. Rather than ignoring these questions in the analysis which follows I use my examination of ideology and ideological change to also explore modernisation. In so doing I attempt to show that whilst these processes are entwined, they are not

synonymous, and should be studied separately. Accordingly I offer a framework by which to examine modernisation based on the principle that to successfully modernise parties must be seen to exhibit a clear and coherent rationale for change and gain widespread agreement for a programme inspired by that vision.

Although a secondary research strand this analysis is seen to be vital because of the ambiguity in the existing literature over the meaning and application of the term modernisation. Whilst widely applied (Faucher-King & Le Galès, 2010, p.4; see also Marquand, 1999a, p.12; 1999b) modernisation is used in a variety of different - not always commensurate - ways, reflecting the work of sociologists (Black, 1966), development theorists (Inglehart, 1997; Huntington, 1996; Prezworski & Limongi, 1997), and psephologists (Heath, Martin & Elgenius, 2007). Such usages are often implicit, clouding analysts' ability to discern different applications of the term, yet even when directly defined accounts often remain ambiguous. To give some examples, Peter Osborne depicted modernisation as 'a set of techniques for securing and then keeping power' (2011; see also Quinn, 2008), whilst Peter Kerr *et al* asserted that it is 'a synonym for 'progress' but which commits politicians to no specific policies in government, and which is ideologically 'neutral'" (Kerr, Byrne & Foster, 2011, p.194). Rather than focusing solely on ideology in the analysis which follows I use my study of ideological change to also offer a tentative evaluation of these parties' modernisation processes.

In so doing I do not engage in the form of extensive, applied analysis undertaken in regards to ideology, but rather examine party rhetoric and context to consider whether parties are/were attempting to modernise, and if so, whether their attempts are/were likely to succeed or fail. This analysis, whilst not offering an exhaustive evaluation of parties' modernisation processes, is seen to be informative because it offers a point of contrast against which to examine ideological change. In this sense it is possible to consider whether successful modernisation projects and ideological change always occur simultaneously? and whether modernisation can occur without ideological change? These questions are often implicit within existing discussions of party change (Dorey, Garnett & Denham, 2011) but they can prove highly insightful when seeking to understand the implications of ideological adaptation. For these reasons in the remainder of this chapter I offer my own conception of modernisation and a framework by which to examine parties' modernisation credentials.

What is Party Modernisation?

In offering my own conceptualisation of modernisation I reflect Mike Kenny and Martin Smith's assertion that modernisation is an attempt 'to bring the political world in line with changes

conceived to have occurred in other domains, principally society, economics and culture' (Kenny & Smith, 2001, p.238). In this sense:

'[t]o be modern is to be aware that one lives in the now, at the present end of an historical process of some sort, unable to live according to the rules of the past, forced to form new ones all the time. In this sense, to modernise means to adapt, to adjust to new, changed, or changing conditions' (Finlayson, 2003, p.69).

In line with these accounts I see modernisation to be a reaction to external conditions whereby the traditions and/or practices of the time are reappraised and renegotiated by an object or body – a renegotiation which induces change. The key point here is that actors themselves identify contemporary or historical factors which require them to change, prompting a conscious (and often wide-ranging) shift in position. Motivations for change can include either long-term shifts or sudden crises in the electoral landscape, public opinion, ideational changes, global influences or internal party pressures to name but a few. Hence, to give an example, a global financial crisis could motivate a party to modernise by prompting them to reappraise their policy agenda, economic approach and organisational capacity to respond to the new conditions. Similarly, incremental changes in public opinion could be recognised by a new party leader, causing them to modernise in order to align the party's outlook, agenda and composition to the 'modern' context. Such changes can be observed, as Hay argues, in the 'policy goals; policy means; policy outcomes; political style; the presentation of policy to the electorate; and even the range of policies excluded from the political agenda that characterise the form government takes' (1996, p.45), categories which can be appended by organisational change and shifts in communications.

Accordingly modernisation can involve ideational, organisational, or policy change (or any combination of these) so long as an external impetus is present. This means that when articulating a modernisation narrative it is necessary for parties to identify a clear 'other' against which they are reacting as this offers a clear motivation for change. In responding to these diagnoses parties can behave in a range of different ways, making it difficult to establish universal principles by which to study modernisation. However, in pursuing my own investigation I assert the need for a clear vision of the direction of change as it is through these means that parties shape expectations amongst party members/supporters for the kind of adaptations to come.⁵⁰ As membership organisations composed of individuals with different

⁵⁰ As has been noted by a number of scholars expectation management is crucial to subsequent perceptions of success/failure to achieve stated ends. For more see: Flinders & Dommett, forthcoming.

ideological and procedural visions consent (or tolerance) is vital if parties are to succeed in changing. Accordingly party leaders' (and other elite's) capacity to tailor expectations and secure consent is seen to be vital to the success of a modernisation project. This contention leads me to examine modernisers' rationale for change, seeking to discern whether a clearly stated, widely accepted and consistently applied rationale for change was offered, and thus whether barriers to success were likely to be overcome.

To structure this analysis I offer three categories of modernisation rationale which are used in the analysis which follows as templates against which to assess parties' attempts to diagnose and justify the need for change. These are: progressive modernisation, responsive modernisation and perpetual modernisation, each of which is outlined in turn:

- 1. Progressive Modernisation:** The first form of modernisation rationale diagnoses the need for party change as a response to external conditions seen to shape the future political environment. In this sense a party is offering its own vision of modern conditions, seeking to predict how global changes are likely to affect society and respond to those possible futures. Accordingly parties exhibiting this rationale are likely to cite factors such as globalisation, and changing social trends, arguing, for example, that developments in the global economy require a different form of educational policy. As the forthcoming analysis goes onto demonstrate this label is applicable to changes in the Labour Party between 1994 and 1997.⁵¹
- 2. Responsive Modernisation:** The second form of modernisation rationale prescribes the need for change as an accommodation to shifts already apparent in the political environment. Attention here is focused on responding to modern conditions, whether it be crises which upset the pre-existing order, shifts in attitudes, or changes made by other parties. In this sense parties voicing responsive modernisation are not seeking to offer a vision of modern conditions and respond to that vision, rather they are attempting to react to existing circumstances which the party is seen to be out of kilter with. In this sense a responsive modernisation rationale is likely to cite the need to accommodate to public attitudes or respond to the dominance of another party. The Conservatives between 2005 and 2010 are seen to have articulated this rationale though – as will be discussed – are not ultimately seen to undergo this form of modernisation.

⁵¹ Whilst scholars may contest my assertion that New Labour displayed progressive rather than responsive modernisation I do not seek to bar other interpretations but simply examine the party's own narrative to discern the publically apparent rationale for change.

- 3. Perpetual Modernisation:** The third form of modernisation rationale argues that parties should constantly adapt to align themselves with modern attitudes and thus retain their appeal/pertinence. Here modernisation becomes a perpetual feature of party behaviour, motivated by a desire to continually adapt to new and changing conditions. This form of modernisation can result from a desire to maximise electoral support by emulating public opinion or if parties wish to retain the 'modernising' label (and the positive associations connected to it). Although less frequently apparent parties in office can attempt to pursue this form of modernisation, though often with varying degrees of success.

By examining the rationale for change offered by political parties I attempt to discern whether a clear vision was offered and whether that rationale was widely accepted; using this information to form a tentative judgement as to the likely success of Labour and Conservative modernisation in the periods examined. Furthermore, in the conclusion to this thesis I examine the linkages between modernisation and ideology to discuss their interaction and discern the potential for future theoretical development in this area. Accordingly by studying periods of supposed modernisation I not only seek to exhibit the varied capacities of my party political ideology approach, but also use this analysis to explore other avenues of investigation opened by this focus.

Conclusion

This chapter has laid the foundations for my forthcoming analysis, providing the methodological means by which my party political ideology approach can be applied. As such it has not only refined and justified the form and focus of analysis, but has also offered a comprehensive overview of my process of morphological investigation. In this regard it has sought to address the question 'how can ideology be studied?', offering an overview of the techniques behind and focus of my own analysis. In surveying this chapter it is clear that whilst informed by Freedén's approach, my morphological analysis differs from his in a number of ways.

First, I have sought to tailor Freedén's method to the specificities of political parties, recognising the different ways in which ideology is communicated to the public, and acknowledging that rhetorical choices can affect the interpretation of a party's message. By integrating these concerns I have aligned morphological investigation with my own focus of inquiry, allowing detailed analysis of the ways in which ideology is projected to, and decoded by, a party's audience.

Second, unlike many previous applications of morphological theory I have gone to great lengths in this chapter to clarify the methodological processes used to produce morphological outputs; detailing the stages of textual analysis and outlining my rationale. This transparency not only enables the replication and scrutiny of my approach, but also allows for future adaptation and refinement. This is vital because in presenting my party political ideology approach I do not profess to offer a definitive model for ideological inquiry, rather I seek to open the door to further investigation based on the rhetorical and morphological analysis of ideology.

Nevertheless, through this process of methodological adaptation I have endeavoured to provide analysts with the means by which to determine:

- a) Whether a party projects an ideological vision,
- b) What form that vision takes, and
- c) Whether that vision is likely to be seen to be motivated by ideology as opposed to other factors.

As such it is possible to probe parties' relationship with ideology and, in accordance with the aims of this thesis, demonstrate the pertinence of ideological inquiry. Moreover, the tools offered in this chapter allow analysts to consider a range of other questions as through longitudinal analysis it is possible to study changes in party position over time and overlaps between different parties' morphologies. In this regard the methodological principles outlined in this chapter open up a range of different investigatory avenues for those interested in studying the interaction between political parties and ideology.

In the chapters which follow these capacities are applied to examine periods of supposed modernisation, exploring party ideology and ideological change in these timeframes. These moments are ideal as they allow me to demonstrate the outputs produced through morphological analysis and explore the multiple competencies of a party political ideology approach. Accordingly in what follows I consider whether a party exhibits an ideology, what form it takes, how that form has changed over time, and how indicative that change is seen to be as a guide to future party behaviour. I further complement these insights with analysis of the extent of ideological continuity or change and consider the potential influences upon the party's changed ideological position. In so doing it is possible to gain a multifaceted picture of parties' relationship with ideology in these periods.

In conducting this analysis attention is also directed to modernisation, considering the rhetoric and context which surrounds parties' attempts to change in order to differentiate between these

two different processes. By so doing it becomes possible to explore ideology's contribution to broader processes of party change, assess the linkages between these concerns, and highlight the challenges to ideational and organisational change which parties face. In this regard this dual focus contextualises ideological analysis, illustrating the wider explanatory capacities of a party political ideology approach.

Accordingly the analysis conducted in the next four chapters provides theoretical and methodological clarity as to the processes underpinning my party political ideology approach, and a range of analytical contributions to debates over modernisation and ideological change in the Labour and Conservative Parties. In the next chapter I turn to discuss the Labour case in greater detail, exploring the existing literature to examine the party's relationship with ideology, ideological change and modernisation; insights which guide my own subsequent application of the party political ideology method.

Chapter 4: Modernisation, Ideology and the Labour Party

The process of what is called 'modernisation' is in reality...the application of enduring, lasting principles for a new generation – creating not just a modern party and organisation, but a programme for a modern society, economy and constitution. It is not destroying the Left's essential ideology: on the contrary, it is retrieving it from an intellectual and political muddle' (Blair, 1996a, pp.221-222).

Introduction

Prior to 1997 the Labour Party had failed to win an election for over twenty years and twenty five years had passed since they had achieved forty per cent of the General Election popular vote (Taylor, 1997). The party faced what has been described as an electoral, organisational and ideological crisis which hampered its popular appeal and seemingly relegated it to the political wilderness (Heath, Jowell & Curtice, 2001; Heffernan & Marquesse, 1992; Taylor, 1997, p.2; Whiteley, 1983).⁵² This led to what is widely recognised to have been a period of 'renewal' and 'modernisation' (Cooke, 2011; Finlayson, 1998; 2003; 2009; Hay, 1997b; Smith, 1994; Wickham-Jones, 1995) in which the party's policy agenda, internal workings and public persona were altered. Many scholars have written on change in the Labour Party and there is a remarkable uniformity around the idea that Neil Kinnock began a process of policy review and organisational reform which, continued by John Smith and Blair, saw the party renew itself and its message.⁵³ As part of this process the party is seen to have faced up to the 'harsh electoral reality' (Heath, Jowell & Curtice, 2001, p.101) that in order to win it needed to 'relate to and draw support from the modern working classes whose upward social mobility, increased expectations and extended horizons are largely the result of opportunities afforded them by our movement in the past' (Kinnock, 1985, p.2 quoted in Jones, 1996, p.116). In this sense Labour is seen to have modernised through a gradual process of change which saw many traditional ideas and aims sacrificed to develop a new, more publicly appealing message.

In the course of this chapter and the next I seek to explore this perception of change, offering my own analysis centred upon three claims:

1. The Labour Party modernised in this period and projected a progressive rationale for that modernisation,

⁵² This crisis had somewhat lessened by 1992 when, following Black Wednesday, the Conservatives' electoral fortunes were severely damaged and Labour's popularity noticeably increased.

⁵³ There is some contestation around the date change originated (Brivati & Bale, 1997) but most accounts point to 1983.

2. The Labour Party's ideological position did change but this was accompanied by a move towards ideological quietism, and
3. That the Labour Party's ideological position post-1994 can (most pertinently) be viewed as ideologically innovative rather than as aligned to a pre-existing ideological tradition or as non-ideological.

These positions do not radically depart from the existing literature but, through my analysis, I seek to augment existing understanding by demonstrating the presence and significance of a clear rationale for modernisation, and outlining the rhetorical and substantive policy shifts indicative of ideological change. These insights are obtained through the unique form of my party political ideology approach. Accordingly this case study (and the next) showcases the capacities of my method as I produce my own depiction of ideological change and discussion of modernisation.

I concentrate my analysis on the period 1994-1997, examining Blair's leadership and the advent of New Labour in this period.⁵⁴ However, in order to avoid Eric Shaw's critique that 'too many students of the contemporary party investigate short periods of time, and on that slim basis make dubious claims about long-term trends' (Shaw 2001, p.172), this focus is contextualised through analysis of texts from 1982, 1983, 1986 and 1991 – taking in speeches from Foot and Kinnock. This enables historical evaluation of New Labour's ideological message, allowing long term trends to be contemplated and thus a more nuanced account of ideological change to emerge. Within this chapter I focus on the existing literature, a form of analysis adopted for two reasons. First, it enables an appreciation of prevalent ideas on this topic; contextualising my own interjections into this area and thus grounding my analysis, and second it allows me to demonstrate why I advance a party political ideology approach. By illustrating the lack of a consistent approach to ideological study in the existing literature I highlight the difficulties of arbitrating between analyses based on very different definitions and methods. In this sense the existing literature shows why I have sought to detail my own theoretical and methodological principles at length, as it is only by appreciating such differences that it is possible to judge different approaches. Accordingly this chapter is used to discuss many of the ideas and analytical principles apparent in the existing literature which are explored further in the next chapter.

In line with the above, the chapter is structured as follows: First, I outline prevalent depictions of ideology tracing the narratives of ideological change and exploring party rhetoric to discern

⁵⁴ Other scholars have examined modernisation between 1992 and 1997 (Hay, 1998), but I examine 1994-1997 to foreground ideational change. Before this period I see modernisation to be focused on organisational change, making this period most insightful for the form of ideological analysis I pursue. By focusing on the rhetoric of one party leader continuity of analysis is also achieved.

evidence of change. Second, I turn to discuss modernisation, tracing existing characterisations and conducting my own analysis to argue that New Labour projected a progressive rationale for change and did, indeed, modernise. Finally, I return to ideology to examine existing narratives of ideological change, cataloguing four broad explanations. This form of categorisation is by no means novel, but by explicitly focusing upon ideology (unlike many prior attempts) I draw attention to the variety of different ways in which the party's ideology and change therein has been addressed and described. Accordingly I survey the nature of Labour's modernisation and the academic commentary on this change, allowing me to apply my party political ideology approach in the next chapter. Hence this chapter facilitates my own subsequent analysis of ideological change, ideological relevance and different existing modes of ideological characterisation. Through these two chapters I therefore strive to demonstrate the value of a party political ideology approach vis-à-vis the existing literature.

Ideology and the Labour Party

The Labour Party's ideology has been studied vociferously since its formation and a range of texts have sought to characterise its socialist, social democratic, collectivist, communitarian and egalitarian traditions (Foote, 1986; Shaw, 1988; Worley, 2009). Internally the party is ideologically eclectic with a range of different factions exhibiting debates 'between the centrists, whether Fabian or quasi-Leninists advocates of a party-led state. Or the decentralists, the pluralists, the municipal and local government tradition – or, more idealistically speaking, the small group of cooperative, community tradition' (Crick, 1997, p.356; see also Drucker, 1979, pp.44-45). In characterising recent changes within the party's ideology a range of different explanations have been offered including discussions of a move towards neo-liberalism (Heffernan, 2001), social liberalism (Buckler & Dolowitz, 2000a; 2000b) and democratic socialism (Callaghan, 2000; Gamble & Wright, 1999; Glyn & Wood, 2001). However, common to this literature is the idea that under Blair's leadership (and indeed before) the party altered its ideological position as part of a broader modernisation project. In reaction to this belief works have emerged detailing the nature of the Third Way (Driver & Martell, 2000; Finlayson, 1999; White, 2001b; Wissenber, 2001), its international heritage (Cliff, 2001), its ideological framing (Dryberg, 2009), and its policy implications (Ludlam & Smith, 2001). Yet, relatively little direct attention has been paid to the rhetorical indicators of change and the way in which the party conveyed a shift in position (for exceptions see Finlayson, 1998; 2003). This leads me to explore the way in which the impression of change was conveyed and to assert that, whilst a clear shift

was outlined, the place of ideology within that process is far from clear cut – raising questions about the ideological significance of this move.⁵⁵

In discerning ideological change within the Labour Party it is easy to perceive a clear narrative emanating from those at the top of the party. This is typified by the notion of New Labour, a rebranding which symbolised a wide ranging shift in ideological outlook and policy position. As Dennis Kavanagh depicts, this transition involved dramatic policy change as:

[o]ld Labour favoured high and progressive taxation, high levels of public spending, Keynesian methods of achieving full employment, granted the trade unions both a dominant position in the party and partnership in economic policy and relied on government action over market forces. New Labour, however, accepted the case for low marginal rates of income tax, low inflation and levels of public spending and borrowing which would reassure financial markets and business' (Kavanagh, 1997, p.537; see also Coates, 2001).

This process of re-appraisal was presented by party elites as a story whereby '[i]n the late 1970s and early 1980s... both ideology and organisation became out of date. What Neil Kinnock, John Smith and I have sought to do is to cure these weaknesses and so transform the left-of-centre in British Politics' (Blair, 1996, p.5). This process was undertaken through the revision of Clause IV where the party 'clearly said that we are in politics to pursue certain values, not to implement an economic dogma' (Blair, 1996, p.16), creating an ideological position which 'is genuinely new, different from both the Old Labour prescriptions of the 1970s and the New Conservative dogmas of the 1980s and 1990s. It is a new approach for a new world' (Wright, 1997, p.18).

This story was repeated again and again, not only reinforcing awareness of change but creating the impression of an unsurpassable need to rethink orthodoxies. In this sense change was portrayed as inevitable and irreversible, with the party translating its traditional values 'to apply those values to the modern world' (Blair, 1994). This led to a new agenda which attempted to combine:

'...a free market economy with social justice; liberty of the individual with wider opportunities for all; One Nation security with efficiency and competitiveness; rights with responsibilities; personal self-fulfilment with strengthening the family; effective government and decisive

⁵⁵ In questioning the ideological significance of change I am raising a proposition not often directly considered within the existing literature, where ideological movement is often seen to be an intrinsic feature of New Labour's modernisation.

political leadership with a new constitutional settlement and a new relationship of trust between politicians and the people; a love of Britain with a recognition that Britain's future has to lie in Europe' (Mandelson & Liddle, 1996, p.17).

In voicing this perspective Blair and other New Labour figures drew on the ideas of Anthony Giddens and Third Way theorists who asserted the need to 'transcend both old-style social democracy and neo-liberalism' (Giddens, 1998, p.26; for more see Giddens, 2000; White & Giamio, 2001, p.213). This indicated a radical departure from previous ideas but it was a departure which appeared credible because of support for change within the party (though there were some voices of dissent: see, for example, Barratt Brown & Coates, 1996).⁵⁶ The presence of a supportive community of intellectuals also added credibility to New Labour's changes as it helped to develop many of their ideas and indicated that the party had embarked upon a coherent and lasting project for change. These factors give the impression that a determined attempt was made by a united party to advance a new, coherent and developed ideological agenda; a judgement which has been widely reached within existing work on this topic.

Whilst this depiction of New Labour's ideology is broadly accepted it overlooks evidence within the party's own rhetoric, not of ideological change but rather the rejection of ideology. In what follows I argue that attention should be directed to the party's rhetoric to grasp the range of factors likely to affect perceptions of ideological change.

Within the Labour Party's rhetoric Blair, and other prominent modernisers (i.e. politicians and public intellectuals), repeatedly eschew the language of ideology. To illustrate, in 1996 Blair wrote: '[t]his country needs new energy, ideas and vision – a government free of dogma, not hidebound by ideology but driven by ideas' (1996b, p.56; 48; 159). Elsewhere it is common to see ideology characterised as 'outdated' (ibid., p.5), 'old' (ibid., p.x), 'abstract moralism' (ibid., p.18), 'all embracing theories of politics – religious in nature' (ibid., p.55) and 'grand ideologies – all encompassing, all pervasive, total in their solutions and often dangerous' (ibid., p.213). Indeed, the term is only used proactively to attack the Conservatives. This is apparent in Tony Wright's comments that the Conservatives are 'on a crazed ideological trip' (Wright, 1997, p.10) and Thatcher's supporters are 'ideological storm troopers' (ibid., p.15). These depictions suggest an at best antagonistic relationship with ideology, viewing it as akin to doctrine and dogma (Fielding, 2003, p.58). In depicting ideology thus, New Labour elites appear to contradict the narrative of ideological change recorded elsewhere, however, a closer examination of their

⁵⁶ It is notable that many within the Labour Party were not full throated advocates of modernisation but nevertheless accepted the need to change on a pragmatic basis.

rhetoric reveals a continued concern with values and vision (the markers I define as ideological if in conflict). Indeed, the party remain committed to Labour's 'enduring socialist values' (Brown, 2004, p.113), their 'key values of democratic socialism and European social democracy' (Blair, 1995b, p.4) their 'set of values and principles definable for all time' (Blair, 1996b, p.31), and the importance of those values to the policies the party pursues (Hodge, 1994, p.245). In this sense ideas matter (Miliband, 1994, p.14) but the party want to be seen to have left dogma behind and embraced 'common sense' (Blair, 1996b, p.159).

Rhetorically New Labour can therefore be seen to exhibit a form of ideological quietism as despite continuing to offer a clear, conflictual vision for Britain the party distanced itself from the notion of ideology. In this sense Old Labour was associated with dogmatic ideology, and new Labour was pragmatic and focused on results. In terms of studying public perceptions of ideological change and the ideological message conveyed through rhetoric this is significant as it suggests a presentational shift as well as a change in the message and policies projected by the party. This finding is significant for my own analysis as it indicates, as discussed in prior chapters, that New Labour's rhetorical choices may be contributing to perceptions of ideological irrelevance. In this regard whilst the party remained committed to the ideas and visions seen here to constitute ideology, they may not have rhetorically conveyed that ideological message, undermining the apparent relevance of this level of study. Accordingly, whilst the existing literature on this topic is largely consensual it appears that my party political ideology approach has the capacity to offer new insights by studying the way the party presented its message to the public.

New Labour and Modernisation

As with depictions of ideology New Labour is also widely perceived to have modernised, with some scholars asserting modernisation to be the 'single word that might capture the essence of New Labour's social and political project' (Finlayson, 2003, p.66; cf. Andrews, autumn 2002). A range of literature has emerged focused on transformations in party organisation (Fielding, 1999; Hain, 2004; Ludlam & Smith, 2004; Quinn, 2004; Russell, 2005; Seyd, 1999; Shaw, 2002; 2004; Seyd & Whitely, 2001; 2002; Taylor, 1999), communication strategy (Bartle, 2002; Lees-Marchment, 2001; Rantavellas, 2003; Seldon, 2007, pp.124-127; Wring, 2005) and policy change (Coates, 2005; Heath, Jowell & Curtice, 2001).⁵⁷ Rhetorical evidence is also cited, with Fairclough drawing attention to the 89 references to 'modern' and 87 to 'modernisation' found in a study of 53 of Blair's speeches (Fairclough, 2000, p.19; for more on modernisation rhetoric see Bull, 2000). In exploring this period I seek to test the presence of a clear and consistent rationale for

⁵⁷ For an informative review article of accounts of Labour's modernisation see Shaw, 1999.

modernisation and the acceptance of that rationale within the party. As outlined in the last chapter such analysis is insightful as it allows an appreciation of the different processes of change within parties and the possibility that a party could move ideologically but not modernise (or vice versa). To explore this prospect I examine the stated impetus for modernisation, the consistency with which it was applied, and the support given to those aims. In pursuing this analysis I seek to discern whether Labour modernisers presented a progressive, responsive or perpetual modernisation strategy for change, whether they coherently managed expectations, and whether they secured consensus for change; traits seen to be vital to the project's likely success.

Within New Labour's rhetoric references to the modern world and change punctuate speeches, and a clear diagnosis of the need to change is advanced. Blair, for example, asserts: 'if socialism is not to be merely an abstract moralism it has to be made real in the world as it is and not as we would like it to be' (Blair, 1996b, p.18), whilst elsewhere Philip Gould comments: '[t]he need to modernise the party, the need to connect the values of the party [to] the changing context is completely crucial for a progressive politics and progressive parties' (Gould, April 2010, p.17). This rhetorical framing is readily apparent throughout the thinking of modernisers (Blair, 1996a, p.48; Brown, 2004, p.117, p.122; Hodge, 1994, p.145; Balls & O'Donnell, 2002, p.4), indicating a clear desire to change.

In considering party rhetoric in greater detail it is apparent that modernisers identified global and social shifts as the impetus driving change. Blair identified four specific drives: the growth of increasingly global markets and culture; technological advance and the rise of skills and information as key drivers of employment and new industries; a transformation in the role of women; and radical changes in the nature of politics itself (Blair, 1998, p.6). In citing these factors he contented:

'I believe it is no exaggeration to say that we are in the middle of the greatest economic, technological and social upheaval that the world has seen since the industrial revolution began over 200 years ago' (Blair in Callinicos, 2001, p.29).

In this regard Labour offered a diagnosis of change in which, as Florence Faucher-King and Patrick Le Galès argue, the party was 'going to adapt the country to a new "historical phase" ("new times") marked by globalization' (2010, p.5). Labour are accordingly seen to offer a form of modernisation rationale which did not focus on factors already apparent in the political system, but which rather emphasised the potential for external factors to impact upon the party's future development and proactively reacted to these. Returning to the framework

presented in the last chapter the party therefore appear to offer a progressive rationale for change, specifically citing global pressures as the drive behind the party's new direction.

What is notable about New Labour's modernisation rhetoric is the degree of consistency in the application of this rationale, with the party consistently emphasising global pressures when justifying ideological and policy shifts. To illustrate this point it is useful to examine the party's rationale for a shift in economic strategy as this is an area where the party was seen to dramatically alter its stance (moving from an interventionist, Keynesian approach to accept the market economy).

In presenting the rationale for economic change Blair and others consistently cite 'the altered circumstances of the world economy' (Blair, 1996b, p.124), stating that 'the new international economy has greatly reduced the ability of any single government to use the traditional levers of economic policy in order to maintain high employment' (Mandelson & Liddle, 1996, p.6). These principles were used to argue that '[n]either the old 'fine tuning' of the past, which appeared to trade off inflation for growth, nor the rigid monetary targets of the 1980s, made sense in newly liberalised capital markets' (Balls & O'Donnell, 2002, p.4), leading the party to contend that 'national economic policy *must* focus less on managing demand' (Brown, 2004, p.229 emphasis added). Accordingly New Labour elites advanced a consistent rationale for change which cited the form of global pressure cited above, linking the broader arguments for change with specific policy proposals. The extent of this linkage is particularly apparent when considering the party's educational policy as in 1996 Blair asserted:

'[o]ur task is to restore that hope, to build a new age of achievement in a new and different world. / Today we compete in the era of global markets, and I say this to our Conservative opponents. There is no future for Britain as a low-wage, low-skill, low-technology economy. (Applause) We will compete on the basis of quality or not at all. This means a stable economy, long-term investment, the enterprise of our people set free' (1996a).

This example illustrates the consistency with which the party placed emphasis on global pressures, but it was also consistent in pursuing those policies deemed necessary under this rationale. Hence in 1995, Blair commented: '[k]nowledge in this new world is power, information is opportunity and technology can make it happen if we use it properly and if we plan and think ahead for the future' (1995a). Similarly, in 1997 he contended Britain to 'have been a mercantile power. An industrial power. Now we must be the new power of the information age. Our goal: to make Britain the best educated and skilled country in the world; a

nation, not of a few talents, but of all the talents' (1997). Accordingly an analysis of Labour's rhetoric and policy agenda shows a clear rationale for change which was consistently articulated and applied in this period.

This analysis therefore demonstrates the predominance of a progressive rationale for change, indicating a coherent and consistently advanced diagnosis which managed (consciously or unconsciously) party expectations of what modernisation entailed. Indeed across the spectrum Labour identified the need to change and outlined the form of that change, sticking to those principles in the run up to the 1997 election. The success of this approach is apparent in the notable lack of significant dissent within the Labour Party over this change agenda. Whilst some saw the shift as marking the end of parliamentary socialism (Panitch & Leys, 1997) and attempts were made to resist some aspects of organisational change (particularly around all women shortlists Brown *et al*, 2002, p.74) the party was remarkably tolerant of the direction of travel with little sustained opposition to these ideas. This is significant as whilst all parties are likely to display some degree of discontent, within the Labour Party this did not mark a significant threat to the enactment of this strategy as members and representatives were broadly behind the changes.

On this evidence Labour can therefore be seen to have consistently offered a coherent, progressive rationale for modernisation which was widely accepted within the party. On these grounds, I argue that its modernisation project was likely to be a success as it had clearly stated goals and was subject to little internal dissent. In retrospectively examining the development of New Labour, specifically in regards to its economic and educational policy, it is clear that many of the ideas proposed as part of this modernisation project came to define the party's position. For example, throughout their period in office Labour emphasised the need to develop people's skills to ensure they were able to thrive in a changing economy (a policy which saw 2.25 million adults on course to improve their basic skills by 2010 (Toynbee & Walker, 2010, p.33)). Accordingly I conclude that Labour evinced the traits seen in the last chapter as necessary for successful modernisation, leading me to conclude that the party did modernise in this period in accordance with a progressive rationale.

Mapping Ideological Change

Having appraised the existing literature to raise some questions for my own analysis and added my voice to claims that New Labour successfully modernised in this period, I now return to study ideology in greater detail. As noted above, a range of different characterisations of ideological change have emerged in the existing literature and in the next chapter I seek to analyse these to pass judgement on whether ideological change occurred, and consider how

Labour's ideological position can be characterised. To facilitate this analysis in the remainder of this chapter I categorise the literature, following a range of other authors (Crouch, 2001; Driver & Martell, 1998; Faucher-King & Le Galès, 2010; Finlayson, 2003; Kenny & Smith, 1997; 2001; Ludlam, 2000; Ludlam & Smith, 2001; Randall, 2003),⁵⁸ to offer my own account of four different explanatory trends. These are:

1. New Labour has changed its ideology: arguing the New Labour has capitulated to Thatcherism and neo-liberal ideas,
2. New Labour displays ideological continuity: arguing that New Labour can be aligned with past ideological traditions within the party,
3. New Labour is ideologically innovative: arguing that New Labour have blended different ideological traditions together, and
4. New Labour is not ideological: arguing that New Labour have not changed ideologically but have acted in accordance with instrumental and electoral motivations.⁵⁹

These categories each offer different answers to Shaw's question:

'...for what, in terms of ideas, ambitions for social reorganisation and beliefs, does New Labour stand? Does it remain committed to the values with which Labour has been associated for its century-long history. Or has it broken with that tradition?' (Shaw, 2007, p.1).⁶⁰

In responding to these questions it should be noted that scholars' accounts are not always exclusively tied to one narrative. It is possible, for example, to position Hay's and Bob Jessop's contributions under the first and last categories because of the nuance in their argument. With this in mind I nevertheless argue that four broad categories of argument can be discerned which each advance a different picture of the influences upon New Labour's ideological position.

In offering these categorises I primarily outline the markers against which my own subsequent analysis is compared. Yet, the expansive nature of this literature also allows me to advance a supplementary point related to my desire to introduce a party political ideology approach. By exploring the different ways in which ideology has been defined and studied across this

⁵⁸ It should be noted that many of these scholars have been critiqued by their focus on ideas (Bale, 1999), however, in perpetuating this analysis my approach - which examines policy alongside ideas and ideology - attempts to counter such critiques.

⁵⁹ References and detailed appraisals of these positions can be found on pp. 91-99.

⁶⁰ For two excellent discussions of Shaw's work see: Andersson *et al*, 2011; Hickson, 2011a.

literature I argue for a greater emphasis on the conceptual and methodological preliminaries which underpin existing studies. Whilst many scholars do define their terms and outline their approach, a vast number do not, leading to ambiguity over the basis of claims and causing difficulties when seeking to compare works. By illustrating the differing degrees of attention paid to ideology and discussing how methodological choices relate to the narratives advanced, I assert the value of the kind of methodologically and conceptually transparent mode of ideological study that I seek to advance. In this regard I use the following discussion to facilitate and justify the party political ideology analysis conducted in the next chapter.

To aid my investigation it is first useful to consider Table 1 which details how ideology is examined in a selection of the texts considered here. It is important to note, as the first column of the table reveals, that not all scholars focus directly on ideology, therefore these works are not entirely commensurate.⁶¹ Nevertheless it is possible to draw some interesting insights regarding the way in which this topic is examined.

Immediately apparent from the first two columns is the range of different approaches. Only half of the authors offer a definition of ideology and a range of different (implicit and explicit) ways of talking about this topic are apparent. On the one hand scholars such as Freedon and Richard Heffernan provide a clear definition with Heffernan, for example, detailing how ideology underpins 'the strategies and tactics employed by political actors in (1) defining problems; (2) offering solutions; and (3) devising practical methods of policy formation' (2001, p.113). Yet, on the other hand some scholars offer no direct definition of ideology but rather talk indirectly about political ideologies such as Thatcherism and social democracy (Hay, 1999), discuss the party's ideological trajectory (Meredith, 2003), or reference pragmatism (Lister, 2001). Such different approaches reveal the fallacy of the idea that ideology's meaning is self-evident and hence indicate the potential for conflating accounts which whilst seeming comparable are based on fundamentally different logics. In addition the table reveals different degrees of emphasis to be placed on ideology so whilst some scholars are fixated on categorising the party's ideological position, others only tangentially discuss this point. These different approaches are not intrinsically problematic, but they make it difficult to embark on a comparative study of these narratives as it is not always clear whether ideology is the central concern, how ideology has been studied, and thus whether two sets of findings are comparable.

In seeking to offer my own characterisation of Labour's ideology I do not attempt to arbitrate between these different characterisations directly. Rather, I use these ambiguities to argue for a

⁶¹ In examining these different accounts I do not seek to attribute culpability to scholars for not engaging in ideological analysis, rather I seek to highlight the different approaches to study currently evident.

new approach to analysis. In this regard my party political ideology approach is a reaction not only to a theoretical problem (i.e. how to discern and study ideology in parties), but also to the manifestation of that problem in the existing literature. In accordance with these difficulties when seeking to examine the existing literature I do not directly compare these accounts but rather draw inspiration from these works to set my own benchmarks. Hence, whilst the existing literature can offer a number of insights it also reveals the pertinence of the form of theoretically and methodologically transparent approach to ideological study that I advance. With this in mind I turn to discuss existing depictions in greater detail.

Table 1: Tabulating the Existing Literature on Ideological Change in the Labour Party

| | | What is the author's focus? | Do they define ideology? | How is ideology discussed? | How is ideology studied? | What is their conclusion? |
|-------------------|------------------|---|--|--|---|---|
| Change | Heffernan (2001) | Explores Thatcherism's impact on the Labour Party to understand how and when political change comes about. Sees ideology as one of three dimensions causing party change. | Yes | Ideology defined as: 'a set of cognitive maps which inform working political ideas, structure policy agenda and influence political attitudes at the level of both elite and mass' (p.113). | Examines policy areas and points of principle, to demonstrate the influence of Thatcherism on Labour's position. For example, 'Labour's altered position on the question of public ownership is a reflection of the ideological, political, economic, and, as significantly, electoral environment in which it found itself' (p.164). Constitutional reform and Europe are used to show some departures from Thatcherite influence. | New Labour marked a process of electoral 'catch up' whereby the party accommodated to Thatcherism. This was an 'acknowledgement that the parameters which bound the ideological space within which parties locate themselves has changed and that accommodation' was necessary (p.117). |
| | Hay (1999) | Labour's modernisation process is focused upon. Hay considers existing analyses but primarily develops his own characterisation of the influence of Thatcherite ideas. | No | Ideology is studied through the prism of political ideologies with Thatcherism, social democracy and Socialism considered. | Hay maps out indicators of Thatcherism and draws comparisons between Conservative and Labour positions to demonstrate an overlap (e.g. pp.49-52). | That 1997 presented an opportunity to reshape the political landscape, but it was an opportunity that was ultimately missed. Instead the party accommodated to Thatcherite ideas, a process which Hay argues began under the Policy Review. |
| Continuity | Fielding (2003) | Focuses on the degree of continuity in ideas and policies between 'New' Labour and 'Old' Labour to disprove the Thatcherite accommodation thesis. | Yes (through a number of definitions including Freedden's) | Dismisses Blair's negative characterisation of ideology in favour of Freedden's. Argues '[i]deologies do not just exist on paper but in real contexts in which interests collide and are articulated by politicians to satisfy a variety of constituencies' (p.59). 'This means that while words are important, in trying to fully understand any party's ideology, intention – and thus context – need to be attended to' (p.60). | Ideological change is studied in chapter three by exploring social democracy's relationship with capitalism to display a tradition of revisionism and a 'long accepted [belief] that the market had an important role to play' (p.84). This argument is developed with reference to contemporary policies to illustrate the historical precedent for such ideas. | Sees 'Old' and 'New' Labour labels to distort debate as parties are constantly forced to 'renew' themselves. Aspects of continuity and change can be perceived, situating New Labour in the post-war revisionist tendency. |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|-----|---|--|---|
| | Meredith (2003) | Focuses on displaying continuities between New and Old Labour, specifically regarding social revisionism. | No | Talks about New Labour's ideological and programmatic trajectory. | Draws on academic and politician's discussion of newness to demonstrate previous attempts to re-present the party. Uses the example of equality to show that whilst equality of outcome has typically characterised Old Labour there was a great deal of contestation over equality within the party. | Argues that New Labour indicates the dominance of 'a particular segment and strategy of Labour's broad and complex (traditionally dominant centre-right) coalition' (p.170) rather than an entirely new position. He argues that existing accounts have overlooked this as they have failed to 'acknowledge the complexity of the centre-right of old Labour' and the 'important parallels between old and New Labour' (p.169). |
| Ideologically Innovative | Buckler & Dolowitz (2000a) | They 'seek to identify a coherent set of philosophical principles which could be said to be reflected in the <i>overall</i> ideological and practical package that <i>results</i> from these combined influences, but which does not entirely <i>coincide</i> with any one of them' (p.302). | No | Do not directly define ideology, but frequently reference the term as distinct from political philosophy and connected to action. | They conduct an interpretive reconstruction of the core characteristics of New Labour's agenda by identifying Labour's policy programme and then seeking to discern political philosophy in those policies. | New Labour is a break from established traditions of neo-liberalism and social democracy and can best be understood as social liberal. Their agenda is, moreover, seen to align with Rawlsian political philosophy. |
| | Freeden (1999a) | Looks at the ideological configuration of New Labour and the linkages therein to a 'Third Way'. | Yes | 'Ideologies do not have to be grand narratives; they certainly do not have to be closed, doctrinaire and abstract systems. Ideologies are recurrent, action-oriented patterns of political argument'. 'Moreover, ideologies are not simply superimposed on practices but also embodied in them. What distinguishes New Labour ideology, as indeed any ideology, are the distinctive configurations it forms | Freeden demonstrates the ambiguity of New Labour's core ideological principles using the example of community. He demonstrates the array of meanings attached to community and indicates the ambiguity of the party's position. He also conveys a tendency towards liberal, individualist conceptions of community and responsibility. | New Labour cannot be boxed in one hermetically sealed ideological family. It draws on 'liberal, conservative and (how could it be otherwise!) specifically socialist components as well' (p.45), in this sense the party has a variety of influences. This diversity does, however, cause problems as it is, in places, inconsistent and hence does not produce a clear policy agenda – thus choices will need to be made |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|---|-----|--|---|---|
| | | | | out of political concepts, the occasional new meanings it assigns to political words in common currency, and the innovative manner in which it blends ideas both external and internal to its traditions' (p.45). | | about the enactment of these principles. |
| Not Ideological | Jones (1996) | Focuses on Labour's revisionist tradition, specially attitudes towards 'public ownership and socialism, private industry and the market economy' (p.vii). Examines revisionism in the party history up until Blair, seeking to characterise contemporary moves against historical party shifts. | Yes | Uses Eccleshall's definition where ideology is defined by 2 characteristics: 'first, specific images of society which seek to render it intelligible from a particular point of view, and second, radiating from those images, distinctive programmes of action which offer 'prescriptions of what ought to be done to ensure that social ideal and actual reality coincide'' (pp.16-17). But he defines ideology against a political myth; an emotive account of Labour's 'development and purpose as a political organization (<i>sic</i>) and movement' (p.13). | Uses 'the methods of the historian of political thought' e.g. studying books, pamphlets, periodicals and party policy documents as well as interviews. Jones offers a narrative of modernisation and ideological change by drawing inferences from a range of sources. Focuses on Blair's ideological explanations, problematises his claims to the ethical socialist tradition, and discusses the significance of Clause IV for ideology and the socialist myth. | New Labour distanced itself from the socialist myth of public ownership. Has diluted former Keynesian assumptions, but argues that social democracy has always been defined by 'flexibility pragmatism' (p.156). |
| | Lister (2001) | Focuses on the seemingly ambivalent message projected by New Labour in their first term and seeks to offer an alternative course. | No | Describes Labour's 'ideological pragmatism' (p.434). Does make some references to ideological beliefs driving certain policy agendas. | Describes instances of pragmatism and populism to demonstrate their dominance in the party. Uses evidence from newspapers, policy positions, academia and quotes from Blair to make her point. Uses these two points to help explain a gap between rhetoric and reality on the topic of redistribution. | Argues that Labour has been led by pragmatism and populism (derived from Thatcher's legacy) rather than a clear ideological agenda. Whilst they have taken some steps towards redistribution more rhetorical work is seen necessary to establish momentum for further change. |

1. New Labour has Changed its Ideology

In seeking to appraise this vast literature it is first evident that a range of scholars depict New Labour's ideological change as an accommodation to Conservative ideas. Two different strands of explanation are apparent, the first of which portrays New Labour as ideologically accommodating to Thatcherite, neo-liberal orthodoxies (Hall, 1998; 2003; Hay, 1994; 1997a; 1999; 2003; Heffernan, 2001; Jessop, 2003; Shaw, 1996), whilst the second depicts the party as post-Thatcherite (Driver & Martell, 1998; 2001). Other variations are offered which depict some degree of change (for example Andersson, 2010; Faucher King & Le Galès, 2010; Lister, 2001). However, the works examined under the first two headings most closely epitomise this perspective. As Table 1 above indicates these texts define and study ideology in different ways with Hay (1999) adopting a historical focus and Heffernan examining electoral rationale (2001, p.98). It is important to remain conscious of these different analytical bases to prevent the construction of straw men, and to reinforce my contention that any arbitration between these accounts is exceedingly difficult because of the different conceptual and methodological choices which underpin these works.

The texts examined under the first heading are united by their contention that New Labour has changed its position in line with Conservative ideas. As Hay argues, New Labour has accommodated to 'the neo-liberal political and economic paradigm that is the sole vision animating contemporary British politics' (1997a, p.372), illustrating 'the ultimate success of the New Right in winning the battle of ideas since the 1970s' (Heffernan, 2001, pp.24-5).⁶² Although the precise impetus for change varies between scholars, modernisation is widely seen to symbolise 'a *detachment* from Labour's established values and objects and an *accommodation* with established institutions and modes of thought' (Shaw, 1996, p.218), a point evidenced by that fact that 'New Labour now fights (and wins) elections largely on policies which less than ten years ago were associated with the (new) right and repudiated by the (old) left' (Hay, 1997a, p.372).

There are some discontinuities between these works as Heffernan argues that 'Labour has been neo-liberalised not become neo-liberal' (2001, p.172). Yet, Jessop goes to great lengths to illustrate the pertinence of this label. Defining neo-liberalism through liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation, re-comodification of the public sector, internationalisation and the welcoming of market forces, and reducing direct taxes, he highlights the influence of these ideas on New Labour's thinking, arguing that New Labour has:

⁶² For a discussion of the electoral success of Thatcherite ideas see Crewe, 1988.

'...committed itself to further liberalization (*sic*) and de-regulation in many areas; to the privatization (*sic*) or, at least, corporatization (*sic*), of most of what remains of the state-owned sector; and to the extension of market forces into what remains of the public and social services at national, regional, and local level as well as to the spread of market forces into the provision of such services elsewhere in Europe and the rest of the world' (Jessop, 2003, pp.140-141).

Accordingly, depictions in this category do differ in some regards but they are unified by a focus on the continuities between Labour's and the Tory's ideology.

The second strand of analysis acknowledges that 'New Labour has become more Thatcherite, if that is taken to mean the party is more committed to free trade, flexible labour markets, sound money and the spirit of entrepreneurial capitalism, not to mention greater individual self-help and private initiative in welfare' (Driver & Martell, 1998, p.2). However, unlike prior scholars this Conservative influence is understood to have led New Labour to adopt a post-Thatcherite rather than directly Thatcherite ideological position. This perspective seeks to acknowledge that New Labour offers a critique of post-war social democracy and liberalism, advancing a communitarian strand within its ideology that sets it apart from Thatcherism (*ibid.*, pp.28-9). Overlapping with depictions of ideological innovation this characterisation reflects upon the party's ideological history as well as Conservative influence, but the latter focus is pre-eminent. As Stephen Driver and Luke Martell assert: whilst Labour is 'both attracted and repulsed by Thatcherism, there is no going back to a pre-Thatcher era' (*ibid.*, p.3).

The narratives of change considered here therefore place a heavy emphasis upon the influence of the Conservative Party and the ideological traditions therein. Whilst the accounts are premised on different definitions and studies of ideology they nevertheless all draw attention to the influence of these ideas on Labour's development. The range of different benchmarks used makes evaluating all the accounts under this heading exceedingly difficult, therefore in structuring my own analysis I draw inspiration from these works to assess the presence of New Right ideas rather than testing the specific claims advanced by each scholar in this tradition.

2. New Labour displays Ideological Continuity

Turning to the second explanatory category, under this heading texts are united by their focus on the continuities between New Labour and the party's past traditions. This approach takes two main forms, first arguing that New Labour has roots within previous ideological traditions within the party (Andersson, 2010; Faucher King & Le Galès, 2010; Jones, 1996; Meredith, 2003;

2006; Meredith & Catney, 2007; Nittal, 2008; Rubinstein, 1997; 2000; Shaw, 2007; Taylor, 1997; Vincent, 1998), and second that the Labour Party is in a constant process of change with New Labour simply the latest incarnation (Coates, 2005; Fielding, 2003; White, 2001a). Scholars within this category conduct historical analysis, drawing attention to ideas and ideational traditions and the continuities and change therein. Such accounts adhere to the idea that 'Labour's has always been a complex political culture of systematic and recurrent intra-party struggle and competition between different traditions, strands, tendencies and groups over assorted understandings, interpretations and applications of party principles and policy' (Meredith, 2003, p.166), scholars simply differ in the comparisons they draw with the party's past.

Arguments within the first strand are far from homogenous as a range of different time periods and benchmarks are used to examine change. Whilst some focus on the continuity of specific ideological traditions, such as Meredith's assertion that there are 'significant revisionist social democratic parallels and continuity between so-called 'Old' and 'New' Labours' (2003, p.239; cf. Hickson, 2007), others examine the continuity of aims and actions. In this latter camp Rubinstein (2000) depicts a range of continuities such as rising living standards, relations with the unions and Labour's approach to capitalism, using examples to demonstrate a false antithesis between New and Old Labour. Hence, on intervention he asserts: 'Stephen Byers has denounced 'the outdated interventionism of the old left' (Watt, Hencke, Gow, 1999), but he offered £152 million to keep BMW and its 14,000 workers at Longbridge and later intervened mightily to keep the plant alive' (Rubinstein, 2000, p.165). Accordingly, although united by comparison between Labour's past and present these works offer diverse conclusions.

The second strand of this category depicts New Labour as the latest output of an ongoing revisionist trend, as Fielding comments 'ideologically speaking, 'New' labour does not mark a decisive break with the party's past' (2003, p.83). This sentiment is echoed elsewhere with Coates arguing: 'in a very real sense *there has always been Old Labour and New Labour...* What is new in New Labour is that the forces of Old Labour are so weak' (Coates, 2005, p.68). Similarly Andersson asserts: '[i]t is clearly not possible, from any reading of social democracy's history, to argue that the Third Way's embracing of the market signifies a decisive break with old social democracy because social democracy has always grappled with questions of markets and capitalism and efficiency' (2010, p.9; see also Fielding, 2003, p.17; 208; Hattersley, 1987; Marquand, 1999b). Here, historical analysis is used to argue that change, however prompted, is endemic to parties and thus ideologies are often more multifaceted than certain characterisations suggest.

In this category (within both stances) authors offer a historically conscious analysis, leading to internal rather than external comparison. It is this dynamic which leads to competing accounts because, as Fielding argues: 'there is no single universally accepted version of the party's history with which to compare its contemporary development; indeed there are as many arguments about Labour's earlier trajectory as about its present course' (2003, p.18). In extrapolating from this categorisation I focus in the next chapter on the pertinence of a social democratic characterisation of New Labour as a range of scholars have sought to evaluate this prism (Andersson, 2010; Gamble & Wright, 1999; Hinnfors, 2006; Sassoon, 1999).

3. New Labour is Ideologically Innovative

Reflecting the focus of the previous two categories, under this heading texts depict New Labour as ideologically creative; combining aspects of neo-liberal and past Labour ideas, or adopting principles which had previously not characterised Labour's ideology.⁶³ Scholars encompassed by these different forms of investigation can be split into first, those citing the combined influence of neo-liberal and social democratic ideas (Driver & Martell, 2001; Gamble & Kelly, 2001; King & Wickham-Jones, 1999; Shaw, 2003; 2007) and second, those who discern a broader range of influences (Bevir, 2000; 2005 ; Buckler & Dolowitz, 2000a; Fielding, 2003; Freedon, 1999a; 1999b; Kenny & Smith, 2001; Smith, 2001).

In this first tradition scholars depict Labour's ideological development as an attempt to align traditional Labour principles with dominant Conservative ideas. In this sense Labour's ideology represents 'a yoking together of two 'thematics', one 'more or less classically social-democratic', pursuing the traditional values of equality, social welfare and full employment, the other neo-liberal, 'extolling market logic, monetary stability, labour market flexibility, lower taxation, privatisation, and deregulation' (Shaw, 2007, p.200; Moschanas, 2002). In this sense, whilst New Labour have moved towards neo-liberal ideas, as Andrew Gamble & Gavin Kelly assert, to judge that the party 'is just neo-liberalism under another name is too simple and also premature' as the party shows evidence of continuity and discontinuity with past Labour traditions (2001, pp.167). In this regard an appreciation of internal and external ideological pressures is necessary to gain an understanding of New Labour's ideological position.

In the second strand a wider array of influences are discerned, hence Freedon argues: '[t]he ideological amalgam of New Labour includes liberal, conservative and (how could it be otherwise!) specifically socialist components as well... But New Labour ideology is not identical with any one of the above categories and it deviates from every one of them in crucial areas'

⁶³ This does not relate to entirely novel perspectives but rather to ideas that have no prior association with the party.

(1999a, p.45). This depiction is echoed in Kenny and Smith's assertion that it is possible to detect the influence of a range of different ideological strands with 'conservatism in social policy, liberalism (of a nineteenth century vintage) in terms of international economy, as well as a distinctly Whiggish attitude to the modernization of some of the constitutional and institutional features of state' (2001, p.254). These accounts therefore reflect the fact that 'New Labour, like any governing party, is influenced by a broad range of intellectual and ideological strands', an insight which leads Steve Buckler and David Dolowitz to ascribe the label social liberalism to New Labour's ideological project (2000a, p.302).

These explanations in many ways echo New Labour's own Third Way rhetoric (Gould, 1999; Mandelson & Liddle, 1996), depicting attempts to overcome previous orthodoxies and offer an innovative ideological response. In this sense it is necessary to look at a range of ideological traditions to understand Labour's position as no singular stance is commensurate. In assessing the degree of continuity and change between different ideological traditions and New Labour's stance, in the next chapter I explore the relevance of new right and social democratic ideas.

4. New Labour is Not Ideological

Turning to the final heading, texts in this category should not, as its name perhaps suggests, be seen as disavowing ideology completely, rather it encompasses two approaches. The first asserts that Labour is pragmatic rather than ideological (Faucher King & Le Galès, 2010; Lister, 2001; Jones, 1996; Taylor, 1997; Temple, 2000),⁶⁴ whilst the second sees Labour's accommodation to Thatcherism to indicate the lack of a unique ideological position (Hay, 1997a; Jessop, 2003).

The first, pragmatic, strand can be subdivided in those scholars who confine this trait to New Labour (Faucher King & Le Galès, 2010; Lister, 2001) and those who see Labour as consistently pragmatic (Taylor, 1997; Jones, 1996). Commenting solely on New Labour and the policies pursued by the party Lister depicts New Labour's tendency to "woo" rather than 'lead' the electorate (i.e. populism) and a problem-solving, 'what works' approach rather than a direct assault on structural inequalities (i.e. pragmatism)' (Lister, 2001, p.428). Similarly, Taylor, adopting a more historical focus, argues that Labour was a 'predominantly electorally pragmatic rather than either socialist or social democratic' as it lacked a strong 'ideological foundation' and had accordingly come to be identified with 'the pragmatic use of British state power' (Taylor, 1997, pp.4-5). In this tradition Labour is seen to have moved away from 'a concentration on ideology towards setting state actors demonstrable targets' (Temple, 2000). Such accounts do

⁶⁴ Barratt Brown & Coates (1996) can also be viewed in this tradition, but they argue that New Labour is ideologically vacuous rather than overtly pragmatic.

not entirely reject ideology; they simply offer significant evidence of a pragmatic approach, suggesting that an ideological prism may not always be the most appropriate.

The second strand overlaps with the accommodation to neo-liberalism argument evident in the first category, highlighting the dominance of Conservative ideology at the expense of Labour's own position. As Hay argues: '[t]he new convergence between the parties... reflects Labour's accommodation to the newly ascendant and seemingly unassailable neoliberal economic and political paradigm' (Hay, 1997a, p.373). Implicit within this work is the idea that New Labour's programme doesn't reflect ideological change and a novel ideological agenda but rather indicates a pragmatic accommodation to Conservative ideas. In this sense the party appears to be ideologically void as its position is defined by Conservative principles rather than its own ideas.

Summarising the Existing Literature

The above analysis has revealed a range of different accounts of ideological change, with the four categories each exhibiting a plethora of subsidiary accounts; making an assessment of Labour's ideological position far from simple. In undertaking my own analysis I recognise these difficulties and the challenges which arise from the diverse forms of study which underpin these accounts. As the above table has depicted ideology has been studied in a range of different ways, with scholars placing different degrees of emphasis on its import as an explanatory factor, defining it in different ways, and engaging in different modes of study. Whilst I do not challenge the specific decisions made by scholars I argue that the lack of information regarding how ideology is seen and studied has held back analysis in this area – making it difficult to draw comparisons. Rather than seeking to judge between these different accounts I accordingly conduct my own analysis inspired by these works. In so doing I focus on the ideological influences upon New Labour's position, seeking to discern which ideological traditions are reflected in Labour's rhetoric and thus which define its ideological position. This stance reflects my rhetorical analysis and the difficulty of retrospectively discerning what influenced the actors who formulated the party's ideological position. From this perspective I seek to determine whether New Labour exhibits a Thatcherite, social democratic, innovatively ideological or non-ideological message.

Conclusion

In concluding this chapter it is evident that existing work on the Labour Party's ideology not only contextualises my own analysis, but also gives rise to some interesting questions about the form and apparent relevance of Labour's ideology in this period. Furthermore, it is clear that

whilst much has been written on change in the Labour Party a lack of methodological and conceptual clarity has created ambiguity around the type of claims being made and the grounds upon which they are advanced. For these reasons the application of my party political ideology approach to this case seems exceedingly pertinent as it is possible to offer substantive analysis of these questions, and provide an alternative, transparent template for analysis in this area.

Before moving in the next chapter to apply this approach and thus detail the form of insight which can be gained it is, first, poignant to return to the claims I seek to advance about New Labour in order to evaluate the progress made through my discussion of the existing literature. To recap, my assertions are:

1. The Labour Party modernised in this period and projected a progressive rationale for that modernisation,
2. The Labour Party's ideological position did change but this was accompanied by a move towards ideological quietism, and
3. That the Labour Party's ideological position post-1994 can (most pertinently) be viewed as ideologically innovative rather than as aligned to a pre-existing ideological tradition or as non-ideological.

The analysis in the second segment of this chapter has demonstrated that, like much of the existing literature, I see Labour Party to have modernised in the period 1982-1997. Yet unlike much of this work I have highlighted the presence of a coherent, consistently applied and widely accepted rationale for change as the reason for the party's success post-1994. Furthermore, I have characterised the nature of change as progressive, distinguishing it from modernisation attempts which react to contemporary circumstances or seek to perpetually change. In this chapter I have therefore illustrated the basis upon which I judge modernisation, using this approach to advance the first claim made in relation to this case study.

Turning to the other points, thus far my analysis has explored existing depictions of ideological change in the Labour Party, leading me to accord with the literature that change was a prominent feature of New Labour's rhetoric. However, my own analysis has uncovered evidence of a rhetorical shift away from ideology, indicating a form of ideological quietism. To fully explore this possibility more extensive analysis of the kind detailed in the previous chapter is outlined, leading me to develop the second claim in the next chapter.

Finally, in relation to the last claim, in this chapter I have outlined existing characterisations of ideological change, presenting four categories and detailing the diverse arguments and

approaches offered by different scholars. In the next chapter I present my own characterisation, drawing inspiration from these accounts to frame my morphological investigation. In so doing I compare the different arguments voiced here through the prism of a single theoretical and methodological approach, engaging in the form of comparative analysis which the diversity of approaches in the existing literature makes difficult. Accordingly, I also advance the third claim in the next chapter.

With the need for further investigation readily apparent I therefore now turn to present the findings of my own morphological analysis, using this process to offer greater insight into the methodological principles outlined in chapter three.

Chapter 5: Modernisation, Ideology and the Labour Party: Applied Analysis

When studying ideology in the Labour Party it is impossible to ignore the range of ideological characterisations outlined in the last chapter which (implicitly and explicitly) convey the idea that party modernisation occurred and evoked (ideological) change in the Labour Party (see Table 1). In what follows I seek to test these depictions through my own analysis, examining my morphological outputs to detect and describe change in this period. Following the principles laid out in chapter three I have constructed illustrative diagrams and tables which catalogue the references made in each speech, the ideological message conveyed through those references, and the type of reference itself. Using Freedden's morphological principles I have also traced the core/peripheral status of each of these references, providing a wealth of data on which to draw in the course of this chapter. In the analysis which follows I use these outputs to assess longitudinally whether New Labour offered a different ideological message to Old Labour, whether the party displayed ideological continuity and/or change, and how ideological change can best be characterised. In this regard I am able to test existing narratives and offer my own depiction of ideological change.

In presenting my own account I seek to make a series of claims relating to Labour's ideology. First, I argue, in line with existing literature, that there is indeed evidence of ideological change as the party consistently articulated a vision of society distinct from the message projected prior to 1994. Furthermore, I establish that rhetoric shifted dramatically from 1994 with Blair not only changing the content of speeches but also the way that the party's message was conveyed. By tracing trends in ideological coding and reference type I expand upon my discussion of ideology in the last chapter to assert that New Labour exhibits a form of ideological quietism but nevertheless offers a clear vision for society. Having reached this conclusion I go on to contend that the party's new ideological message can most informatively be seen as ideologically innovative. By discussing the pertinence of social democratic and Thatcherite ideas, and evidence of continuity and change I return to the existing literature to indicate my preference for the third category of explanation examined in the prior chapter, calling for further analysis of the influence of different traditions.

In addition to discerning and characterising change within this chapter I also use my focus on party rhetoric to examine the consistency with which the party's ideas were advanced. By tracing the discipline with which New Labour presented and justified its ideological position I assert that a public audience is likely to have been given the impression that the party were

committed to change. Accordingly, in this case I argue that ideology is likely to have been seen as a reliable indicator of party behaviour, suggesting the relevance of analysis at this level.

It is therefore by focusing on the ideas espoused, the consistency with which those principles are presented, and the emphasis placed upon them that I advance the three claims foreshadowed in the last chapter:

1. The Labour Party modernised in this period and projected a progressive rationale for that modernisation,
2. The Labour Party's ideological position did change but this was accompanied by a move towards ideological quietism, and
3. That the Labour Party's ideological position post-1994 can (most pertinently) be viewed as ideologically innovative rather than as aligned to a pre-existing ideological tradition or as non-ideological.

Whilst these analytical insights are a crucial component of this chapter attention also dwells on the interpretative processes which lead me to advance these conclusions; reflecting my commitment to offer conceptually and methodologically transparent research. Accordingly in what follows I provide elongated depictions of how my findings were produced, detailing how data was extracted from my research and interpreted and how factors such as context affected the coding decisions made when producing these outputs. In places this curtails the attention given to the characterisation of ideological change, however, these forms of inquiry are depicted in far greater detail in chapter seven, ensuring that the process of analytical assessment is fully exhibited. Accordingly, in seeking to appreciate the insights of my party political ideology approach both of these analytical chapters should be examined.

In presenting my findings I structure the chapter in three parts. First, I examine each year studied in turn, drawing on the core morphological configurations to highlight trends in the form of references used (concepts, motifs or contextual) and ideological content. By drawing out broad themes and offering preliminary explanations I demonstrate evidence of an ideological shift between Old and New Labour and depict ideological quietism as one characteristic of this change. Second, I consider context (of each specific speech and the political environment), the alternative motivations (other than ideology) actors may have for making specific points, and consistency between policies and justifications. Exploring these facets it is possible to draw a preliminary conclusion as to whether the party leader's utterances were likely to appear ideological by examining consistency and the presence of clearly identifiable explanations for departures of message. Whilst my method is not applied exhaustively, indicative analysis points

to the conclusion that the Labour Party advanced a coherent and consistent message – and hence can be seen as ideological. Having probed ideological perceptions I return, third, to the morphological outputs, conducting detailed textual analysis to determine the form of ideological change evident in this period. By evaluating trends in continuity and change and discussing the apparent resonance of Thatcherite and social democratic ideas I draw attention to the complexity of Labour’s ideology. Returning to the existing literature I conclude that an ideologically innovative depiction of change is most appropriate.

This structure echoes the methodological and analytical focus of this chapter as I use this study to both demonstrate the practicalities of a party political ideology approach, and the insights available through this method. By applying this technique to the well trodden ground of New Labour, the unique facets of this approach are thrown into sharp relief, revealing the contribution that this style of analysis can make to understanding of ideology and ideological change within political parties.

Morphological Analysis 1982 – 1997

As discussed above a wealth of information is available through my party political approach which can be used to explore ideological change in this period. In this opening section I examine ideological change from three perspectives; looking at the changing presence of concepts (seeking to discern a shift in focus), the type of references used (to examine rhetorical changes in this period), and the ideological message conveyed in this period (further probing the notion of ideological quietism presented in the last chapter).⁶⁵ By exploring these three factors I contend that the party’s ideological message did change in substantive terms, but so too did the way that its ideological message was conveyed. Through this analysis I argue that under Blair Labour lexically aligned itself with public concerns and exhibited a form of ideological quietism, allowing them to tackle negative public perceptions of the party’s vision whilst remaining ideological.

In presenting my findings data is drawn primarily from the two inner rings of the morphological diagrams constructed in accordance with the methodology outlined in chapter three. This places stress on those references which are emphasised by speakers, either through their importance to the message of the speech as a whole, or due to the rhetorical techniques used to draw attention to principles. To reprise, references at the very core are those which display both these traits, whilst those at the outer core fall into only one of these categories. Whilst the margins and periphery are still ideologically indicative, the first two levels are concentrated

⁶⁵ In the series of tables below the ideological coding is represented by the highlighting (red/blue/underlined/blank) and accords with the principles presented in chapter three: see p.54.

upon as, in accordance with Freedden’s logic, it is the core of an ideology which is most significant as those principles define the party’s outlook and rarely change (1996, p.82).⁶⁶

In light of my stated commitment to methodological clarity each speech studied is examined chronologically, advancing a brief overview of the ideological trends evident within each text. Whilst this discussion could be abridged to highlight headline changes I discuss each year to aid understanding of the basis upon which subsequent claims are advanced.

Table 2: 1982 Morphological References

| | CONCEPTS | MOTIFS | CONTEXT |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Inner Core | | | Economy |
| | | | Industry |
| | | | Labour Government |
| | | | Labour Movement |
| | | | Trade Unions |
| Outer Core | <u>Change</u> | | Arms Race |
| | Crisis | | Conference |
| | Democratic Socialism | | Country |
| | <u>Future</u> | | Education |
| | <u>Interests</u> | | Labour Party |
| | Internationalism | | Low Pay |
| | Investment | | Nuclear Arms Race |
| | <u>Nation</u> | | Our People |
| | Socialism | | Steel Industry |

Beginning with 1982 a predominance of contextual references is recorded with a range of actors, events, institutions and policy areas emphasised by the lexical techniques used. The dominance of contextual as opposed to conceptual references at the inner core is particularly notable, suggesting that Foot relied rhetorically upon events and issues to convey his vision of the country/world. Hence references such as ‘[t]he Tories do not seem to need a steel industry, but we in the Labour Party and in the next Labour government – we will need a steel industry, so we must fight to protect it now and to protect the jobs there now’ (Foot, 1982) offer a vision of the country based on industrial investment and full employment. In this sense ideology is not conveyed through concepts (cf. Freedden, 1996), but rather indirectly through contextual points.⁶⁷

Turning to ideological content the colour coding illustrates the highly ideological nature of the party’s message in this period with conflict between the parties clearly evident. Industry, the economy and international affairs are pivotal to Labour’s vision and the party is prepared to

⁶⁶ For the curious reader each of the full morphologies is attached in Appendix 1 & 2, facilitating further investigation.

⁶⁷ This point justifies my expansion of Freedden’s method to include contextual references and motifs.

advance idealistic positions. Hence, unlike Blair who later tailored his account of Socialism to reflect public concerns (1995), Foot argues that people around the world are discovering that ‘the only way that they can lift their people from the gutter is by the power, intelligence and purpose of democratic socialist ideas’ (1982). On this evidence Foot could be seen to be advancing a preference shaping rather than preference accommodating strategy (Hay, 1997b).

Table 3: 1983 Morphological References

| | CONCEPTS | MOTIFS | CONTEXT |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Inner Core | | | Industry |
| | | | Labour Party |
| | | | Steel Industry |
| Outer Core | Hope | | Arms Control |
| | Democratic Socialism | | British People |
| | Intervention | | British Press |
| | Peace | | Conference |
| | | | Country |
| | | | Defeat |
| | | | Economy |
| | | | Foreign Affairs |
| | | | General Election |
| | | | International Competitive System |
| | | | Manifesto |
| | | | Market |
| | | | Nuclear Arms Race |
| | | | Private Sector |
| | | | Public Sector |
| | | Trade Unions | |

In contemplating this speech it is important to note that Foot has, at the time of speaking, resigned the party leadership and is aware that he is to be succeeded by Kinnock. Accordingly the ideological content could be expected to be less strident as Foot is no longer tasked with providing an ongoing vision for the Labour Party. In this light the prominence of ideological references is interesting, suggesting that Foot himself and the party are confident in their conflictual approach – a point supported by Foot’s defiant assertion that he will not be ‘making any apologies for what I said at the election’ despite condemnation of the 1983 manifesto.⁶⁸

Once again, as in 1982, ideological references to the arms race, the trade union movement, industry and the economy are made, suggesting the centrality of these themes to the alternative vision that Labour is offering. Indeed, many of the accompanying ideological points are related to these themes, reinforcing their centrality to the party’s vision.

⁶⁸ The manifesto was branded the ‘longest suicide note in history’; illustrating the strength of criticism that Foot faced for the platform on which he led the party into the election.

In regards to the form of references recorded most again occupy the contextual column, with very few concepts present at the core of the party's morphology. This may reflect Foot's own rhetorical style, but it also indicates a tendency to articulate the party's vision through the tangible changes they hoped to make rather than more abstract ideas and principles – a very different form of ideological projection to that evident under Blair as will be seen presently.

Table 4: 1986 Morphological References

| | CONCEPTS | MOTIFS | CONTEXT |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Inner Core | Investment | | Economy |
| | Moral Majority | | Labour Party |
| | Moral Obligation | | |
| Outer Core | Anti-Discrimination | Morality | America |
| | Defence | | British People |
| | Democratic Socialism | | Country |
| | Freedom | | Cuts |
| | Future Generations | | Foreign Affairs |
| | Government | | General Election |
| | Hope | | Housing |
| | Justice | | Industry |
| | Modernisation | | Jobs |
| | One World | | Labour Government |
| | Peace | | Moral Questions |
| | Production | | NHS |
| | Provision | | Nuclear Arms |
| | Recovery | | South Africa |
| | | Society | |

This speech differs in a number of ways from the prior two, reflecting the new party leader's rhetorical style. However, there are still marked continuities between the ideological focus of the party under Kinnock and Foot. The balance between concepts and context is not illustrative in this instance as Kinnock utilises both types of reference, though it is notable that he relies to a far greater degree on concepts than Foot – perhaps reflecting his attempt to clearly define the party's agenda.

More interesting is the ideological content of the speech. Whilst directly ideological references remain dominant the presence of valence and non-valence references indicate an attempt to align the party's agenda with the notion of a common good. For example, in discussing peace the reference is made, not as in 1983 to the determination 'to build a peaceful world' (Foot, 1983) but rather as a common good, condemning how 'aggression and oppression and starvation kill peace' throughout the world (Kinnock, 1986). Whilst subtly different, the latter creates the impression that Labour is pursuing publically recognised goods, a technique used frequently by Blair to offer a less antagonistic picture of the party's vision for society. It should also be noted

that the motif of morality is used to make a series of indirect ideological attacks on the Conservatives, arguing that the people want ‘a government which will back up its morality by policies’ (Kinnock 1986) – suggesting an attempt to critique the opposition by aligning Labour with the desires of the people.

Despite the increased presence of such references, direct ideological pronouncements remain, with a number of concepts and policy areas defined in ideological terms. Notably nuclear arms, industry and the economy are still present. The focus on trade unions is absent – potentially indicating a shift in position if perpetuated. Hence, whilst some degree of change in the projection of the party’s ideological message is apparent continuity remains in an underlying focus on industry and foreign affairs.

Table 5: 1991 Morphological References

| | CONCEPTS | MOTIFS | CONTEXT |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Inner Core | <u>Change</u> | | Economy |
| | Future | | Labour Party |
| | Investment | | |
| | <u>Security</u> | | |
| | | | |
| Outer Core | <u>Confidence</u> | | Britain |
| | Democratic Socialism | | British People |
| | Government | | Country |
| | <u>Innovation</u> | | <u>Education</u> |
| | <u>Opportunity</u> | | <u>European Community</u> |
| | Poverty | | General Election |
| | <u>Prosperity</u> | | Labour Government |
| | Universalism | | NHS |
| | <u>Value for Money</u> | | Public Services |
| | | | Soviet Union |
| | | | Tax |
| | | | <u>Training</u> |
| | | | <u>Transport</u> |
| | | | Victory |

In reference to the 1991 morphology once again little can be inferred from the different types of references used as no clear trend is in evidence. However, it is possible to detect a change in the ideological references made. From the above table it is clear that a number of different techniques are used to convey ideological message; apparent overtly (as with investment), indirectly through valence concepts (such as security), and indirectly through non-valence references (as with innovation). There is also an apparent move away from direct ideological conflict in favour of more indirect modes of projection (either through valence or other ideas), and ideological points which had previously been core are no longer present. Hence, whilst the economy is still in evidence, trade unions, industry and nuclear arms – themes which had

previously been apparent – are no longer mentioned.⁶⁹ Further, ideological conflict is no longer predominant within the morphology. These two trends indicate a change in both the ideological message offered by Labour and the way their message is communicated – suggesting that a process of projecting ideological change may have begun.

Table 6: 1994 Morphological References

| | CONCEPTS | MOTIFS | CONTEXT |
|-------------------|----------------|--------|-------------------|
| Inner Core | <u>Change</u> | | British People |
| | Government | | Economy |
| | Responsibility | | |
| Outer Core | Opportunity | | Country |
| | Community | | Crime |
| | Cooperation | | Education |
| | Duty | | Labour Government |
| | Employment | | Labour Party |
| | Hope | | NHS |
| | Interests | | Public Spending |
| | Investment | | Tax |
| | Justice | | |
| | Leadership | | |
| | Nation | | |
| | Partnership | | |
| | Poverty | | |
| | Quality | | |
| | Renewal | | |
| | Socialism | | |
| | Society | | |
| | Trust | | |
| | Unemployment | | |
| | Universalism | | |

In 1994 a shift away from context in favour of concepts is evident, a move which suggests a conscious attempt to outline a conceptual rather than a policy, or contextually led agenda. As Blair’s first speech as leader this could be seen as an attempt to redefine the party in the public mind, clearly offering principles which define Blair’s approach vis-à-vis past party leaders. In presenting his message Blair places prominence on relatively uncontroversial ideas such as hope, cooperation, community, poverty and change, moving away from the conflictual rhetoric of past party leaders.

This shift in tone is reflected in the ideological content of these references as whilst direct conflict is in evidence it mainly concerns non-contentious issues. Thus when Blair states: ‘we must build the strong and active society that can provide it. That is our project for Britain. It will be founded on these four pillars: opportunity, responsibility, justice and trust’ he is offering an

⁶⁹ Yet, as recorded in the 1986 diagram, the reference to trade unions was absent before this moment.

ideological vision of the importance of building a different kind of society.⁷⁰ But, considered away from this speech each of these concepts could refer to a common good or be neutral. In this sense even directly ideological references offer a softer picture of the party's agenda, defining a vision not in relation to specific policy goals – such as nuclear disarmament – but rather through more abstract ideas such as justice which, if used in other circumstances, could be recorded as valence topics. In this sense Blair's conceptual message was likely to be perceived as non-contentious; a dramatically different approach to Foot.

A departure from the ideological message which defined the party in the 1980s is also apparent as trade unions, industry and nuclear arms do not appear, and economy is re-inscribed with new meanings attached to familiar references. Hence, whilst in 1983 Foot asserted 'the competitive system, the market economy, or whatever you like to call it, has shown itself in the last few years less successful in providing a stable expanding economy than at any time in this century', in 1994 Blair commented '...above all we must conquer the weaknesses of our economy that hold our country back. It will not be done by state control, but it will not be done either by market dogma. It can only be done by a dynamic market economy based on partnership between government and industry, between employer and employee, and between public and private sector'. These are vastly different ideological visions for the British economy, indicating widespread change in the ideological picture projected by Labour.

⁷⁰ Subsequently a clear vision of opportunity, responsibility and justice is offered but the reference to trust is not expanded upon other than to condemn the Conservatives lack of trust. Accordingly the latter reference is recorded as valence used to make an ideological point, whereas the others are directly ideological.

Table 7: 1995 Morphological References

| | CONCEPTS | MOTIFS | CONTEXT |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Inner Core | <u>Change</u> | <u>New Britain</u> | Education |
| | <u>Community</u> | <u>Young Country</u> | Public Services |
| | <u>Family</u> | | |
| | Partnership | | |
| | Responsibility | | |
| Outer Core | Cooperation | | Economy |
| | Fairness | | Elections |
| | <u>Freedom</u> | | Europe |
| | <u>Future</u> | | Labour Government |
| | Government | | <u>New Labour</u> |
| | <u>Human Race</u> | | |
| | <u>Investment</u> | | |
| | <u>New Age</u> | | |
| | <u>New Generation</u> | | |
| | <u>New Politics</u> | | |
| | Opportunity | | |
| | <u>Patriotism</u> | | |
| | Socialism | | |
| | Society | | |
| | Trust | | |
| | Universalism | | |
| | Work | | |

Once again concepts outnumber the other forms of reference apparent in the 1995 morphology, and notably there is a high degree of consistency between these and those voiced in 1994. The continued references to community, cooperation, partnership, opportunity, change and trust indicate a conscious attempt to rearticulate the party's position by reaffirming their stated agenda to the public. As discussed in previous chapters, consistency is vital to an ideological position being perceived as genuine, and in this light under Blair Labour appears to be making a concerted effort to recast Labour's ideology and establish its credibility in the public mind.

Once again the ideological picture is complex. Labour continues to offer a vision of society at conflict with the Conservatives using relatively non-contentious issues such as fairness and opportunity. Even the reference to Socialism, whilst playing on ideological associations, appears more focused on reassuring voters that Labour is not pursuing state control: instead following 'a set of values, a belief in society, in co-operation, in achieving together what we cannot achieve alone' (1995). In this regard whilst many of the concepts are discussed in a conflictual manner or evoke strong ideological associations the points are unlikely to alienate the public.

The table also reveals a reliance upon references used to make indirect ideological points. In many cases these references weave together ideas which previously were presented as directly conflictual. To give an example, the idea of new generation is itself apparently neutral but it

encompasses previously ideological references to future, fairness, intergenerational duties and legacy. In this regard the language used by Blair indicates a form of ideological quietism as ideological ideas are recast in less conflictual terms – this echoes the findings of the last chapter, suggesting that the party attempted to distance themselves from negative ideological associations.

Table 8: 1996 Morphological References

| | CONCEPTS | MOTIFS | CONTEXT |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Inner Core | <u>Investment</u> | <u>Age of Achievement</u> | <u>Education</u> |
| | Opportunity | | Europe |
| | Responsibility | | |
| | Society | | |
| | | | |
| Outer Core | Ambitions | | <u>21st Century</u> |
| | <u>Change</u> | | Britain |
| | Civil Rights | | British People |
| | <u>Defence</u> | | <u>Business</u> |
| | Fairness | | Economy |
| | <u>Family</u> | | Elections |
| | <u>Future</u> | | <u>New Labour</u> |
| | <u>Human Race</u> | | Public Services |
| | <u>Modernisation</u> | | <u>Technology</u> |
| | <u>Partnership</u> | | |
| | <u>Peace</u> | | |
| | <u>Reform</u> | | |
| | <u>Trust</u> | | |
| | Universalism | | |

Once again the degree of consistency between the references at the core of the 1996 speech and those evident in 1994 and 1995 is of primary interest, as is the continued attempt to portray relatively non-contentious issues such as opportunity, responsibility, fairness and society as key to the party’s ideology. Beyond this core the party overwhelmingly presents an indirectly ideological message, suggesting further ideological quietism in the presentation of the party’s vision.

In contemplating the differences with 1982 and 1983 it is also evident that Labour has repositioned itself on a number of issues. Notably, the party has changed its stance on investment – moving from an ideological commitment to greater investment against Tory neglect, to portraying this aim as a self-evident good. Similarly concerns not previously voiced such as the family, technology and business are now positive aspects of the party’s message, suggesting a shift in emphasis. These points once again suggest ideological change post-1994, supporting the idea that New Labour sought to offer an ideological vision distinct from ‘Old Labour’.

Table 9: 1997 Morphological References

| | CONCEPTS | MOTIFS | CONTEXT |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Inner Core | <u>Civilised Nation</u> | <u>Beacon of the World</u> | <u>Education</u> |
| | <u>Modernisation</u> | <u>Hard Choices</u> | |
| | <u>Society</u> | | |
| | | | |
| Outer Core | <u>Change</u> | | British People |
| | <u>Giving Age</u> | | <u>Crime</u> |
| | <u>Investment</u> | | <u>Economy</u> |
| | <u>Quiet Revolution</u> | | <u>Europe</u> |
| | <u>Reform</u> | | <u>New Labour</u> |
| | <u>Revolution</u> | | <u>NHS</u> |
| | <u>Universalism</u> | | <u>Victory</u> |

The 1997 speech is comparatively sparse in references when viewed alongside the other seven – a phenomenon explicable by the fact that this speech occurred after Labour’s victory. This context means that the speech is largely focused on policy progress and victory rather than vision and hence is rather thinner on ideologically significant content than previous speeches.

In terms of ideology the majority of references are used to implicitly convey an ideological position, echoing trends since 1994. Yet direct conflict is present in relation to society, universalism, the economy, Europe and the NHS – issues which, when present, have consistently been coded as overtly ideological. In this sense the consistency discussed in relation to speeches post-1994 is again apparent, a point which when considering the kind of references evoked and the decisive move away from trade unions, nuclear weapons and opposition to the market economy, suggest a clear ideological departure from the party’s position in the 1980s.

Summarising the Initial Trends

In pulling together these strands it appears that there is evidence that the party’s message substantively changed in this period, with analysis indicating that this shift originated prior to 1994 as lexical shifts can be observed in Kinnock’s speeches (see above). This conclusion echoes widespread claims – not least from Blair himself (1995a) – that modernisation began under Kinnock and was the product of a series of incremental changes within the party, appearing to support the argument of the existing literature (Cooke, 2011; Finlayson, 2003; Hay, 1997b; Smith, 1994; Wickham-Jones, 1995). In addition to this shift the above analysis has also revealed two changes within Labour’s mode of ideological communication which can be summarised as follows:

1. The language in which the party articulated its message altered post-1994 with the party moving away from contextual references which referred to

actors, policies, institutions and events, in favour of conceptual references which offered a more abstract vision for society.

2. Post-1994 a form of ideological quietism is evident as Labour came to rely to a much greater extent on indirect references – both valence and non-valence – to convey their vision of the world.

In studying this data it is vital to view these two trends alongside one another because taken alone the first trend, depicted in Figure 12 could appear to contradict much of the prevalent logic around Labour's relationship with ideology.⁷¹ To expand, it is widely stated that Labour was a highly ideological party in the 1980s and that in the process of modernisation those ideological ties became weakened and/or profoundly altered (Barratt Brown & Coates, 1996). However, this data indicates that in 1982 and 1983 – the period of supposed ideological virility - and to a lesser extent 1986 and 1991, Labour's communicative discourse was dominated by contextual indicators not typically seen to convey ideology – namely actors, institutions, events and policy areas. In contrast from 1994 – the point at which Labour is seen to have abandoned its ideology - Labour portrayed an overtly conceptual (and hence ideological) image with relatively few contextual references. This finding runs counter to the grain of existing narratives, however, by taking the trends depicted in Figure 13 into account it is possible to explain how this data is consistent with prevalent logic.

⁷¹ Figures 13 and 14 aggregate the data offered above, showing the extent to which each category (either coding form or reference type) is evident within each speech. Figure 13 displays a clear shift in the type of references used and Figure 14 reveals a change in the way the party's ideological message was conveyed to the public audience.

Figure 12: Longitudinal Analysis of Reference Type

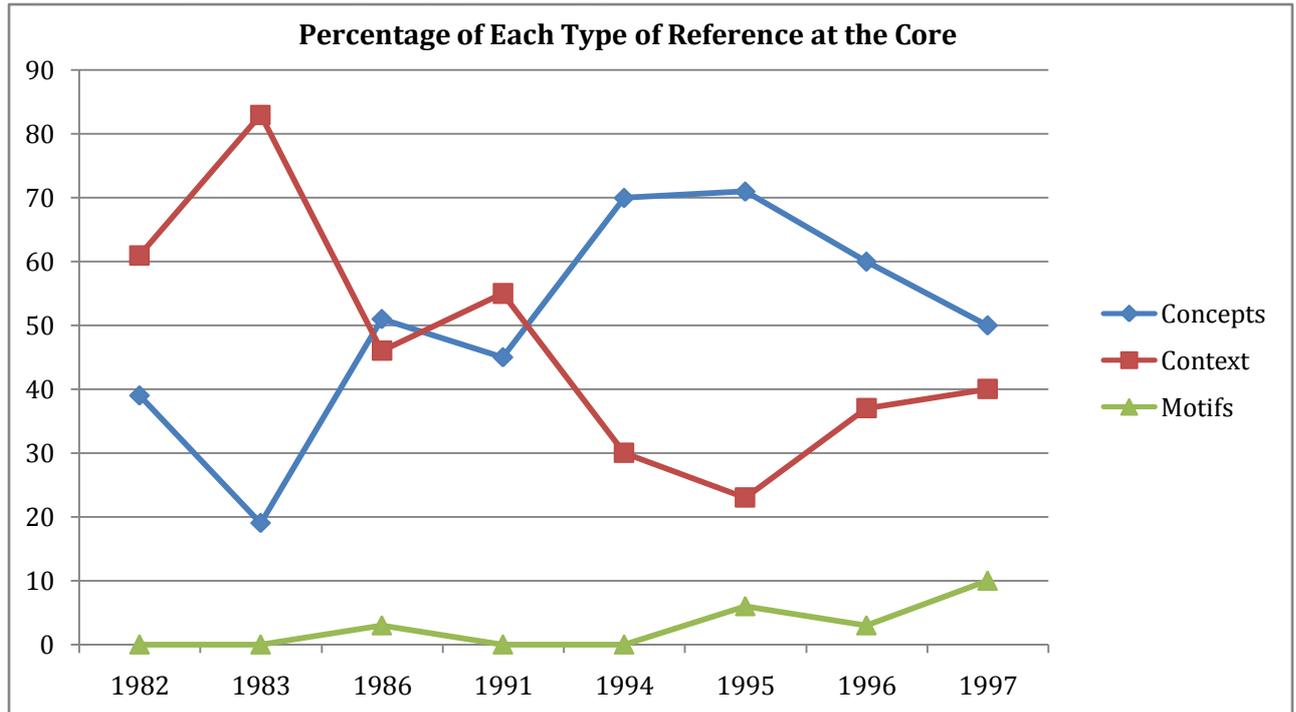
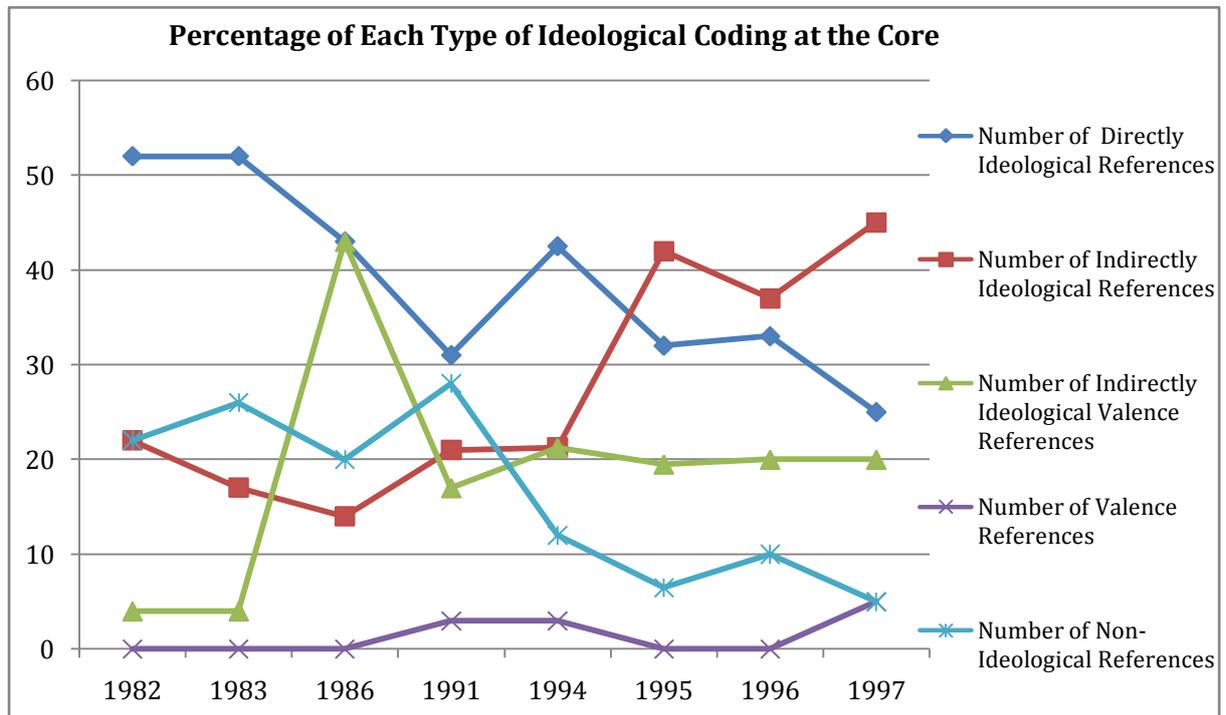


Figure 13: Longitudinal Analysis of Ideological References



This second diagram offers a way of unpacking the apparent contradiction revealed by the first as it indicates a high percentage of directly ideological references in the period in which contextual references were dominant, and a resurgence of indirect ideological points when concepts emerge post-1994. In this sense an ideological shift accompanied the lexical change, suggesting a different way of conveying ideology rather than an absence of ideology as the first diagram alone may indicate. This suggests the importance of looking at multiple trends across the time period examined to ensure that a full picture is gained, but it also reveals the importance of studying how references convey ideology - emphasising the virtues of the multi-stranded methodological approach advanced in this thesis.

As the above chronological analysis has revealed it is only when returning to the text and examining the way in which references are used to make a point that it is possible to grasp the meaning of longitudinal trends. Hence, only by studying the way in which contextual references such as industry, trade unions, nuclear arms and the economy were used in the 1980s was it possible to discern the strong ideological message which underpinned each citation. Similarly, only by crosschecking such references with later invocations made by Blair is it possible to detect the degree to which the party changed its position on, for example, the economy. Continuity and change is examined in greater detail in the latter stages of this chapter but at this point it is sufficient to contend evidence of ideological change in the party's rhetoric, once again reinforcing existing depictions. In studying ideology from a public perspective this is significant as it suggests an attempt to communicatively convey change and thus a determination to alter public perceptions. With this in mind I briefly diverge from my analysis of the nature of Labour's ideological change to probe the likely reception of their ideological message and the potential for the party's professed ideological shifts to be deemed relevant.

Detecting Ideological Relevance

The process of discerning ideological relevance outlined in chapter three introduced the principle of examining context, alternative motivations and consistency in order to determine whether ideology was likely to be seen to drive party behaviour. In considering New Labour's ideology I examine speeches between 1994 and 1997 for evidence of ideological change, focusing on Blair's attempts to modernise the party. It is important to note that a more expansive focus of inquiry considering the earlier speeches examined here would be informative and that my analysis is simply confined to these cases due to constraints of space.

In presenting my analysis I offer an illustrative demonstration of how ideological relevance can be assessed; examining the electoral pressures on the party (to detail how alternative motivations can be discerned), and scrutinising one policy area to examine consistency.

However, as indicated in the last chapter, an analysis of context is not only informative in regards to ideological relevance, it can also offer insights relevant for the coding processes (applied above) which underpin my analysis. Accordingly, before outlining my analytical conclusions about the perceived relevance of New Labour's ideology I first briefly discuss the broader methodological insights available through this analysis.

Context and Alternative Motivations

Context and alternative motivations are highly informative for the coding judgments made in the course of my analysis because they cast light on the likely importance of a specific reference (and hence the emphasis placed upon it in a morphology), and the ideological significance of a reference (i.e. whether it is ideologically significant or whether it is present due to recent events). To expand I discuss these points further with reference to examples.

In relation to the first point, concerning the importance of references, it is possible to identify instances which, in hindsight, appear unimportant but when understood in the contemporary context come to hold new prominence. So, for example, in 1996 Blair commented:

'I don't care where you are coming from; it is where your country is going that matters. If you believe in what I believe, then join our team. Labour has come home to you, so come home to us. Labour's coming home!' (1996a).

In coding this extract the references to home and team are relatively innocuous, used more to describe Labour than carrying significance in their own right, hence in coding this passage Labour Party and British People are the only references recorded. On the basis of this passage alone neither of these references appears to have particular prominence and could be assumed to lie at the periphery of the party's morphology and be of only marginal interest when trying to grasp the party's message. However, when placed in context this passage evokes the refrain 'football's coming home' from the official 'Three Lions' anthem for the Euro 1996 football tournament. Understood in this context these words stand out from the rest of the speech as they create an intertextual reference to current events. Thus, whilst the same basic aims are apparent the significance of these words is only fully grasped when context is appreciated as Labour are making an implicit attempt to reach out and align themselves with football fans. In this instance context is vital to ensuring that reference coding reflects the likely interpretation of the audience, resulting here in both references being seen to be of greater importance to the party's message (as evident by their location at the outer core). In this regard appreciating context is vital to ensuring that the coding of references reflects likely public interpretations.

Moving to the second insight, concerning ideological significance, there are also instances in which context can help explain variations in a party's morphological picture as specific events force an issue onto a party's agenda. For example, in 1994 the concept of trust was injected into Labour's morphology (and appeared thereafter), potentially indicating an ideological shift, however an examination of context reveals this reference to be contextually informed and thus to have an indirect valence status. To expand, in October 1994 the Guardian broke a story which was to become known as the 'cash for questions scandal' involving Neil Hamilton and Tim Smith, both Conservative Ministers who had received money to ask questions in the House of Commons (The Guardian, 20th October 1994). This revelation was significant as it confirmed a growing sense of public distrust and disillusionment with the Government. It is in this context that the concept of trust comes to figure in Labour's speeches, indicating that rather than being a new concern dreamt up by the party leadership, Labour were instead attempting to exploit negative perceptions of the opposition by emphasising the issue of trust. In this sense the reference is not coded as ideological, but rather as an indirect valence reference.

Taken together these two examples therefore reveal the insights that at an appreciation of context and alternative motivations can offer when trying to reach coding judgements. For this reason the contextual analysis conducted for an examination of ideological relevance is also seen to be relevant for the other coding processes which underpin this mode of party political ideology analysis. Having clarified these points I now return to questions of ideological relevance, exploring context and alternative motivations around the 1994 speech to offer an illustrative example of the insights this analysis can provide. To do so I consider the electoral context in which Labour found itself in this period, indicating that other potential drives for party behaviour were readily apparent.

In first considering the contextual references evident within the speech itself it is clear that elections loom large. In the opening passages Blair directs attention to Labour's recent electoral success, citing how '[i]n May we won over 2,500 new seats. We have won four by-elections this year, and three of our new MPs are women. In the European elections too we gained record numbers of seats. My friends, these were not opinion polls. They were elections, and we are winning them' (1994). In this sense he foregrounds the party's viability and asserts the need for success, but he also acknowledges the party's past electoral failures, stating '[a]t the next election the voters will have had this Tory government for 17 or 18 years' (ibid). This analysis therefore reveals elections to be prominent within party rhetoric, underlining the ample possibility that other non-ideological factors could be publically deemed to be driving party behaviour.

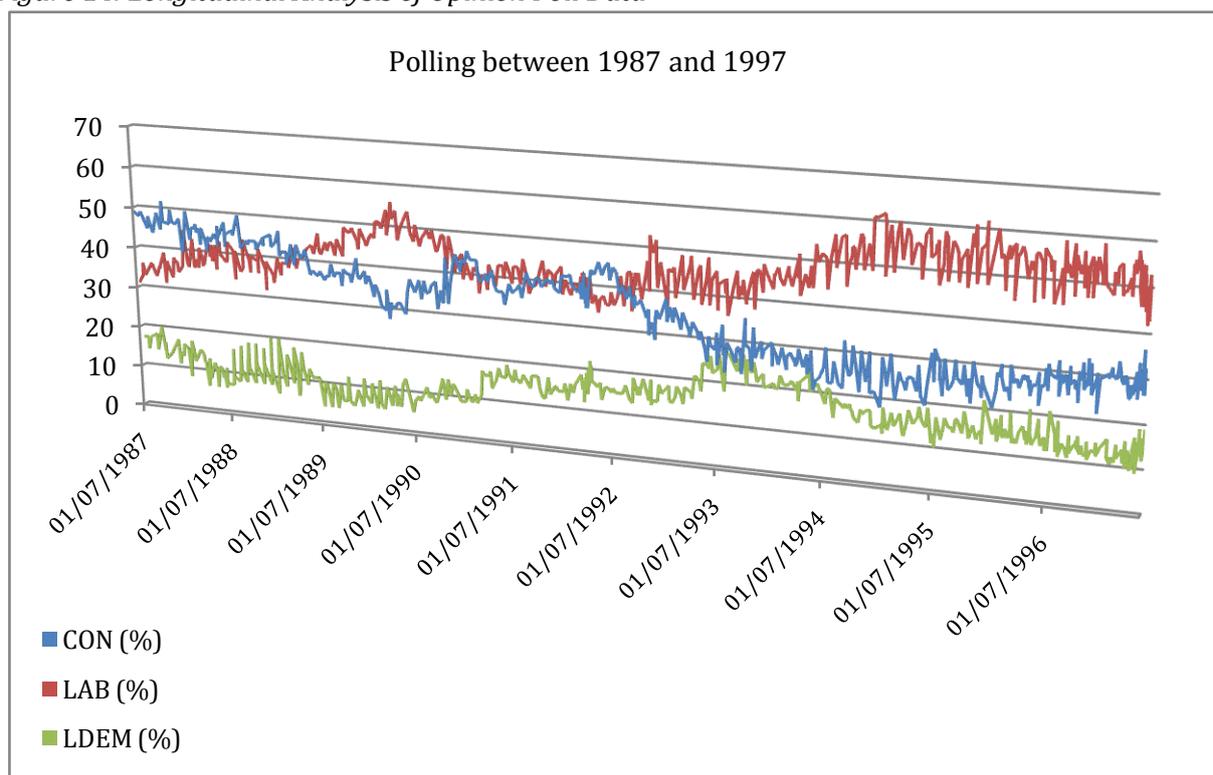
The pertinence of elections in further revealed when conducting a more expansive analysis as it becomes apparent that electoral results, polling and supporter demographics all provide impetus for party change. As noted at the start of chapter four, Labour appeared to exist in the electoral wilderness, suffering an electoral, organisational and ideological crisis which barred the party from office. From the general election in 1979, the party had suffered four consecutive general election defeats, and in 1992 was achieving a lower share of the vote than in 1979 (see Table 10).

Table 10: General Election Results between 1979 and 1997

| | Labour % | Conservatives % | Liberal Democrats % | Other % |
|------|----------|-----------------|---------------------|---------|
| 1979 | 37 | 44 | 14 | 5 |
| 1983 | 28 | 42 | 25 | 5 |
| 1987 | 31 | 42 | 23 | 4 |
| 1992 | 34 | 42 | 18 | 6 |
| 1997 | 43 | 31 | 17 | 9 |

Source: Collated using data from Politics Resources.

Figure 14: Longitudinal Analysis of Opinion Poll Data



Source: Collated using data from UK Polling Report

Even in a climate of high dissatisfaction with the Conservatives Labour failed to achieve electoral success. As Figure 14 demonstrates the defeat in 1992 followed a period of sustained leads in the polls, revealing Labour's inability to convert significant disillusionment with the

Government into greater electoral support. The party's future viability was further cast into question by a decline in their traditional support base. As Kavanagh describes:

'[L]abour's support was increasingly confined to the declining sectors of society—trade unions, the north of Britain, the council estates and the working class. The party had not gained over 40% of the vote since 1970. Its 'normal' or average share of the vote had slumped to one third of the electorate by 1992, way behind the Conservatives' (1997, pp.534-534).

Taken alongside the fall in party membership by 1994 to around 280,000 members (ibid., pp.534-535) Labour faced considerable electoral motivations to change its electoral strategy to appeal to a wider section of the population, and to confront negative perceptions of its image. Moreover, this impetus was readily apparent to the public and hence was likely to impact on public perceptions of party behaviour.

In accordance with this data it is therefore apparent that members of the public may have been sceptical of the ideological significance of party change, potentially seeing it instead to mark an electorally motivated rebranding process. Yet, as indicated in chapter three, in order to judge the extent to which other motivations were seen to be driving party behaviour it is necessary to examine the consistency with which the party outlined and enacted its vision.

Judging Consistency: Policy and Policy Justifications

Ideally an assessment of consistency would take in speeches produced by other party elites in this period and would catalogue the degree to which Labour delivered on its policy agenda in office. However, due to constraints of space and my immediate concern with contemporary attitudes before the 1997 electoral victory, I curtail my analysis to policies and policy justifications advanced in the 1997 manifesto. Rather than examining the entire policy agenda – quite a task considering its near 18,000 words – I focus instead on the topic of education. By examining the policy proposals produced in the eight speeches examined here (seven before and one after the production of the manifesto) and those evident in the manifesto it is possible to gauge the consistency with which policies were advanced - specifically between 1994 and 1997. Having done so attention turns to examine the rationale offered to justify the educational policy of nursery places for three and four year olds and the consistency of message therein.

Table 11: Tracing Continuities in Education Policy between the Labour Manifesto and Previous Speeches

| Manifesto Policy Pledges | 91 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Promote lifelong learning at work and through further education | X | | | | |
| Independent Learning Accounts | | | | | |
| Investing in People Initiative | | | | | |
| Enhance opportunities for children over the age of 14 to acquire knowledge and experience within industry and commerce by supporting broader A Levels | | | | | |
| Enhance opportunities for children over the age of 14 to acquire knowledge and experience within industry and commerce by supporting upgraded vocational qualifications | X | | | | |
| BT and cable companies will wire up schools, libraries, colleges and hospitals to the information superhighway free of charge. Make charges as low as possible | | X | X | X | |
| Home School Contracts | | | X | | X |
| Access to computer technology | | | X | X | X |
| National grid for Learning to bring teachers up to date materials to advance their skills and children high quality education materials | | | | X | X |
| Give each child their own e-mail address | | | | | |
| Lifelong learning through a new University for Industry | | | X | X | |
| Nursery places for all 4 year olds | X | | X | X | X |
| Targets for universal provision for 3 year olds | | | X | X | X |
| Mandatory qualifications for head teachers | | | | X | X |
| General teaching council to raise standards in profession | | | | | |
| Teachers have an induction year when they first begin teaching | | | | | |
| More spending on education as the cost of unemployment falls. Raise proportion of national income spent on education | | | | X | X |
| Class sizes cut to 30 or under for 5, 6 and 7 year olds | | | X | X | X |
| Attack low standards in schools. Stronger focus on literacy in curriculum. Every child to leave school with reading age of at least 11. Numeracy task force and ambitious targets. Use phonetics and interactive class teaching | | | X | X | X |
| Student Maintenance repaid on income related basis | | | | | X |
| Pilot literacy summer schools | | | | | X |
| National guidelines on minimum periods for homework for primary and secondary school pupils | | | | | X |
| Public private partnership to build schools | | | | | X |
| 'Set' students | | | | | |
| Admission policies for local Grammar schools to be decided by local parents | | | | | |
| Fresh start for failing schools where they can be closed and re-opened | | | | | |
| Bad schools can be taken over by good local schools | | | | | X |
| Education Action Zones to attack low standards by recruiting best teachers | | | | | |
| Support voluntary mentoring schemes to provide one to one support to disadvantaged pupils | | | | | |
| Scheme with premier League for the benefit of local children in under achieving urban areas. Piloted in 1997/8 season | | | | | |
| Integration of pupils with SEN into mainstream education while recognising that specialist facilities are essential to meet particular | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| needs | | | | | |
| More parent governors and parent representatives on LEAs | | | | | |
| Pupil referral units to protect schools and pupils from disruptive pupils | | | | | |
| LEAs to devolve powers to schools and to be inspected by OFSTEAD and the Audit Commission | | | | | |
| Grant maintained schools will not close | | | | | |

Source: Labour Party (1997).

As the table above reveals a large number of policy proposals were made in the area of education and an array of new ideas were presented. Whilst this may appear at first glance to indicate a lack of continuity, in many instances the party's policies are refinements of earlier, vaguer commitments. Hence, the pledge to raise standards made in 1996 and 1997 is unpacked with specific policies on setting students, education action zones, an induction year for new teachers and a general teaching council. In this sense the plurality of policies are mostly linked to ideas which had previously been voiced by the party. Indeed, across the five speeches only four pledges made in speeches do not feature in the manifesto. In this regard Labour did widely deliver on the pledges they made post-1991, indicating consistency in the application of their ideas and thus a high degree of reliability in delivering on their stated rationale. For this reason it appears that Labour did little rhetorically to dissuade an audience from seeing their utterances to be indicative of their likely future actions.

A similar consistency is evident in the party's vision for education as apparent when considering the justification for the party's commitment to nursery places in 1995, 1996, 1997 and the relevant passage of the manifesto.⁷²

1995: 'Thirty-fifth in the education league may be good enough for the Tories but I didn't come into politics satisfied for Britain to be 35th best at anything. What an appalling record to have. We are going to put our education system right - no more dogma, no more arguments about structures, for every school, fair and equal funding, no return to selection, academic or social, but a new deal in our classrooms. / We will be the champions of standards for the 21st century: more support and in return, more demand for achievement; the aim of a nursery place for every three and four year old' (Blair, 1995).

⁷² Whilst a pledge to providing nursery places was also made in 1991 this passage is not considered here. This is because this speech was made by Kinnock and contains different rationale to that offered by Blair. Whilst the changes which occurred are of interest a comparison here would detract from the focus on consistency pursued at this specific point.

1996: 'The first wonder of the world is the mind of a child. I sometimes sit reading a newspaper, watching TV, and you look up and you see your children at a computer, and you marvel at what they can do, using that computer as easily as we would read a book. Yet we are 35th in the world league of education standards today - 35th. They say give me the boy at seven, I'll show you the man at 70. Well give me the education system that is 35th in the world today and I will give you the economy that is 35th in the world tomorrow. (Applause) / So let us set about this task at every level - radical improvement and reform for our children; a teaching profession trained, able to stand alongside the best in the world and valued as such. No to Tory nursery vouchers, yes to proper nursery places for all our children' (Blair, 1996).

1997: 'We are launching the biggest assault on poor literacy and numeracy standards this country has seen. We are setting a target of 80% up to the standard in literacy, 75% for numeracy by the year 2002, and we'll keep on until every 11 year old in every school in every part of Britain gets the start in life that they deserve. And I repeat the promise I made at the election, that over the lifetime of this parliament, we will reverse the Tory policy of cutting spending on education as a proportion of our national income and raise it once again, beginning with £1 billion extra next year. / Nursery vouchers have gone and instead we'll get nursery places for all four year olds and we're on the way to places for all three year olds too. The money will be there, but in return hard choices and modernisation. No failure. No muddling through. No second best. High standards. The pursuit of excellence. Discipline and leadership. Support from home. Not for some children in some schools. But for all children in all schools' (Blair, 1997).

In each of these three extracts a remarkable degree of consistency is apparent. The theme of standards is particularly prominent with all three referencing the pursuit of high standards and the first two using the same international comparison to emphasise the point. There are also consistent references to reform, symbolised in the first passage by the statement 'put our education system right' (1995) and in the others by references to reform and modernisation. The principle of universalism is also apparent in all three as conveyed by references to the importance of standards for 'every 11 year old' (1997) and education 'for all our children'

(1997). A commitment to providing proper places for children is also made, leading to the explicit rejection of nursery vouchers in 1996 and 1997. Admittedly there are some variations, such as the reference to fair and equal funding in 1995 and the explicit link between education and the economy in 1996, yet even taking this into account the message of standards, state provision and universalism is common to each passage.

Turning to the manifesto these themes are also in evidence:

‘Quality nursery education guaranteed for all four year-olds

Nursery vouchers have been proven not to work. They are costly and do not generate more quality nursery places. We will use the money saved by scrapping nursery vouchers to guarantee places for four year-olds. We will invite selected local authorities to pilot early excellence centres combining education and care for the under-fives. We will set targets for universal provision for three year-olds whose parents want it’ (Labour Party, 1997).

In this passage there is a clear commitment to standards as communicated by the reference to ‘excellent centres’ and ‘targets’, the notion of universalism, evident in the commitment to ‘universal provision’, and the idea of quality nursery places. Interestingly the argument against nursery vouchers is couched explicitly in terms of public spending and quality provision for children, chiming with the other extracts examined here. Whilst there are variations in the language used to discuss spending on education, the party does commit to financing this policy, echoing earlier, vaguer pledges to provide ‘fair and equal funding’ (1995) and promising in 1997 that ‘the money will be there’ and the ‘policy of cutting spending on education as a proportion of our national income will be reversed’.

In this analysis there accordingly appears to be a high degree of consistency in the references used to outline the party’s policy on nursery places. This indicates a coherent, consistently applied approach to educational policy. Through this example it is therefore possible to conclude that whilst Labour would have been seen to face considerable electoral motivations to change, the consistency with which they voiced ideology suggests a genuine commitment to the ideas outlined. Hence, even if initially sceptical of changes in the party’s message Labour are likely to have been seen to have voiced a reliable ideological message which guided their actions and judgements.

Yet, in making this point it is important to remain conscious of the ideological quietism uncovered earlier, a trend which indicates that whilst Labour may have been consistent, they

were also wary of ideological associations. Accordingly, whilst Labour can be seen to offer a clear value based vision of society, some indicators do suggest that the party moved away from ideology. On this evidence it is therefore possible to conclude that in Labour Party rhetoric ideology may have appeared less relevant than in the past, but it still remained present – indicating its ongoing pertinence. I return to discuss the relevance of ideology further in the conclusion but in this chapter I now turn to the existing literature to attempt to characterise Labour’s ideological shift.

Returning to the Existing Literature

To reprise, in the last chapter four broad headings were identified under which scholars offered variations of arguments that either:

1. New Labour has changed its ideology
2. New Labour displays ideological continuity
3. New Labour is ideologically innovative
4. New Labour is not ideological

In what follows I return to these explanations through the prism of my own analysis in an attempt to discern which of these narratives most closely matches my own findings, and which is therefore appropriate when attempting to characterise New Labour’s ideological position. In focusing on these four categories of explanation I explore two different analytical questions. These are:

1. To what extent does Labour’s ideological position post-1994 display continuities and/or changes with the ideological position previously projected by the party between 1982 and 1991? and
2. Is New Labour’s ideological position best understood as social democratic, Thatcherite, ideologically innovative or non-ideological?

In addressing these questions I draw inspiration from the literature but do not seek to emulate specific forms of inquiry, rather I echo the spirit of their arguments to offer my own assessment of the party’s ideological position.

Continuity or Change?

The first question is relevant to three of the categories presented above as Heffernan (2001) and Jessop (2003) point to change, Steven Fielding (2003) and Stephen Meredith (2003) to continuities, and Buckler and Dolowitz (2000a) and Freeden (1999) to aspects of continuity and

change. Hence this analysis provides a preliminary means of arbitrating between their claims. Whereas attention focused in the first stage of analysis upon the concepts at the morphological core and the rhetorical trends recorded therein, here I focus on continuity and change in references recorded across the morphologies between 1994-1997 and 1982-1991. In view of the 283 separate references noted analysis concentrates on the concepts evoked. Whilst this does exclude consideration of motifs and contextual references it allows the novelty of New Labour's conceptual attempt to redefine the party to be assessed. In Table 12 references from the core, outer core and margin are evident with concepts coded (ideologically) differently across time signified by orange shading. By studying this data I argue that there is evidence of continuity *and* change within the party's rhetoric, indicating the pertinence of an innovative characterisation of ideological change.

Table 12: Tabulating Continuity and Change in Labour Ideology

| Continued | New | Dropped |
|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Accountability | Ambitions | Civilised Society |
| Anti-Discrimination | Aspiration | Common Action |
| Borrowing | Bureaucracy | Common Cause |
| Change | Civil Liberties | Common Good |
| Choice | Civil Rights | Common Interest |
| Citizens | Civilised Nation | Common Sense |
| Community | Class | Crisis |
| Competition | Collective Security | Debt |
| Confidence | Common Purpose | Famine |
| Cooperation | Compassion | Fresh Direction |
| Defence | Creative | Future Generations |
| Deficit | Discrimination | Innovation |
| Democracy | Enlightened Patriotism | Insecurity |
| Democratic Socialism | Enterprise | Interdependence |
| Duty | Equal Worth | Internationalism |
| Employment | Fear | International Rights |
| Equality | Flexibility | Intervention |
| Fairness | Full Employment | Modern Country |
| Family | Get On | Moral Majority |
| Freedom | Giving Age | Moral Obligation |
| Future | High Ideals | Obligations |
| Government | Human Rights | One World |
| Growth | Human Solidarity | Production |
| Hope | Inequality | Productivity |
| Human Race | International Cooperation | Profit |
| Individual | Life Chances | Protection |
| Interests | Mainstream | Provision |
| Investment | Modern Age | Recovery |
| Justice | Modern World | Social Ownership |
| Leadership | National Ethos | Sovereignty |
| Liberty | New Age | Terrorism |
| Modern | New Generation | Value for Money |

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Modernisation | New Politics | War |
| Nation | New World | Waste |
| National Interests | Potential | Wellbeing |
| Needs | Public Ownership | Women's Rights |
| Opportunity | Quality | |
| Partnership | Quiet Revolution | |
| Patriotism | Reconciliation | |
| Peace | Reform | |
| Poverty | Renewal | |
| Power | Respect | |
| Privatisation | Revolution | |
| Progress | Self and Mutual Improvement | |
| Prosperity | Self and Mutual Support | |
| Responsibility | Social Justice | |
| Rights | Solidarity | |
| Security | Stake-Holding | |
| Serve | State | |
| Skills | Tolerance | |
| Socialism | Trust | |
| Society | Vision | |
| Standards | Work | |
| Support | | |
| Talent | | |
| Unemployment | | |
| Universalism | | |

Interpreting this data is by no means simple as whilst at first glance significant areas of continuity are apparent, there are also numerous new and dropped references. Accordingly I take each column in turn. First, in relation to continuity the predominance of references under this heading gives the impression of widespread consistency as key ideas such as choice, duty, democracy, future, investment, liberty, modernisation, opportunity, poverty, progress, Socialism and universalism are ongoing elements of Labour's message. Whilst the precise application of these concepts may change - for example investment refers to a call for a British Investment Bank in 1986 and greater private and public investment in 1994 - the overarching ideological ethos remains the same; advancing a vision for society in which each individual is given the chance to succeed, democracy, freedom and equality thrive, and the interests and prospects of future generations are protected. Thus Kinnock's desire to leave a country that is 'secure, prosperous, just and free to our children' is reflected in Blair's commitment to the concepts of security, prosperity, justice, freedom and the future (Kinnock, 1986). In this regard continuity in message in this period is evident - suggesting the pertinence of traditional social democratic and socialist ideals.

However, in considering continuity the orange coding is particularly significant as it reveals changes in inscription and thus ideological shifts which could easily go unnoticed. To illustrate,

in 1986 defence was initially linked directly to an anti-nuclear stance, arguing that 'by pursuing a nuclear-dependent defence policy, the present government is diminishing the conventional defence of our country' (Kinnock, 1986). Yet in 1996 Blair simply asserts '[w]e will be strong in defence' (1996a), a vision which is not ideologically linked to disarmament, but is more abstract. This reveals a change in stance which, if not examined in detail could be overlooked and seen to indicate continuity – in this sense my coding techniques offer greater insight into continuity and change apparent in this period – suggesting that both traits are significant.

Turning to the list of new concepts it appears that New Labour injected a range of new considerations but, on closer examination I argue that many of these new references mark a moment of re-inscription rather than radical change. This point is signalled by the degree of overlap between the new references and those which are continually present or have been dropped. For example: equal worth (new) is connected to equality (continued); human rights (new) links to rights (continued) and universalism (continued); renewal (new) and reform (new) tie to change (continued) and modernisation (continued); and aspiration (new), ambition (new) and potential (new) to the existing theme of opportunity. This suggests continuity rather than change, but does indicate that an attempt was made to redefine these positions in the public mind. Having acknowledged these overlaps there are some references which appear to advance a genuinely different ideological position. The injection of bureaucracy, enterprise, flexibility, get on, quality, revolution and stake-holding are indicative here as they suggest a critique of the state (through the concept of bureaucracy), support for the market and business (enterprise), and a new economic philosophy based on stake-holding. These points differ dramatically to previous emphasis on state intervention, suggesting an acceptance of market economics – and thus the need to look beyond Labour's ideological traditions when seeking to characterise the party's position.

Finally, the column of dropped concepts again offers a mixed picture as many of these references live on in new citations, suggesting a change in language rather than a wholesale rejection of these ideas. Accordingly social ownership (dropped) can be closely equated to the new reference to public ownership (new); women's rights (dropped) links to the reference to human rights (new) and rights (continued); protection (dropped) connects with security (continued); and obligation (dropped) links to duty (continued). Of course the terms are not used in the exact same sense, but there are linkages, as evident when examining obligation and duty. To illustrate, in 1991 Kinnock stated: '[i]t is for that reason that our environmental policies are centred on government accepting its obligations to protect and promote sustainable development and on citizens being given the right in law to ensure that those obligations are fully met', indicating Labour's expectations of government. In 1995 Blair similarly stated '[w]e

all suffer crime and the poorest and vulnerable most of all. It is the duty of government to protect them' (1995a) revealing a similar sense of governmental obligation. In this regard, when looking beyond the first column there is considerable evidence of continuity. This reinforces the idea that Blair was trying to recast perceptions of the Labour Party by making rhetorical rather than radical substantive shifts. However, within this column there is some evidence of a change of direction as the concepts interdependence, internationalism, intervention, and an array of references to common action, cause, good and interest were dropped. This signals a shift away from the collectivist, international ideas evident in speeches before 1994, suggesting an ideological departure in favour of the individualist focus conveyed by new references such as get on and aspiration. In this regard change does appear to have occurred.

In drawing these different findings together neither continuity nor change triumphs, rather a muddy picture of continuity and change is painted.⁷³ This suggests that in attempting to characterise change it is necessary to look at traditions within the party and external influences, suggesting the pertinence of a range of different traditions when attempting to characterise New Labour's ideological position. In the above evidence the presence of references such as stake-holding, enterprise and flexibility alongside equality, justice and poverty suggests the pertinence of an ideologically innovative characterisation as such accounts have the capacity to reflect the presence of traditional themes and new ideas. Yet, in order to advance this claim further I move to examine the pertinence of social democratic, Thatcherite, innovative and non-ideological explanations in greater detail.

Social Democracy?

In light of the trends of continuity evidenced above I first consider linkages between New Labour and social democratic ideas. Whilst scholars exploring ideological continuity have focused on a wide range of ideological traditions within the party – such as socialism and ethical socialism – I examine this strand because of the longevity of debates around social democracy in the Labour Party (Crosland, 2006; Hattersley & Hickson, 2012; Marquand, 1999a; 1999b). Rather than focusing on a conception of social democracy used within the literature examined earlier I draw inspiration from these analyses and conduct my own investigation using Paul Hirst's three part definition. He defined social democracy as follows, stating:

'[f]irst, that it attempts to minimise the cost of capitalism for individuals, either through growth and employment enhancing policies, and/or, through welfare state provision for the contingencies of unemployment, ill-health and old age. Secondly, and this distinguishes it from social

⁷³ This picture has allowed the many competing accounts of Labour's ideological changes to emerge.

market versions of the welfare state, that it attempts to tackle and reduce major unjustifiable inequalities in power and wealth. Thirdly, that it accomplish these objectives within the limits set by parliamentary democracy on the one hand, and private property and the market economy on the other' (Hirst, 1999, p.87).

In view of this definition I concentrate first on Labour's approach to unemployment and welfare, studying the party's rhetoric on unemployment and the welfare state to discern continuities with the social democratic traits cited by Hirst. Second I consider Labour's approach to inequality, exploring the party's position on the redistribution of power and wealth. In considering these themes I conclude that whilst there is evidence that Labour moved to offer greater welfare provision, reduce unemployment, devolve power, and enhance individual opportunities for prosperity, these moves were not rhetorically justified through the social democratic language of redistribution, inequality and capitalism. In this sense I argue that Labour continued to pursue many of the aims and policies associated with social democracy, but that they did not align their agenda with this ideological perspective; suggesting that this frame alone is not sufficient in attempting to capture the party's ideological position. To facilitate analysis of these points I have extracted a range of pertinent references from my outputs which are presented in Table 13.

Table13: Social Democratic References

| LIST OF REFERENCES | 1982 | 1983 | 1986 | 1991 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| RESPONDING TO CAPITALISM: | | | | | | | | |
| Employment | | * | * | | * | * | | |
| Growth | | * | * | * | | * | | |
| Pensions | | | * | * | * | * | | * |
| Unemployment | * | | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Welfare system | | * | * | | * | * | * | * |
| VALUES: | | | | | | | | |
| Equal Worth | | | | | | * | | |
| Equality | | | | * | * | | | |
| Inequality | | | | | | | * | * |
| Universalism | | | | * | * | * | * | * |
| TACKLING INEQUALITY: POWER | | | | | | | | |
| Age of Achievement | | | | | | | * | |
| Democracy | * | | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Government | | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| New Britain | | | | | * | * | | * |
| Power | | * | * | * | * | * | | |
| Public Ownership | | | | | * | * | * | |
| Rights | * | | | * | * | * | | * |
| Stake-Holding | | | | | * | * | * | * |
| TACKLING INEQUALITY: WEALTH | | | | | | | | |
| Prosperity | | | | * | | * | | |
| Tax | | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

This table is split into four categories, first listing the criteria for assessing the party's response to capitalism, second listing references to values associated with social democracy, and third and fourth exhibiting references to power and wealth. In considering the first column it is clear that the party were concerned with issues surrounding the welfare state and sought to provide social services. Indeed, the party assert that they possess 'the same values as it ever did. Fighting poverty and unemployment' (1997), and evince a clear rhetorical commitment to protecting the elderly and sick. For example, in 1996 Blair asserted '[w]e will provide security in old age. Let me say this to you: previous Labour governments did their duty by British pensioners, and so will the next Labour government' (1996a). In this sense the party is seeking to adapt the provision of services to new times, yet in so doing some market rationale does enter the party's vision as apparent in the comment that 'government's role is going to be to organise provision - like new stakeholder pensions not fund it all through ever-higher taxes. And our number one duty is to get help to the poorest pensioners first' (Blair, 1997). This envisages a less proactive state role, with individuals having their needs met through the state

and market. In this sense whilst a desire to protect individuals does remain, the means through which that is secured are different.

Turning to the welfare system the desire to pursue 'employment enhancing policies, and/or, through welfare state provi[de] for the contingencies of unemployment' (Hirst, 1999, p.87) is also apparent but emphasis is placed primarily on securing employment opportunities rather than offering more expansive welfare provision. As Blair argues 'people on benefits need and deserve better - not more benefits, but help in getting off benefits, because welfare should be about opportunity and security in a changing world. It is about helping people to move on and move up. Because the world has changed, the welfare state has had to change with it' (Blair, 1994). Accordingly Labour is moving away from the idea of an expansive welfare state to promote a proactive system in which individuals are helped back into work. Although tallying with Hirst's definition this approach could be seen to align with Thatcherite notions of welfare dependency, therefore I turn to discuss the party's approach to inequality in order to discern whether social market or social democratic rationale underpins these welfare policies.

In considering the second part of Table 13 it initially appears that the party are concerned with inequality as the language of equal worth, equality and universalism is apparent in their rhetoric. But, on closer examination many of these references are abstracted from issues of power and wealth – articulated as general guiding principles rather than tied to specific initiatives. For example in 1994 Blair asserts Labour's commitment to the idea that each individual has 'the right to be treated equally as a citizen' (1994) and asserts that inequality gives Labour its 'reason for existence' (1997). However, few of these ideas are mobilised to diagnose specific ills and guide the party's response. The one exception comes in 1994 when Blair critiques the markets capacity to deliver 'equality and prosperity to all' (Blair, 1994), yet even here this is not expanded to justify an alternative economic approach. On this evidence it therefore appears that whilst evoking social democratic language Labour did not connect these principles to policy.

Turning to the second dimension of social democracy cited by Hirst, power and wealth, it is apparent that Blair displays a clear rhetorical and policy commitment to the devolution of power, arguing '[w]e are putting forward the biggest programme of change to democracy ever proposed by a political party' by legislating for a Bill of Rights, devolving power to Wales and Scotland, abolishing quangos, introducing a Freedom of Information Act and reforming the House of Commons and Lords (amongst a range of other initiatives). In this way Labour offered a raft of proposals which sought to bring Government 'closer to the people' by taking 'power back from big government and share it with the people' (Blair, 1995a) to create a society in

which 'everyone has a stake and everyone plays a part' (Blair, 1995a). The reference to the age of achievement sums up the party's approach at this level as there is a clear commitment to ensuring that '[t]here is a place for all the people in New Britain, and there is a role for all the people in its creation' (1996a). In this regard the party are clearly concerned with the distribution of power, but they do not articulate this agenda in social democratic terms. As the quotes above indicate, the principle of inequality is not evoked to justify these moves, rather initiatives are presented as common sense. Hence once again the party does align with social democratic ideas but eschews the language of this ideological tradition.

Turning, finally, to the economic dimension the table suggests that social democratic ideals are far less resonant as the notion of redistribution is absent and inequalities in wealth are not directly tackled. Whilst some critique is offered of the Conservatives as the party of millionaires (1994), this does not lead to a progressive, redistributive policy agenda, rather Blair strives to create 'a new Britain - a nation reborn, prosperous, secure, united - one Britain' (1994). In this sense the party focuses on improving everyone's standard of life through economic growth and greater prospects of the worst off rather. This approach is encapsulated by Blair's comment that:

'[i]n Britain we are still in the 30-30-40 economy: 30 per cent do very well, 30 per cent just getting by, 40 per cent struggling or worse. / When the Tories talk about the spirit of enterprise they mean a few self-made millionaires. Well, best of luck to them. But there should be a spirit of enterprise and achievement on the shop floor, in the office as well: in the 16 year-old who starts as an office girl with the realistic chance of ending up as the office manager; in the young graduate with the confidence to take initiatives; in the secretary who takes time out to learn a new language and comes back to search for a new and better job. These people have enterprise within them. They have talent and potential within them. Ask me my three main priorities for government and I tell you: education, education and education' (1996a).

This passage reveals the party's tolerance of success and wealth at the upper end of the spectrum with no reference to unjust rewards or a desire to redress the top of this distribution, rather emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for individuals to obtain wealth. This approach is reflected in references to ambition, aspiration, life chances and get on which convey the party's concern with tackling the symptoms of the current economic distribution rather than addressing the cause. In this sense Blair sees '[t]he true radical mission of the Labour

Party, new and old, is this: not to hold people back but to help them get on - all the people' (Blair, 1996a), a perspective reflected in the party's desire to make the system fairer (as reflected in their tax policy (1994)), and help people better themselves. So, whilst the party do assert that a country in which 'a few winners take all rather than all of us as winners' is 'not right, it is not in people's interests' (Blair, 1996a) they do not portray that distribution as unjust, but rather attempt to maximise people's chances to do well. This logic diverts substantially from the social democratic vision set out by Hirst, indicating the predominance of a social market philosophy. Given Andrew Gamble's comments regarding the linkages between social market ideas and Thatcherism this trend suggests that the latter label may have explanatory purchase (Gamble, 1979).

In rhetorical terms New Labour did not therefore present an overtly social democratic agenda as whilst concerned with welfare provision and equality these ideas were not entwined to diagnose and respond to inequalities arising from capitalism. Furthermore, in the economic case the party appear content with the economic distribution at the top, focusing only on raising the position of the poorest. Yet, despite the lack of social democratic rhetoric the party do exhibit certain social democratic tendencies as apparent in the emphasis on redistributing power and implementing social policies such as the minimum wage and tax credits. This suggests a complex picture whereby old traditions continue to exert some influence despite a rhetorical move away from these ideas. In this regard, I do not assert New Labour to be social democratic and thus reject Meredith's claims that there are significant revisionist parallels between New Labour and social democracy (2003). But I do not see Labour to have entirely rejected this tradition either, a finding which points towards the value of an ideologically innovative characteristic as such explanations have the capacity to reflect the relevance of a range of different influences.

Thatcherism?

In turning to assess the pertinence of Thatcherite ideas it should be noted that Thatcherism 'does not represent a coherent ideology' but rather 'embodies a series of interconnected political attitudes rather than a coherent body of thought' (Evans, 2004, p.2; see also Gamble, 1993; Letwin, 1992, p.17). This makes it difficult to discern a universally accepted definition, as apparent in the differing focus on neo-liberal and social market ideas evident in my appraisal of the existing literature. In offering my own assessment I draw on Gamble's depiction of Thatcherism through New Right ideas. Whilst existing as a wider body of thought (i.e. advocated by Liberals as well as Conservatives), this frame is insightful as it allows an assessment of the

Conservatives' vision of the state/market relationship, a vision which differed dramatically to the social democratic ideas detailed above. Gamble highlights a range of traits, stating:

'[t]he New Right seeks to create a free economy and a strong state; only if the economy is free can the state be strong; and only if the state is strong can the economy be free. For the New Right the remorseless growth of the modern state, measured by its spending programmes and the range of its interventions, has been a disaster and must be reversed if a free and prosperous society is to survive' (1988, p.5)

This indicates a clear preference for market solutions, greater market freedom, less state intervention, the reduction of inefficiency and waste within the state, and minimal tax and public spending. Alongside this the Conservatives prized a strong economy and low inflation. Whilst offering a glimpse of the ideas which guided Thatcher's time in Government these points also provide a useful set of markers against which to test New Labour's Thatcherite credentials.

Table 14: Thatcherite References

| LIST OF REFERENCES | 1982 | 1983 | 1986 | 1991 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Bureaucracy | | | | | * | * | * | * |
| Business | | | | * | * | * | * | * |
| Competition | | * | | * | | * | * | |
| Economy | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Enterprise | | | | | * | | * | * |
| Free Trade | | | | | | | * | * |
| Freedom | | * | * | * | | * | * | |
| Full Employment | | | | | * | | | |
| Government | | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Growth | | * | * | * | | * | | |
| Inflation | * | | | * | | | * | |
| Market | | * | * | * | * | * | | |
| Partnership | | | * | | * | * | * | * |
| Private Finance | | | | | | | * | |
| Private Investment | | | | * | | | | |
| Private Sector | | * | | | * | * | | * |
| Privatisation | | | * | * | * | * | | |
| Prosperity | | | | * | | * | | |
| Public Finance | | | | | | | * | * |
| Public Investment | | | | * | | | | |
| Public Ownership | | | | | * | * | * | |
| Public Sector | | * | | | * | | | |
| Public Service | | | | | | | | |
| Public Services | | | | * | * | * | * | * |
| Public Spending | | * | * | | * | | | * |
| Rights | * | | | * | * | * | | * |
| State | | | | | * | | | |
| Tax | | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Waste | | | | * | | | | |

Table 14 initially reveals a rhetorical overlap with many of the key themes of Gamble's depiction as the party discuss bureaucracy, freedom, inflation, public spending and privatisation. However, as revealed throughout my analysis it is necessary to examine these references in greater detail to discern how each was used and whether, for example, bureaucracy is imbued with the negative sentiments and freedom with the positive attributes apparent in the Thatcherite, New Right tradition. In examining meaning a somewhat mixed picture of the overlaps between New Labour and the Conservatives emerges.

First, there are a range of indicators which suggest an affiliation with Thatcherism. In 1996 Blair asserted Labour's desire to pursue 'a stable economy, long-term investment, the enterprise of our people set free' (1996a), a message which chimes with the above notions of economic

freedom and strength. Moreover, the party appear to embrace the market asserting 'we should open up the markets in communications and technology - yes, a market solution' (1994) and favour competition to 'ensure that prices are low' (1996a). Indeed, Blair appears to co-opt many of the principles which characterise Thatcherism, asserting 'Labour will be the party of sound finance and good housekeeping. World interest rates and inflation rates are low; in Britain we will keep them this way. There will be defined targets set and kept to. Losing control of public finance is not radical, it is just reckless, and we will not do it' (1996a). In this regard Labour adopted the Thatcherite economic mantle, yet they also signalled a desire to pursue a small state. In 1997 Blair called for a White Paper to pursue 'simple government' which would 'cut the bureaucracy of Government and improve its service' (1997), indicating a desire to replicate the small state, strong economy rhetoric and policy agenda of the Conservatives under Thatcher. On this evidence New Labour appear to actively embrace their opponent's language but as the table above indicates a range of other references are pertinent when forming a judgement on the applicability of the Thatcherite label.

In relation to the economy, whilst the market is embraced New Labour continue to display scepticism of its capacities, asserting that tackling the weaknesses of our economy 'will not be done by state control, but it will not be done either by market dogma. It can only be done by a dynamic market economy based on partnership between government and industry, between employer and employee, and between public and private sector' (1994). This strategy is reflected in references to the need for public and private finance and investment and the importance of both sectors. The party also goes on to directly critique the market's role in education and assert that the NHS, armed forces, police, railways and post office 'cannot be left to the market...These are public services. They should be run for the public and they should stay in public ownership for the people of this country' (1994). Such rhetoric suggests that far from accepting the entirety of Thatcher's economic agenda the party tailor their approach to utilise market responses in some conditions and more traditional social democratic measures, such as public ownership, in others. In this regard the state continues to play an influential role in guiding the economy and delivering social goods as apparent in the party's commitment 'to the goal of full employment' and their desire to support business (1994). In this sense the Thatcherite conception of a strong state practising limited intervention does not align with New Labour's programme.

In viewing these different trends it therefore appears that New Labour did accommodate to a significant degree to the ideas underpinning Thatcher's agenda. The desirability of a small, efficient, non-bureaucratic government and a strong economy exhibiting low levels of inflation was clearly accepted. However, in delivering those aims the party pursued a partnership

solution, and remained committed to social policies such as full employment and public service provision. In this sense both the ends pursued, and the means used by Labour differ from the Thatcherite traits outlined above, indicating that whilst there were overlaps between the two parties they cannot both be defined as Thatcherite. In this regard I do not follow Heffernan in seeing New Right ideas to have won the battle of ideas, as New Labour did depart from the principles which underpin that philosophy (Heffernan, 2001, pp.24-5). Shaw's assertion that New Labour exhibited 'a *detachment* from Labour's established values and objects and an *accommodation* with established institutions and modes of thought' (Shaw, 1996, p.218) is seen to promote a more convincing account as it hints at the kind of shift evident above but does not equate New Labour entirely with Conservative ideas. This suggests that Thatcherism is pertinent when seeking to understand New Labour's position, but that the party cannot be solely characterised through this prism.

Innovation?

In view of the above findings accounts in the third category carry significant appeal as they have the capacity to reflect the influence of both internal traditions and Conservative influences. Indeed, Shaw's depiction of New Labour as 'yoking together two 'thematics'; one 'more or less classically social-democratic', pursuing the traditional values of equality, social welfare and full employment, the other neo-liberal, 'extolling market logic, monetary stability, labour market flexibility, lower taxation, privatisation, and deregulation'" (Shaw, 2007, p.200; Moschanas, 2002) has great value. As the above analysis and the accompanying tables illustrate, the party remains rhetorically committed to equality, welfare provision and full employment whilst also embracing market solutions, pursuing a strong, stable economy, and equipping people with the necessary skills for a flexible labour market. Accordingly the pertinence of both Thatcherite and social democratic ideas is apparent, suggesting the value of a characterisation which reflects the impact of both these traditions. Whilst other ideological positions may be pertinent, as indicated by Freedman (1999), Kenny and Smith (2001) and Buckler and Dolowitz (2000a), within the scope of analysis conducted here it is sufficient to note that an ideologically innovative explanation is the most apt because it reflects the range of influences upon the party.

This conclusion is normatively appealing because it recognises the influence of the party's past and the immediate context, and takes into account the agency of individuals within parties. In this way it acknowledges politicians' capacity to choose between different traditions, to interpret the political landscape (to judge the perimeters of plausible and electorally desirable party change), and to intervene in the political sphere to shape perceptions. It also recognises that party actors do not work in a vacuum but are confined by the historical traditions and

organisational rules of the party, as well as the political realities of the time.⁷⁴ For these reasons characterisations citing ideological innovation are deemed highly informative.

Non-Ideological?

Despite the appeal of innovative explanations it is pertinent to revisit the depiction of Labour as non-ideological, wherein the party are characterised as acting in accordance with a pragmatic rationale, or as lacking a unique ideological position. In addressing the first depiction, the above analysis has revealed New Labour to display a high degree of consistency between the ideas cited and the policies pursued. For this reason I believe that there is evidence, contrary to Lister's assertion, that New Labour were not acting entirely pragmatically but rather sought to enact those principles emphasised in their rhetoric. This does not exclude the possibility that some decisions were taken in accordance with non-ideological impetus, but on the basis of the above analysis I do not believe that this depiction is the most apt when trying to capture New Labour's ideological identity.

Similarly, in relation to critiques citing the lack of a unique ideological position, whilst the above discussion of Thatcherism did demonstrate substantive overlaps with the dominant ideological tradition, there is evidence that other ideational strands are present in New Labour's message. The resonance of social democratic ideas and an emphasis on investment and intervention indicate that far from replicating a Thatcherite outlook the party are attempting to stretch beyond existing conventions to display their own ideological identity. For these reasons I do not find the non-ideological categorisation convincing in this case and instead see the third narrative to most closely encapsulate ideational developments in this time period.

Summary

The above analysis has revealed the difficulties which emerge when trying to characterise New Labour's ideology. Within my own analysis I have sought to discern the different ideological frames which appear to resonate with Labour's rhetoric and policies. Accordingly, I have argued that whilst social democratic and Thatcherite characterisations offer some insights, singularly they are unable to account for Labour's position. Similarly I have discounted non-ideological explanations due to the presence of a consistent ideological project. This leads me to conclude that characterisations in the tradition of ideological innovation are most appropriate, specifically those which acknowledge the relevance of both social democratic and Thatcherite ideas.

⁷⁴ This is not to say that evidence of continuity is indicative only of the difficulties of change, on the contrary New Labour embrace aspects of the past, making both continuity and change crucial to their identity.

Conclusion

In concluding this chapter it is pertinent to revisit the three claims I sought to advance through this and the previous chapter, namely:

1. The Labour Party modernised in this period and projected a progressive rationale for that modernisation,
2. The Labour Party's ideological position did change but this was accompanied by a move towards ideological quietism, and
3. That the Labour Party's ideological position post-1994 can (most pertinently) be viewed as ideologically innovative rather than as aligned to a pre-existing ideological tradition or as non-ideological.

Whilst these claims do not divert from the tenor of the existing literature my own exploration of these themes has nevertheless advanced a range of additional insights relating to the kind of modernisation in evidence, the form of ideological change and the likely perceptions of that change. My morphological outputs and contextual analysis have repeatedly demonstrated that by 1994 Labour were projecting an ideological vision distinct from that evident between 1982 and 1991 (though some overlap is apparent). Accordingly it is possible to conclude that ideological change did take place in this period, and (when combined with analysis in the last chapter) that this occurred alongside a broader modernisation process (underpinned by a progressive rationale). Labour is therefore seen to have exhibited a coherent and well developed rationale for ideological and broader party change.

In exploring the ideological shift discerned within this case I have highlighted the consistency with which the party projected its message. This consistency is seen to have resulted in Labour's new ideological message being (likely) deemed a reliable guide to party behaviour, making ideology a relevant consideration. However, alongside this analysis I have also uncovered significant evidence of ideological quietism, suggesting that whilst the party were seen to rely on a consistent set of values, these values may not always have been perceived as ideological. In this sense this analysis indicates the continued pertinence of ideological inquiry but also offers some insight into why parties may be increasingly deemed to be pragmatic rather than ideological.

Cumulatively these insights advance my first two claims but in the later stages of this chapter I also explored existing categorisations of Labour's ideological position, conducting my own analysis to conclude ideologically innovative characterisations most appropriate. In advancing

this judgement I highlighted the ambiguity within New Labour's ideological message, demonstrating that whilst there are areas of overlap with existing accounts, no one frame can entirely account for New Labour's position.

Accordingly the expansive analysis offered here advances a range of new, case specific insights which help to explain Labour's relationship with ideology in this period and the processes of change which occurred within the party. Yet, this chapter was not purely focused on analytical questions as it also advanced a range of methodological insights. Whilst chapter three was preoccupied with outlining the methodological principles and processes which underpin my party political ideology approach, in this chapter I have endeavoured to offer detailed accounts of the interpretative processes which inform my analytical conclusions. In so doing I have attempted to facilitate greater understanding and thus the replicability of my approach. This additional focus, whilst curtailing some of the more detailed analysis evident in chapter seven, is seen to be vital because so many analyses of New Labour's modernisation and ideological position fail to outline the principles guiding their work – making it difficult to draw comparisons between works, or to replicate modes of investigation. In offering a more detailed account of my methodological process I do not claim to sidestep the issue of hermeneutics as researcher perspective is endemically related to the outputs produced through this form of qualitative analysis. Rather I embrace the idiosyncrasies of research produced through this approach, seeking to minimise differences emerging due to a misunderstanding and hence misapplication of my approach. This rationale prompted the extra detail on coding and judgement formation given above, rendering the chapter not simply analytical but also concerned with detailing the mechanics of my party political ideology analysis.

The investigation of the last two chapters has therefore advanced a range of case specific and methodological insights, illustrating the virtues of a party political ideology approach. Yet, it is also possible to draw inferences from this analysis to foreground my study of the Conservative Party. These are:

Change is not always readily apparent: Whilst in the case of New Labour ideological change was widely recognised through a clear linguistic disjuncture between pre-New Labour and New Labour this is not a pre-requisite for change to have occurred. As the detailed analysis above has revealed apparent continuity in language can hide fundamental shifts in inscription, hence detailed analysis is needed before passing judgement on the presence or absence of ideological change.

Change is not always confined to a distinct period: In the New Labour case modernisation is widely cited as occurring between 1994 and 1997. Whilst analysis of this time period does yield

interesting results, to understand the nature of change (and hence the significance of certain trends) it is useful to look beyond the publically cited period of change; illustrating the virtue of longitudinal analysis.

Ideological change does not necessarily indicate modernisation: New Labour exhibited a clear ideological change, but this shift did not automatically result in modernisation. It is possible for a party to change its ideology without modernising, or to modernise without changing its ideology. New Labour's progressive modernisation entwined these two characteristics but it is possible for parties to undertake a different form of modernisation process (such as responsive modernisation) and not fundamentally alter its ideology. However, to be seen as genuine, parties do need to display a consistent commitment to the rationale behind the modernisation process; making a study of this trait pivotal to passing judgement on modernisation.

With these principles in mind I turn to consider my second case and the question of whether the Conservative Party modernised and exhibited ideological change between 2005 and 2010. Over the course of the next two chapters I therefore seek to answer the following questions:

- Did modernisation occur within the Conservative Party between 2005 and 2010?
- Did the ideological position of the Conservative Party alter as a result of modernisation? and
- How can that change, if apparent, be characterised?

Chapter 6: Modernisation, Ideology and the Conservative Party

'We have to change and modernise our culture and attitudes and identity. When I say change, I'm not talking about some slick rebranding exercise: what I'm talking about is fundamental change, so that when we fight the next election, street by street, house by house, flat by flat, we have a message that is relevant to people's lives today, that shows we're comfortable with modern Britain and that we believe our best days lie ahead' (Cameron, 2005).

Introduction

As the Conservatives approached the 2005 General Election the party was experiencing its longest period in opposition since 1832 (Snowdon, 2010, p.xi), an alien position having spent two thirds of the previous century in Government. Since being ousted by the Labour landslide of 1997 the party had failed to make headway, with its vote share rising to just 31.7 per cent in 2001 (Green, 2010), a long way short of the 41.9 per cent achieved by Major in 1992. Whilst not equalling Labour's four consecutive general election defeats the Conservatives had notably failed, unlike Labour, to embark on a process of renewal. Few policy or organisational changes were made, meaning that between 1997 and 2005 the party was widely perceived to have turned inwards, pursuing a core vote strategy focused on crime, immigration and Europe (Seldon & Snowden, 2005; for a discussion see Green, 2011). Whilst some in the party did attempt to initiate a process of renewal, such as with the Kitchen Table Conservative document presented by Central Office staff (Bale, 2010, p.83), these attempts were routinely dismissed. For example, Nick Sparrow, the party's pollster, commented that he confronted a 'sort of cabal of real insiders who weren't particularly listening to anybody' (Bale, 2010, p.131). This attitude led the party to pursue the votes of previous Conservative supporters who had supposedly abstained in 1997, rather than attempting to whittle down Labour's electoral coalition.⁷⁵ Under William Hague, Duncan Smith and Michael Howard this approach prevailed, leading to election campaigns focused on issues which did little to expand Conservative support (Gamble, 2010, p.136).

By 2005 the Conservatives had made only modest inroads in changing public perceptions despite spending a significant amount of money in marginal seats trying to entice voters. In

⁷⁵ The Conservative analysis is contested as whilst they emphasised abstention there is some evidence that 2 million Tory voters defected to Labour rather than abstained.

response Lord Ashcroft, a prominent party donor, commissioned a report into the reasons for their third successive general election loss, concluding that the party faced a fundamental image problem. He found that amongst voters:

‘...the Conservatives were thought less likely than their opponents to care about ordinary people's problems, share the values of voters or deliver what they promised. Majorities in key marginal seats thought the party was out of touch, had failed to learn from its mistakes, cared more about the well-off than have-nots, and did not stand for opportunity for all. And things did not improve with time - voters had a more negative view of the Conservative Party at the end of the campaign than they did at the beginning’ (Ashcroft, 2005, p.3).

This judgement was damning. Even Labour, who prior to 1997 were hampered by perceptions of economic incompetence, had not faced such entrenched negative attitudes.⁷⁶ Needing an electoral swing of 6.9 per cent to win in 2010, a feat the party had not managed since 1931 (Snowdon, 2010, p. vii), the Conservative Party appeared to face an insurmountable challenge; confronting not only an electoral crisis, leadership difficulties and organisational problems, but also having a fundamentally toxic brand.

It is against this background that David Cameron was elected as Conservative Party leader having spent just four years as an MP. His campaign attempted to offer a solution to this raft of problems, arguing for party modernisation and rebranding to promote ‘a modern compassionate Conservatism that is right for our times and right for our country’ (Cameron, 6th December 2005). Cloaking himself in language adopted by New Labour, using words such as ‘change’, ‘new’, ‘modern’ and ‘progressive’ (Evans, 2008, p.297), Cameron came to be seen, in Peter Osborne’s words, as the ‘first outright moderniser to lead the Conservative Party, just as Tony Blair was the first outright moderniser to lead the Labour Party’ (2009, p.ix). The comparison between the two parties is, at first glance, understandable. Both relied upon similar language, opinion poll data and appeals to the centre ground. However, whilst there is widespread consensus that the Labour Party had modernised and substantially changed its ideological position, in the Conservative case these claims are far less clear cut. This leads me to explore the applicability of the modernisation label, and notion of ideological change in this period, concluding that whilst some evidence of change is apparent there are substantial differences between this case and the emergence of New Labour.

⁷⁶ For further details on public attitudes towards the Conservatives prior to 2005 see Ashcroft, 2005.

In discussing the Conservative Party I focus analysis primarily on 2005-2010, examining the period between Cameron's accession to the leadership and the general election. In this time span it is possible to grasp, first, whether Cameron presented a distinct ideological vision for the Conservatives, second, how ideological change has thus been depicted, and third, what evidence there is that modernisation occurred. To facilitate study of ideological change I once again scrutinise speeches from earlier in the party's history, examining leaders' speeches in the years prior to a general election. Thus Major's 1996 speech, Hague's speech in 2000, Duncan Smith's speech in 2002 and Howard's speech in 2004 are studied.⁷⁷ As with the last two chapters it is this historical analysis which enables comparisons to be drawn and the degree of continuity and change in Cameron's ideological pronouncements to be assessed – offering clues as to the extent of change.

As with the prior case study I advance three claims, arguing in this instance:

1. That whilst the Conservative Party made an attempt to change they did not outline a clear rationale for change, manage expectations or secure party support. These failures are cumulatively seen to have damaged the party's ability to achieve modernisation in this period,
2. That Cameron's attempt to inject new concerns into the party's agenda in 2005 did not mark a new ideological direction for the party,
3. That from 2008 the Conservatives formulated a more coherent ideological narrative in response to social, economic and political problems. However, this vision did not differ radically from the party's previous ideological perspectives,⁷⁸ raising questions as to the degree of ideological change achieved.

In line with these aims I structure the chapter as follows. First, I outline the background of Conservative Party ideology, distilling historical characterisations of the party's position and identifying its main ideological tendencies. Attention focuses primarily on mapping Cameron's ideological position, probing Conservative characterisations and depicting academic observations. Through this analysis I aim to offer a preliminary characterisation of the way in which Conservative ideology is seen to have developed since Cameron's leadership – providing a benchmark against which my own subsequent analysis can be assessed. Second, I turn to modernisation, outlining Cameron's interventions on this topic to discern whether

⁷⁷ Although Ian Duncan Smith did not face a general election as party leader he did attempt to modernise the party, making his period of leadership interesting for this analysis.

⁷⁸ This point is made specifically in relation to the three Conservative leaders prior to Cameron.

modernisation occurred, and if so in what form (i.e. progressive, responsive or perpetual modernisation). Third, attention returns to ideology, examining existing works to discern four characterisations of the Conservatives' ideological position post-2005. Each of these is outlined in turn, again producing characterisations which, in the next chapter, inform my own morphological analysis.

This analysis differs slightly from chapter four as more attention is paid to outlining the nature of change then exploring trends in the existing literature. This reflects the comparative lack of work on this topic, as whilst an academic literature is fast emerging it is less developed than the literature on New Labour. There is also a noticeable lack of contributions from modernisers themselves; an outcome likely to be due to the proximity of this case and the lack of political (auto)biographies of the kind which emerged later in New Labour's lifespan. But, even with this in mind there remains a lack of wider literature from modernisers discussing the ideas behind their project and the impetus for change. Rather than giving disproportionate attention to those accounts which have emerged I have sought to reflect this lack in my discussion – arguing that this absence symbolises a failure to clearly formulate and disseminate the ideas needed to drive modernisation and ideological change. In this regard the structural difference reflects the incongruence between these two cases and is a testament to the dangers of generalisation when discussing recent instances of party modernisation and ideological change.

Ideology and the Conservatives

Studying ideology in the Conservative Party may appear to many to be nonsensical as for a range of scholars and politicians the party is not ideological but is defined by 'common sense' and a philosophy or an 'attitude of mind' which does not offer a radical vision, but rather seeks to govern on the basis of history and experience (see, for example, Heywood, 2003, p.72). Indeed, even Cameron has rejected the language of ideology, arguing that '[t]his is a government led by people with a practical desire to sort out this country's problems, not by ideology' (Cameron 31st December 2010). However, as in the New Labour case (pp.83-84), the Conservatives continue to exhibit values and beliefs which collectively constitute a vision of society in conflict with Labour's approach, signalling ideology (see Jones, 2009, p.309). Furthermore, there is a wealth of ideological debate apparent within the party with widely recognised factions such as interventionist wets and Thatcherite dries, Euro sceptics and pro-Europeans, and social conservatives and social liberals (Bale, 2006; Heppell, 2002) voicing different perspectives on the party's approach to economics, international affairs and social/moral concerns.

In discussing Conservative ideology certain scholars have argued that Thatcherism brought about a 'crisis of conservatism' as it challenged the tenets of the party's ideology; namely defence of the union, empire, constitution and property (Gamble, 1995, p. 10; for more see Gray, 1997; Lynch, 2010). However, I view the idea that the party has "hollowed out' the culture in which a coherent mode of conservative discourse and political practice has flourished' sceptically (Eccleshall, 2000, p.276). Whilst these debates may have helped to cast light on the internal divisions within the party after Thatcher's departure, these ideational difficulties are seen to mark not a crisis, but rather a challenge to the party to re-articulate a clear vision and direction. This perspective reflects the need for parties to constantly adapt and reappraise their position, rendering such phenomenon not crises but indicators of the need for renewal. From this perspective Cameron's election marked the latest opportunity to tackle the ideational difficulties which the three previous leaders had failed to resolve; leading me to concentrate on the extent to which a coherent alternative narrative of Conservatism was offered.

Unlike New Labour, Cameron's Conservatives are not seen to be part of a broader ideological movement, neither is there a singular motif for the change he sought to instil. Instead a range of characterisations have been offered – not least by Cameron himself – labelling the party's ideological perspective: compassionate conservatism, liberal conservatism, Red Toryism, 'one nation' conservatism, modern conservatism, civic conservatism, 'sceptical' conservatism and 'progressive' conservatism (Blond, 2010; Dorey, Garnett & Denham, 2011, p.57; Hickson, 2011b; Kerr, Byrne & Foster, 2011, p.195). Whilst appearing far from non-ideological (Jones, 2010, p.13), this ambiguity suggests the lack of a pre-formulated ideological perspective, hinting at ideological adaptation and development in this period rather than the presentation of a coherent new vision. In this regard the party is potentially seen to differ from New Labour who, upon Blair's succession as leader projected a coherent, developed and widely accepted ideological perspective. In seeking to underline these differences I draw attention to this point, tracing how Cameron and academics have portrayed the coherence, development and acceptance of the party's ideological pronouncements from 2005 onward. Through this prism it is possible to comprehend the very different style of analysis required when contemplating this case – illustrating the need to offer my own account of change.

Cameron's Ideological Message

In considering Cameron's depictions of the party's ideology it could, initially, appear that the party possessed a coherent vision underpinned by traditional concerns. This impression is gained when studying Cameron's utterances, particularly those made in a series of interviews with Dylan Jones where he stated:

'...the philosophical underpinnings of modern Conservatism are incredibly clear. We're saying that Labour got it wrong because they thought change was about spending money and top-down lever pulling from Whitehall, whereas real change is about social responsibility, it's about a responsible society in which everyone plays their part. So it's recognizing (*sic*) the limitations of government, You can trace very clearly the line between the Thatcher Conservative Party that was about transforming our economy and recognizing (*sic*) the limitations of government in regard to the economy and what I'm saying, which is that we need a similar scale of transformation in terms of our society' (2010, p.309).

Such statements portray Cameron as extending traditional Conservative values into the social arena, redeploying Thatcher's rationale for economic regeneration to develop a package of social reforms rooted in the Conservative principles of responsibility, small government and decentralisation. These moves were not only publically comprehensible but offered a coherent vision which approached societal, economic (and later political) dilemmas through the same prism – indicating a high degree of coherence. This outlook also appeared to have been accepted by the party as the document *Built to Last: The Aims and Values of the Conservative Party* (2006) was ratified by the membership (admittedly with a low turnout; Bale, 2008, p.275). In this document the party described its outlook in similar terms to Cameron, stating:

'[o]ur Party seeks to cherish freedom, advance opportunity and nurture responsibility. By trusting people, we help individuals grow stronger; by sharing responsibility, we help society grow stronger. We believe that there is such a thing as society, but it is not the same thing as the state. Our Party stands for a free society and a strong nation state; an opportunity society, not an overpowering state; a responsible society in which each person and every family, regardless of position or power or wealth, is able to fulfil their potential, to make their own choices, and to find true and lasting happiness' (Conservative Party, 2006, p.1)

These two passages therefore point to the presence of a coherent and widely accepted ideological narrative within the Conservative Party; giving the impression that Cameron had formulated and sold a new variation of Conservative ideology to the party at large. However, when looking beyond these set piece descriptions the coherence of Cameron's ideological message is cast into doubt. As has been widely noted, between 2005 and 2007 the Conservatives

developed positions on a range of previously alien issues; committing the party to the promotion of quality of life issues such as flexible working and work-life balance, and social concerns such as climate change and civil partnerships (for instance see Williams and Scott, 2011). Indeed, within *Built to Last* itself the party outlined a determination to 'fight social injustice and help the most disadvantaged' (Garnett, 2010, p.109) and '[t]o meet the great environmental threats of the age, to enhance the environment and to increase general well-being' (Conservative Party, 2006, p.6), indicating a shift in emphasis. This move appears at odds with the above passages as far from simply extending traditional rationale to new areas, these pronouncements injected a raft of new concerns, many of which stood in direct conflict to ideas previously upheld by the party (for example civil partnerships).

In considering the existing literature it is apparent that these ideological tensions have been noted with scholars offering different judgements of ideological coherence and change in this period. Whilst there is a broad consensus that Cameron had the capital and capacity to affect fundamental change (Heppel & Hill, 2009; Denham and Dorey, 2006, pp.40-41), there is far less agreement as to the extent and type of change achieved because of the injection of these new ideas (McAnulla, 2010, p.287; Norton, 2008, p.331). The different characterisations of ideological change and narratives of modernisation are examined in due course, but here I concentrate on examining whether Cameron's ideological vision is seen to be coherent, consistent and have widespread public support. Through this analysis it is possible to offer a more detailed picture of the questions around ideological change in the Conservative party.

For some scholars questions of consistency are largely irrelevant as the new concerns cited above are seen to be part of the broader attempt to extend traditional ideas to new concerns. For example, Philip Norton argues that Cameron conveyed:

'...a sense of direction through an emphasis on values that are shared by electors. This is notable in terms of ethical values: of the need to preserve the environment and to embrace a sense of social responsibility, especially in terms of family and the local community. In so doing, some in the party portray him as pandering, especially on environmental issues, to some transient fashion. In fact, the stance he is taking can be justified in terms of Tory values, of preserving one's inheritance, the physical fabric of our society to be protected and nurtured for future generations' (2008, p.329).

However, others have argued that far from extending a traditional ideological agenda in this period, or indeed establishing a new perspective, the party was instead pre-occupied with

electoral rebranding, resulting in little ideological clarity, coherence or consistency (Bale, 2008; Green, 2010). In this sense the new ideas advanced are seen to mark an attempt to rebrand the party in the public mind. This characterisation is supported by analysis of Conservative rhetoric because, as Tim Bale notes, in 2007, in the run up to the 'election that never was' Cameron moved away from this new agenda to return to traditional ideological messages such as promoting the 'traditional (married) family' and asserting that immigration put 'too great a burden on public services' and 'needed to be better controlled' (Bale, 2008, p.278; Garnett, 2010, p.114; Williams & Scott, 2011). In this way the Conservatives are not seen to have formulated a new, coherent ideological message.

Such arguments are supported by Jane Green's analysis which argues that far from offering a new, readily apparent agenda in this period the Conservatives failed to outline a clear ideological vision. As she states: 'few voters seemed to understand what the Conservatives stood for. The change in emphasis and tone had not been matched by the unveiling of a clear philosophy, and many of the party's policies had been kept under wraps' (Green, 2010, p.673). Once again the Conservative Party has therefore been depicted as lacking a clear and consistently articulated picture of its identity and vision for society.

In addition to these concerns scholars have also raised questions regarding the coherence of the party's message. These critiques are typified by analysis of the Big Society, an idea which was projected in the latter stages of this period as a key component of Cameron's message. Many scholars have raised fundamental concerns about the ideological coherence of this project. For example, Kerr *et al* argue that 'there are a number of potential fundamental problems or contradictions built into the project which Cameron shows no signs of being able to adequately deal with' (2012, p.29). This critique is advanced further by Matthew Flinders and David Moon who argue that far from delivering small government and decentralisation (the project's stated aims), '[t]aken to its logical conclusion, the 'Big Society' inevitably would result in a more complex, messy and asymmetrical patchwork of accountabilities between central government and a range of community groups, private companies and third-sector organizations' (2011, p.661). Accordingly the coherence of the Conservative project and the presence of an overarching ideology has been called into doubt.

Although such claims of inconsistency and incoherence could be levelled at New Labour's ideological pronouncements it is notable that in the former case a greater consistency in message and vision is apparent. To illustrate this point it is worth quoting Finlayson at length, as he notes that whilst:

'[t]he day to day appearance may be that of flux and adaptation to the prevailing winds, and like all major political parties they will back off from anything that seems to be going too much against the popular mood. But, over a long time period, what is most clear about New Labour, and especially Tony Blair, is that they have been pretty much saying the same thing all along, and saying it usually in pretty much the same way' (2003, pp.39-40).

In contrast to this the Conservatives did not outline a consistent message and rather appeared to promote different aims at different times, offering a confused picture which undermined the credibility of their stated ideological agenda.

A further difference between these two cases is apparent when examining the depiction of party unity in the Conservative case, as whilst New Labour was seen to have broad party support (or assent) Cameron did not. For example, Peter Dorey has depicted how 'Cameron's determination to reposition the Conservatives' ideology, and adopt a range of distinctly un-Thatcherite policy positions or principles, has aroused increasing concern and contempt in some quarters of the party' (2007, p.149). Citing Lord Saatchi's call on '(genuine) conservatives 'to man the ideological barricades' against those who seek salvation on the centre ground' (ibid., p.151) Dorey brings the Conservatives' fidelity to Cameron's vision into doubt. Stephen Evans offers a similar depiction, arguing that whilst some degree of change is evident, many of the party's attempts to change have been stalled by internal party opposition. In relation to education policy, for example, when David Willetts suggested abandoning the building of new grammar schools MPs voiced significant discontent, forcing the leadership to back grammar schools 'as local demand dictated' (Evans, 2008, p.301). Such insights also bring the party's commitment to change into doubt, suggesting that Cameron's ideological (and indeed broader modernisation project) was liable to being derailed.⁷⁹

In this way the existing literature on the Conservative Party raises a number of questions about the extent to which the party actually changed, whether change was underpinned by a consistent and coherent vision, and whether new ideas were accepted by the party. All three of these dimensions indicate the need for caution when assessing the party's ideology as far from being widely seen to project a recognisably different, consistent and coherent vision, the Conservatives' ideological status is questionable. This indicates the need in my own analysis to not only assess whether change occurred, but also to construct my own explanation of the

⁷⁹ For further evidence see: Montgomerie, 16th July 2011. Here internal party polling reveals a hostility to many of the new policy positions advanced by Cameron during this period.

ideological trends evident in this period. In the remainder of this chapter I go on to discuss the different characterisations of ideological change, but before doing so I consider the nature of Conservative Party modernisation, seeking to discern whether a clear rationale for modernisation is present, and if so, what form of modernisation the party underwent.

Modernisation and the Conservative Party

In considering modernisation there once again appear to be clear points of contrast between the two cases examined here as whilst Cameron adopted Blair's modernising language he was not able to call upon the ideas and support of other senior MPs and intellectuals in advancing a modernising agenda.⁸⁰ Only a handful of MPs and a small clique who had developed the ideas behind his leadership campaign (including Michael Gove, George Osborne, Steve Hilton, Kate Fall, Ed Llewellyn and Ed Vaizey (Bale, 2009, p.226)) were fully signed up to the idea of change, calling Cameron's capacity to deliver change into doubt.

Whilst questions of modernisation have been noted in the existing literature, relatively little attention has been paid to whether modernisation occurred, and if so how significantly the party changed. This indicates the need for future analysis of party change, but in conducting my own inquiry I do not describe the internal dynamics of the Conservative Party or the changes that Cameron did succeed in making as this form of analysis has been provided elsewhere (Bochel, 2011; Griffiths, 2011; Williams & Scott, 2011). Instead I look at the rationale for change, seeking to determine whether a clear explanation for modernisation was offered and whether expectations of change were effectively managed. In so doing I seek to discern whether Cameron offered a progressive, responsive or perpetual rationale for modernisation, using my own framework to explore the depictions of change outlined above.

In the early years of Cameron's leadership there is a raft of evidence that the party (or at least Cameron himself) was committed to modernisation. Indeed, Cameron asserted that the Conservative Party needed to 'adapt and apply our principles to the modern world' (Jones, 2010, p.350), requiring a thorough reappraisal of the party's agenda and mode of operation.⁸¹ Reflecting upon change Cameron identified three areas in which the party needed to modernise:

'I think there were ways in which we had lost touch with the country,
and so we didn't look like the country we were trying to govern. You

⁸⁰ In comparing Labour and Conservative modernisation it is important not to look for identical processes but rather to evaluate, using the characterisations of modernisation outlined in chapter three, the kind of modernisation rationale which was presented. Through this means it is possible to judge parties' modernisation credentials, allowing for the possibility that this process can differ in alternative cases.

⁸¹ This reappraisal was embarked upon by the launch of six policy groups focused on modernising the party's policy agenda (Cameron, 6th February 2006).

know, the shortage of women candidates, the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities, the fact that we were representing mainly rural seats, many in the south of England. We needed to change the Conservative Party, literally to be more reflective of the country we wanted to govern. That was one part of modernization (*sic*). I think another was thinking more deeply. For too long the party had got rather intellectually idle, and so if asked the question about education it was Bring Back Grammar Schools! If asked the question about health it was Bring Back Matron! If asked about policing it was Bring Back the Bobby on the Beat! It was all a bit formulaic, and I think we needed to think more deeply and more widely about problems and I hope we have done that. Also I think there were some consequences of the changes of the 1980s. Britain had become a more open, more tolerant society over issues like race and sexuality and I think the Conservative Party needed to modernize (*sic*) to catch up there as well. And there was also a more literal kind of modernization (*sic*), with a properly run Central Office and press office and better organization (*sic*) all round' (Jones, 2010, p.293).

In this sense Cameron asserted the need to change the party in terms of composition, organisation and attitudes if modernisation was to be achieved (Denham & O'Hara, 2007; Lee, 1999, p.15). Whilst offering a diagnosis of the need for change there was, however, markedly less clarity about the rationale for change, with two narratives offered which provided very different accounts. The first presented a progressive rationale, citing global and attitudinal changes as the basis for a pro-active shift in position, whilst the second emphasised the dynamics of domestic policies and the need to respond to New Labour, thus offering a reactive explanation. In what follows I argue that these two rationales indicate the lack of a clear modernisation project within the Conservative Party. As hinted above, I argue that Cameron did not possess a clear vision for change which could be used to marshal support amongst party members; a lack which I argue allowed the party to divert from the new agenda apparent between 2005 and 2007.

In exploring these two rationales it is possible to identify the first in the foreword to *Built to Last* in which Cameron stated:

'[w]e live in a world that is undergoing far-reaching change. A huge shift is taking place in economic power to the new developing economies of the east, bringing with it unprecedented competition and unimagined

opportunity. The threat of climate change is forcing the world to innovate and to co-operate in new ways. The global terrorist threat demands not just new international security effort abroad but new efforts to integrate at home. The endemic poverty of Africa and the spread of killer diseases like HIV/ AIDS are no longer someone else's problems. There are more subtle changes taking place too. Our society is becoming less hierarchical and less deferential. People searching for fulfilment and well-being expect more control over the decisions that affect their lives. Choices that were once beyond the reach of all but the richest are now just the click of a button away for everyone. New social networks are emerging every day through the internet, bound together by common interest not a common geography' (Conservative Party, 2006, p.2).

Much as with New Labour this diagnosis suggests a progressive vision for modernisation as external factors such as the global economy, the need for internal cooperation on environmental issues, security and development, and attitudinal changes are identified. In diagnosing and reacting to these external stimuli the party indicate their desire to progressively respond to exogenous pressures. This rationale was, to some extent, evident in the party's wider agenda, for example, in justifying family friendly and environmental policies they asserted the need to 'meet the great environmental threats of the age, to enhance the environment and to increase general well-being' (ibid., p.6).⁸² If viewed alone it could therefore appear that Cameron outlined a clear rationale for change and cited policy changes driven by this diagnosis, indicating the foundations of a successful modernisation project. However, as stated above, Cameron did not provide just one rationale, he also advanced a second vision of modernisation.

To illustrate, in 2006 Cameron stated:

'...we, as a Party, were left opposing a Prime Minister who claimed that his aims were far closer to our own. From this fundamental fact sprang most of the difficulties we faced over the last decade. We knew how to rescue Britain from Old Labour. We knew how to win the battle of ideas with Old Labour. We did not know how to deal with our own victory in that battle of ideas. That victory left us with an identity crisis. Having defined ourselves for many years as the anti-socialist Party, how were

⁸² For more see: Gove, 16th March 2010.

we to define ourselves once full-blooded socialism had disappeared from the political landscape? We made terrible strategic and tactical mistakes. Sometimes we tried to claim that Labour had not really changed – that it was still the same old Labour Party. Other times we said that Labour were stealing our clothes...but that people would prefer ‘the real thing.’ But the Conservative reaction in the 1990s to the changes Labour made then had serious consequences. As Labour moved towards the centre ground, the Conservative Party moved to the right. Instead of focusing on the areas where we now agreed with Labour on our aims.....highlighting the different prescriptions that arose from our different values and principles.....we ended up focusing on those areas where we didn’t agree. Tax cuts. Immigration. Europe.... Embracing a “new politics” and accepting that in many areas New Labour was closer to the Conservative Party was a difficult thing to do. But nevertheless it was the right thing to do. Not least because it’s true. And make no mistake – I will stick to this path. The alternative to fighting for the centre-ground is irrelevance, defeat and failure’ (Cameron, 30th January 2006).

In this account the external impetus for modernisation originates within the contemporary political environment, diagnosing the need to come to terms with New Labour in order to stop the party being marginalised by adopting extreme positions (an almost Downsian analysis). This indicates a responsive rationale for modernisation which appears to suggest that the Conservatives simply needed to come to terms with Labour’s legacy and resist the temptation to follow a right wing agenda. In this sense modernisation was depicted as a process of getting ‘back in touch with the country that we wanted to govern’ rather than a process of progressive change (Cameron, 28th February 2010). Such a diagnosis sets a substantially different benchmark for the perceived success of modernisation as rather than offering a progressive response to global problems the party are simply aligning themselves with the centre ground politics of New Labour.⁸³

In this sense Cameron offered a confused picture of the form of change he was pursuing, appearing to simultaneously suggest that the party should actively react to modern global conditions and respond to domestic changes. This created uncertainty as to why the new policy agenda outlined above had been implemented – was it a reaction to New Labour, or was it a

⁸³ This latter form of change is akin to the kind of rebranding exercise described by Green, 2010, p.668; Hayton, 2010; Lynch, 2010, p.123; Williams & Scott, 2011.

progressive attempt to respond to new, global challenges? The lack of clarity around the motivation driving these changes (a phenomenon depicted in the discussion above) in turn indicates a failure to manage party expectations and gain party support. These factors are vital for successful modernisation projects as only when parties are united (or acquiescing) can lasting change be achieved.

In reaching this conclusion my investigation accords with much of the existing literature where a scepticism of, and lack of support for, modernisation within the Conservative Party has been noted. As Andrew Denham and Dorey (2006) outline, from the outset the party membership did not favour modernisation as a poll conducted after the leadership election found that only 45 per cent of the party membership felt a move towards the centre ground was needed, whilst 48 per cent wanted a more robust right wing agenda (Denham & Dorey, 2006, p.41). In this sense, whilst running on a modernising platform Cameron's mandate for change was far from concrete as significant sections of the membership and parliamentary party remained sceptical about this agenda.

In addition to these concerns Janet Daley (2006) and Denham and Kieran O'Hara (2007) have traced confusion about Cameron's intentions. Indeed, Daley describes how a group of Conservative stakeholders – including modernisers – could not reach a consensus as to 'whether the modernising agenda was about the language (or presentation) of Conservative politics; or about re-assessing its most basic principles'; a difficulty which led them to conclude that modernisation 'could simply be a cover for political cowardice and a retreat from what elected politicians personally believe to be right for the well-being of society' (Daley, 2006, p.1; p.3). Furthermore, in assessing Cameron's progress in 2007 Denham and O'Hara concluded that Cameron's 'modernization' (*sic*) project is still a work in progress. With no consensus about what 'modernization' (*sic*) should mean, it is by no means assured of ultimate victory within the Conservative Party' (2007, p.188). These examples indicate a high degree of scepticism towards Conservative modernisation but also a lack of concrete understanding of what it entailed, supporting my contention that the party did not outline a clear rationale for, and vision of change.

For these reasons, when assessing Conservative modernisation I argue that the party did not formulate, gain acceptance of, and execute a clear vision for modernisation. Accordingly whilst Cameron had an ambition to change the party – as indicated by the new logo and ideas – he did not establish the conditions necessary for modernisation as expectations were not managed and support was not secured for a clearly stated project of change. This failure is apparent in the widely acknowledged retreat from issues such as the environment and the quality of life agenda

which indicate a lack of commitment to the new policy concerns seen to reflect modern conditions. In this sense the absence of a clear vision and party support is seen to have hindered the party's ability to successfully modernise. However, the contemporary nature of this case means that future modernisation cannot be ruled out.

Mapping Ideological Change

Having addressed the topic of modernisation attention returns to ideology, seeking to trace how ideological change has been characterised in the existing literature. Whilst the above analysis has revealed the need for caution when depicting ideological change it is nevertheless useful to discern how Cameron's Conservatives have been characterised. This study allows me in the next chapter to assess different depictions of Conservative ideas. As with the previous chapter four characterisations of change are apparent. These can be summarised as follows:

1. Cameron's Conservatives have changed their ideology: arguing that the Conservatives have accommodated to New Labour,
2. Cameron's Conservatives display ideological continuity: arguing that the Conservatives have returned to the party's ideological traditions, specifically Thatcherism and One Nation ideas,
3. Cameron's Conservatives are ideologically innovative: arguing that the Conservatives have blended different ideological themes together, and
4. Cameron's Conservatives are not ideological: arguing that the Conservatives have acted in accordance with electoral/strategic rationale.

These characterisations are examined in turn to allow me to detail the different narratives on offer. Once again it is useful to reiterate the lack of development in this literature and the lack of an overt ideological focus when compared to New Labour. Indeed as Table 15 reveals, the scholars are unified in not defining ideology and discuss this area in a variety of different ways. Whilst these points are not examined further here they reveal the extent to which ambiguity colours existing analysis and thus the insights to be gained from a party political ideology approach.

Table 15: Tabulating the Existing Literature on Ideological Change in the Conservative Party

| | | What is the author's focus? | Do they define ideology? | How is ideology discussed? | How is ideology studied? | What is their conclusion? |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|
| Change | Williams and Scott (2011) | Look at policies promoted by the Conservatives and compare them against Labour's and/or Thatcher's and Major's positions to discern continuity or change. | No, but talk about whether the Conservatives broke from neo-liberal ideology and discuss ideological repositioning. | Look at policy change in relation to employment relations. Seek to discern whether the Conservative Party underwent ideological repositioning. | Through policy – aligning changing policy agendas with ideological repositioning. | That in 2005-2008 the Conservative Party repositioned in line with Labour policies on two of the three issues examined. But that from 2008-2010 the party reverted to traditional policy positions held under Thatcher/Major. |
| | Driver (2009) | Looks at 'how the Conservatives have sought to build a reform agenda in the long years of opposition to Labour since 1997' (p.81). Looks at broken society narratives and continuities with Labour. | No, but talks about values and specific ideological traditions. | Looks at ideological traditions and the policy agendas associated with them (specifically the Thatcherite welfare policy agenda). | Continuities and changes in the party's policy agenda are discussed to determine their ideological alignment. | Argues that 'the continuities between Labour and Conservative social policies would suggest that Cameron's Conservatism is anything but a re-run of Thatcherism' (p.94) and that New Labour policies have been adopted. |
| Continuity | Dorey (2007) | Looks at the changes made by Cameron and how they differ from his predecessors. Tracks the challenges he faced in implementing change to argue that modernisation alone is not enough to secure electoral victory. | No, but talks about ideological repositioning. | Discussed through ideological traditions within the party (e.g. Thatcherism verses One Nation conservatism). | Looks at 'ideological pronouncements and associated policy stances' (p.140) to assess change. Looks at macro-level (ideological position), meso-level (general principles or intent) and micro level (policy) to examine change (p.142). | Argues that in his first year as leader Cameron tried 'to reposition the party ideologically, and revive the 'one nation' strand which atrophied during the 1980s and 1990s. In so doing, he has explicitly eschewed Thatcherism, and effectively apologized (<i>sic</i>) for many aspects of it, while explicitly abandoning many of the policies implemented during the Thatcher-Major premierships' (p.162). But, he faced challenges to achieving change and isn't guaranteed electoral victory. |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|---|--|--|---|---|
| | Garnett (2010) | Focuses on whether David Cameron offers a conservative or a radical ideology. | No, but talks about ideology. | Evaluates Cameron's ideological position vis-à-vis alternatives. | Looks at <i>Built to Last</i> and Cameron's speeches to discern evidence of continuity and change from Thatcherite ideas. | Portrays Cameron as ideologically a One Nation conservative but argues that his policies and responses have not always echoed this position. |
| Innovation | McAnulla (2010) | Looks at Cameron's attempts to ideologically reposition the party – asks 'how far the Conservatives' current ideological stances may be underpinned by a set of contemporary 'triangulating' political philosophies' (p.287). | No, but talks of attempts to reposition the party ideologically. | Looks at different ideological traditions within the party, specifically Thatcherism, sceptical conservatism and radical conservatism. | Looks at the policies pursued by Labour and the discourse used by the party to reposition. Examines changes to determine the nature of the Conservatives' Third Way. | Argues that the party does exhibit a Third Way approach. But, that 'while the Blairite third way remains partly informed by the social democratic tradition, the Cameron 'third way' is much more influenced by conservative traditions regarding scepticism, civic virtue and a limited role for the state' (2010, p.311). |
| | Evans (2008) | Looks at whether Cameron has managed to achieve change and what is preventing it. | No, but looks at the party's ideological trajectory. | Looks at ideological traditions through key principles and policies. | Looks at the linkages between different ideological traditions (such as One Nation conservatism) and Cameron's perspective to determine areas of continuity and change. | Argues that there is evidence that Cameron has moved towards the centre ground and embraced a One Nation agenda, but that Cameron himself has many Thatcherite tendencies. Accordingly argues that there is evidence of continuity and change in the party's ideological position. |
| No Ideology | Bale (2009) | Traces the changes under Cameron's leadership and outlines the environmental factors which facilitated those changes. | No, but talks about ideology. | Not directly, suggests that Cameron lacks ideological vision (p.231). | Argues that it's not yet possible to tell if Cameron has a vision, indicates that change thus far has been achieved through an electoral strategy rather than in accordance with an alternative ideological vision. | Concludes that Cameron has four out of five traits to be a good leader, but that he is lacking a clear vision which may jeopardise his attempt to achieve change and electoral victory. |

1. Cameron's Conservatives have Changed their Ideology

'I wanted to be the person who understood what Blair had changed in Britain, and keep the good and get rid of the bad. Rather than wind the clock back' (Cameron in Jones, 2010, p.214).

Much as with the first theme discussed in relation to New Labour there is a tendency within existing depictions of Cameron's Conservatives to offer an accommodationist narrative, arguing that Cameron developed an ideological position inspired not by the Conservative Party's history but by the Labour Party (specifically by New Labour). Driver (2009), Richard Griffiths (2010), and Steve Williams and Peter Scott (2011) advance this perspective on differing grounds and to different degrees. However, it is important to note that none of these scholars defines the party solely through this lens. These three authors examine the degree to which the Conservative Party has departed from Labour's agenda by discussing continuities and change in the party's social policy, public service policy and employment policy agendas vis-à-vis Labour.

In depicting the Conservatives each author foregrounds New Labour, reflecting their impact upon the environment in which the party operates. In this sense Driver argues that 'the conservative (with a small 'c') social agenda of Thatcherism has been replaced with a recognition that modern society is diverse and that modern Conservative politics has to work with contemporary social relations not against them' (2009, p.95). New Labour's impact is detected in the new issues introduced onto the Conservative Party agenda in 2005, but also in their economic approach. To illustrate, Williams and Scott argue that '[t]he Conservative Party's concern in opposition with tackling gender pay inequality contrasts markedly to its stance under the 1979-1997 Thatcher and Major administrations, but its proposals represent mainly an accommodation to existing Labour policy interventions' (2011, p.517). Elsewhere Griffiths highlights that '[b]oth Conservatives and New Labour are... thinking in terms of a quasi-market model' (2009, p.105). In this sense New Labour are seen to be a key influence upon the Conservative Party's policy agenda, indicating accommodation rather than change.

Whilst advancing the same line of argument as New Labour scholars such as Heffernan (2001) and Jessop (2003) these characterisations do not portray the party solely through this lens, but rather seek to acknowledge Labour's legacy. It is this approach which allows Griffiths (2010) and Williams and Scott (2011) to conclude that although there are overlaps there are also 'notable differences' between Cameron's policies and those of other parties (Griffiths, 2010, p.107). Accordingly, when appraising the idea that the Conservative Party changed to accommodate to New Labour it is important to recognise the caveats attached to this perspective. Indeed, most scholars do not advance this view in isolation but rather reference

New Labour to highlight strategic similarities between Labour and the Conservatives (McAnulla, 2010; Kerr, 2007, p.50), or to foreground Labour's role in altering the political environment (Kerr, Byrne & Foster, 2011). Thus in evaluating this narrative in the next chapter I argue that it is important to remain cognisant of scepticism around the idea that Cameron's Conservatives simply accommodated to the existing ideological and policy landscape set by New Labour.

2. Cameron's Conservatives display Ideological Continuity

Turning to the second narrative there is a distinct segment of the literature which attempts to characterise changes within the Tory party by understanding them through the framework of ideological traditions previously dominant within the party. These characterisations have taken two forms; the first and most coherent characterise Cameron's Conservatism as a return to the One Nation tradition (Dorey, 2007; Coombs, 2011; Garnett, 2010), whilst the second seeks to note rather than full heartedly characterise the party through the influence of Thatcherite ideas (Kerr, 2007; McAnulla, 2010; Evans, 2010). As with the last chapter this narrative is advanced by scholars who have chosen to offer a historical analysis of the contemporary party, focusing on existing traditions rather than ideological novelty.

The first strand is the most forcefully advanced of the two with scholars arguing that the party can most effectively be understood through the One Nation tradition. Dorey advances this perspective arguing that Cameron has made efforts 'at repositioning the Conservative Party ideologically, thereby explicitly disavowing Thatcherism in favour of a socially liberal 'one nation' mode of Conservatism' (2007, p.138). Citing Cameron's own membership of the One Nation group within the party as evidence Dorey goes on to demonstrate the macro, meso and micro steps taken to move the party from Thatcherite ideas towards a more socially inclusive outlook. This reversion to earlier forms of political thinking has been noted elsewhere (Coombs, 2011, p.82; Garnett, 2010) with scholars arguing that Cameron's contention that 'the state should take an active part in ensuring social tranquillity' (Garnett, 2010, p.111) – a perspective embodied in his Big Society initiative – harked directly back to the themes of One Nationism. However, the commitment to these ideas has been challenged. Mark Garnett argues that 'based on the early announcements it would be reasonable to suggest that Cameron's 'One Nation' diagnosis of the condition of Britain has not been echoed in his policy prescriptions, which in most instances do not indicate a radical departure from the Thatcher/Blair consensus' (ibid., p.113). In this sense, whilst theoretically committed to One Nation ideas the translation between these ideas and the policies pursued by the party is less certain, suggesting that the conclusion reached on the pertinence of this category can be affected by the sources examined.

The second strand is less overt in its characterisation but draws attention to the influence of Thatcherite ideas upon Cameron. Kerr, Christopher Byrne & Emma Foster describe how '[p]erhaps the most obvious way of conceiving of Cameronism is to frame it in terms of a continuation and a development of Thatcherism, albeit a Thatcherism with a human face' (2011, p.196). Whilst Cameron is seen to have made some attempt to distance himself from Thatcherism, Evans argues that 'Thatcher has actually exerted considerable influence upon him and how he has conducted himself as leader' (2010, p.340). Pointing specifically at policy areas such as council housing ownership and the environment, and more broadly at commitments to social responsibility and neo-liberalism he argues that Thatcher's influence has been exhibited in a number of ways (ibid; McAnulla, 2010). Both policy and ideational studies have revealed this Thatcherite influence (Evans, 2009), yet, once again, these findings are qualified, with Evan's himself concluding that it is 'early to predict how Cameron's future will unfold' (2009, p.107). In summarising these approaches it therefore appears that different ideological traditions can help explain Cameron's position, indicating the potential of a multi-stranded ideological characterisation such as those evident in the third category.

3. Cameron's Conservatives are Ideologically Innovative

Under this third heading accounts are united by their depiction of Cameron's Conservatives as ideologically innovative. Two strands of argument are in evidence, the first advances that the Conservatives cannot be equated solely with previous ideological trends or the Labour Party's agenda but can be understood as a product of these positions (McAnulla, 2010; Beech, 2009; Kerr, 2008; Kerr, Byrne & Foster, 2011; 2012). The second argues that a new ideological position has been formed which reconciles past divisions within the party in an innovative way (Evans, 2008; Heppell and Hill, 2009).

The first strand is, once again, historically focused, leading analysts to situate the party in relation to previous positions. Hence, Stuart McAnulla attempts to discern whether the Conservatives offered their own Third Way vision which mediates between Thatcherite and New Labour ideas. This comparative approach is also apparent in Kerr's work where he argues that '[w]hereas Cameron has been keen to colonise a number of New Labour discourses, he has been equally keen to 'fit' these around a range of existing one-nation and neo-liberal conservative ideas' (Kerr, 2007, p.62), indicating an attempt to form a new position in which Tory ideas are rendered compatible with New Labour's successful approach. These categorisations strive to show the range of influences upon the Conservatives' ideological position, a point epitomised by Matt Beech's conclusion that Cameron's brand of Conservatism – whilst not yet wholly distinct in the sense of Thatcherism - could characterise someone 'who is

economically neo-liberal, espousing a One Nation approach to social policy, is eurosceptic in a Thatcherite fashion and Tory in his or her regard for tradition and social institutions' (Beech, 2009, p.30). In this sense it is the combination of multiple ideological strands which defines the Conservative Party. However, underpinning these different ideas there is seen to be a common commitment to neo-liberalism which has allowed the party to draw on Thatcherite and New Labour ideas. As Kerr, Byrne and Foster argue: 'Thatcherism, Blairism and Cameronism are three distinct hegemonic projects, but hegemonic projects that nevertheless serve to uphold and advance the same abiding state project: namely neo-liberalism' (2011, p.198; see also Kerr, Byrne & Foster, 2012).⁸⁴ While distinct, because each tradition organises this commitment around a different signifier (Thatcher - 'free market', Blair - 'Third Way', Cameron - 'Big Society' (Kerr, Byrne & Foster, 2012)), neo-liberal ideas are therefore seen to be paramount to this perspective.

Turning to the second strand under this heading attention is still paid to the party's history. Here the Conservatives are seen to have adopted 'the same year zero approach as New Labour' (Evans, 2008, p.297) in an attempt to re-imagine the ideological landscape to enable previously alien perspectives to be combined. Under the banner of being 'a social liberal moderniser' (Heppel & Hill, 2009, p.390). Cameron is seen to have given 'the Conservative Party an opportunity to reconcile the economic liberalism which rose to dominance during the Thatcher years with social liberalism, which she personally found so abhorrent' (Evans, 2008, p.292). In this sense he is seen to have forged a new agenda, moving 'his party away from the purely free-market agenda which it pursued during the Thatcher/Major years and towards a new kind of politics enthused with a Disraelian-inspired sense of social priority' (ibid., p.313). This interpretation thus draws attention to the novel combination of ideas brought together by Cameron, indicating the utility of understanding the range of influences upon and traditions within the party.

4. Cameron's Conservatives are not Ideological

The final narrative refers to instances in which the Conservatives are seen to have undertaken instrumental rather than value driven change (Williams & Scott, 2011, p.3). This perspective disavows a change in values, arguing instead that rationalistic, strategic decision making drove the injection of new ideas onto the party's agenda. As Bale, a key proponent of this narrative has stated: 'it is easy to overdo the pace, nature and scope of change achieved by Cameron' (2009, p.222) or to mistakenly read ideological inferences into decisions which are strategically driven.

⁸⁴ Kerr *et al's* terming of these periods as 'hegemonic' is seen here to be problematic as these three leaders are all seen here to operate within the hegemonic confines established by Thatcher, rather than representing three distinct, hegemonic projects.

Bale argues that the changes evident between 2005 and 2008 are indicative of an attempt to rehabilitate the party in the public mind, thus a return to policies such as immigration and crime in 2007 should not automatically be seen as a reversion to Thatcherite ideals. Instead he argues that having 'decontaminated' the Conservative brand in the public mind the party was now 'rebalancing' its agenda by integrating those policy concerns which it had previously been impossible to talk about without sounding 'nasty' and 'right wing' alongside new concerns (Bale, 2009, p.278; see also Evans, 2010, p.327). This reading draws attention to the instrumental, strategic concerns guiding party behaviour, suggesting that analysts should be conscious that shifts in party message can reflect other motivations besides ideology. Hence, whilst not disavowing the potential that Cameron did attempt to change Conservative ideology, Bale indicates the need to look beyond ideology when interpreting the Conservative Party's behaviour. This is an insight I remain conscious of when drawing my own inferences in the next chapter.

Summarising the Existing Literature

In summarising the existing literature it is also important to note that there are examples, not discussed here, where scholars depict ideological movement away from New Labour and Thatcherism but who do not offer an alternative characterisation. Philip Lynch, for example, argues that 'Cameron's conservatism rejects both Thatcherite individualism...and New Labour's regulatory state with its centralised targets' (2010, p.124) but he does not offer an alternative depiction. Similarly, Simon Lee argues that the Conservative Party changed its ideology to temper their message (2009, p.6) without offering a characterisation of that shift. When analysing narratives of ideological change it is pertinent to keep this ambiguity in mind as it suggests that attempts to distinguish Cameron's ideology from his predecessors are ongoing and that a distinct ideological perspective may not yet be in evidence.

Returning to the above analysis these categories have indicated that whilst differing depictions have emerged they are, in comparison to New Labour, under-developed and highly qualified. This, once again, leads me not to replicate the analysis of existing scholars but rather to draw inspiration from these approaches and establish my own benchmarks for assessing Conservative Party ideology in the next chapter.

Conclusion

In many ways this chapter is indicative of the relative lack of development in academic understanding of modernisation and ideological change in the Conservative Party as compared with New Labour. Whilst a range of articles and books have emerged discussing change within

the party, analyses have thus far proved far less conclusive than their Labour counterparts. Whilst some form of change is seen to have occurred, there is little consensus on its form, specifically as to whether it marked an attempt to rebrand or a genuine ideological shift. Within this chapter I have sought to appraise current depictions of ideological change and, due to the relative lack of sources, offer my own analysis of modernisation. This has led me to two conclusions:

1. That the Conservative Party has not, as yet, modernised due to the failure to establish clear expectations of, and consensus around the need for change. Hence, whilst the party did attempt to change, the lack of a clear diagnosis of the external impetus for that shift undermined its success.
2. That the Conservatives' ideological position is best understood at this stage of analysis as confused. Further analysis is therefore deemed necessary in order to discriminate between the different characterisations currently apparent in the existing literature.

Accordingly this chapter has argued that whilst Cameron signed up to the rhetoric and rationale of modernisation he did not articulate a clear modernisation project or offer a transparent picture of the kind of change he envisioned. Instead he presented both progressive and responsive rationale for modernisation, distorting the motivation for change and creating confusion within the party and the public mind as to the nature and extent of repositioning. This leads me to conclude that whilst the party may have changed they did not modernise because a clear impetus was not apparent, nor was consensus for change or a coherent programme of modernising policies. However, this judgement does not preclude the possibility that the party could identify such drivers in the future, allowing them to modernise.

Ideologically, understanding of the Conservative Party position is less clear cut. Whilst New Labour was seen to offer a coherent, developed and accepted narrative of ideological change the Conservatives are seen to have faced considerable internal opposition, lacked a coherent message and offered ideas which were not always fully developed. These traits make it difficult to discriminate between ideological pronouncements emphasising traditional Conservative ideas and new policy concerns which are seemingly divorced from such an agenda. In order to effectively discern the compatibility of these ideas and the ideological changes they symbolise it is necessary in the next chapter to offer a detailed analysis of the party's ideological message across these five years.

Accordingly in the next chapter I explore the Conservatives' ideological identity, applying my party political ideology approach to analyse the party's relationship with ideology and explore questions of ideological characterisation, change and party rebranding.

Chapter 7: Modernisation, Ideology and the Conservative Party: Applied Analysis

In embarking on analysis of the Conservative Party it is clear that the expectations for my findings differ dramatically to the New Labour case. Whilst in the former case study ideological change and modernisation were widely believed to be in evidence, here there is no consensus as to whether ideological change occurred and the party's modernising credentials have been called into question. This ambiguity, in addition to the relative scarcity of literature on the Conservative Party compared with New Labour, and the lack of work focused directly on ideology, leads me to develop my own account of ideological change. In this sense this chapter differs to chapter five, as whilst existing scholarly contributions do guide my analysis, much of what follows is my own narrative constructed through morphological investigation.

In what follows I seek to offer a depiction of the Conservative Party which, unlike many existing accounts, does not attest the presence of a radically different ideological vision from 2005. Whilst a raft of new ideas and concerns were introduced in 2005 I argue that throughout this period the party evoked traditional ideological principles such as responsibility, small government and low taxation. In this sense the party is marked by ideological continuity rather than change and hence should not be seen to exhibit the same ideological trends as the New Labour case. However, I argue that the lack of a definitive shift does not render ideological inquiry irrelevant but rather requires a more subtle form of analysis to discern whether ideological change has occurred in any form and how it is likely to be interpreted by the public. In exploring these questions I identify two distinct phases, first 2005-2008 and second 2008-2010, periods which both reveal the party's willingness to adapt an underlying (traditional) ideological agenda to contextual pressures. In exploring the first phase I uncover evidence of an attempt to react to negative perceptions of the party which, whilst appearing ideologically significant, did not represent a change in attitude and, due to inconsistencies in the party's message, is likely to have undermined the perceived reliability of the party's stated ideological agenda.

From 2008 onwards the party is again seen to adapt to context – this time reacting to economic and political crises. Rather than producing an incoherent narrative, in this instance a more rounded and innovative ideological agenda is discerned which diagnosed and attempted to resolve problems in a consistent manner. Whilst not departing radically from the ideological position advanced by previous party leaders it is possible to discern a distinct ideological formulation which re-interpreted and re-deployed traditional concerns in a new manner. These

conclusions reveal that the Conservative Party in this period had a complex relationship with ideology. This is reflected in public attitudes as although it is possible to discern a distinctive ideological message when studying the latter years of this period, early ambiguity and a willingness to adapt is likely to have affected public perceptions of the Conservatives' ideological position. In this regard no simple conclusions can be drawn, but through my morphological analysis it is possible to gain greater understanding of the party's relationship with change and ideology.

This argument can succinctly be summarised in the three claims I advance through this case study:

1. That whilst the Conservative Party made an attempt to change they did not outline a clear rationale for change, manage expectations or secure party support. These failures are cumulatively seen to have damaged the party's ability to achieve modernisation in this period,
2. That Cameron's attempt to inject new concerns into the party's agenda in 2005 did not mark a new ideological direction for the party,
3. That from 2008 the Conservatives formulated a more coherent ideological narrative in response to social, economic and political problems. However, this vision did not differ radically from the party's previous ideological perspectives, raising questions as to the degree of ideological change achieved.

In recognition of these aims the chapter is structured as follows. First I offer an overview of the ideological trends which have defined current understandings of the Conservatives' under Cameron. By looking for shifts in the longitudinal data collected and examining change in references made under Cameron's leadership I assess the extent to which the party's agenda changed from 2005. Having constructed my own narrative of ideological change I, second, consider the degree of consistency within the party's projected message. Through this analysis I argue that Cameron's attempts to illustrate a new direction for the Conservative Party were undermined by incoherent and at times contradictory justifications which are likely to have led to the impression of ideological unreliability. Whilst initially damaging to Cameron's attempt to convey change I argue that this occurrence is also likely to have influenced later judgements of the party's ideas – even when more coherently and consistently advanced. By highlighting the electoral pressures for change within the Conservative Party and the significant alternative motivations the Conservatives' faced – and public awareness of these – I argue that context is

likely to have conditioned public scepticism of change. Finally, I return to the categorisations of ideological change presented in the last chapter, testing these narratives to discern the influence of different ideological traditions. Through these three analytical stages I aim to construct a distinctive narrative of the Conservative Party's ideology which rebuffs the idea of substantive ideological change, advancing instead a picture of adaptation, continuity and limited ideological innovation.

Morphological Analysis 1996-2010

In examining the morphological trends uncovered through my analysis of Conservative Party leaders' conference speeches the figures below reveal that, unlike in the New Labour case, ideological changes are not reflected in the different coding labels I apply to each speech. Figure 15 indicates that both concepts and contextual references are used by the Conservatives, with no dramatic shifts in their application, whilst Figure 16 fails to show any significant changes in the type of ideological references used.

Figure 15: Longitudinal Analysis of Reference Type

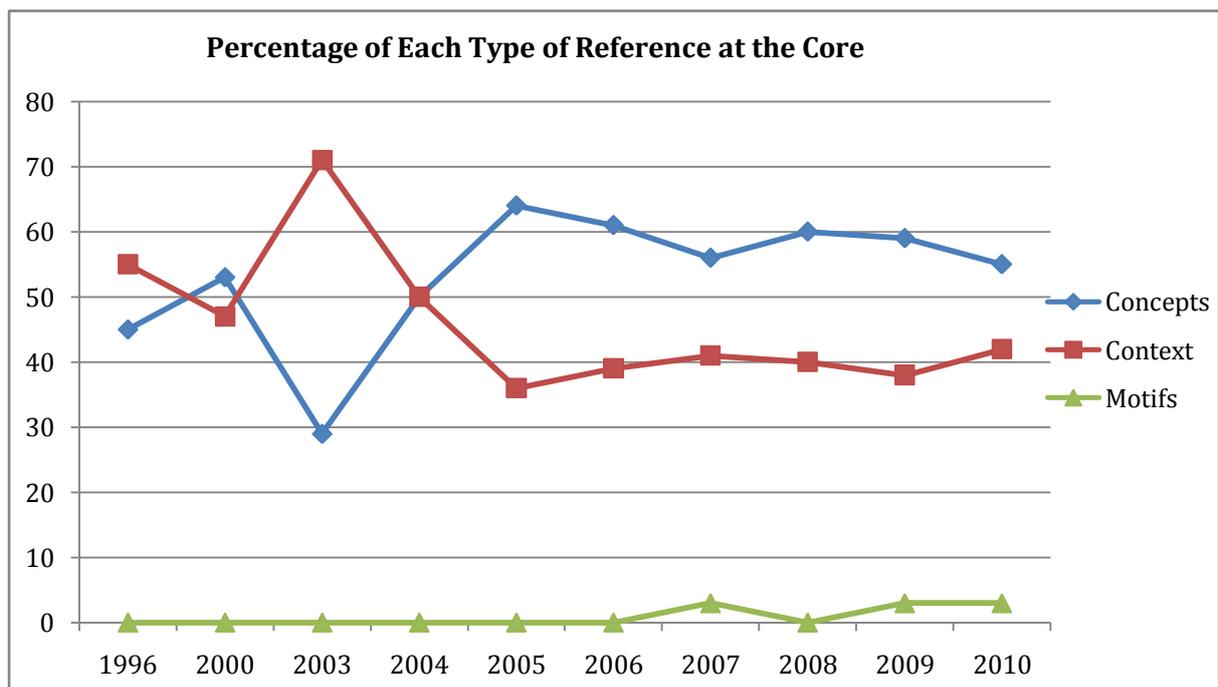
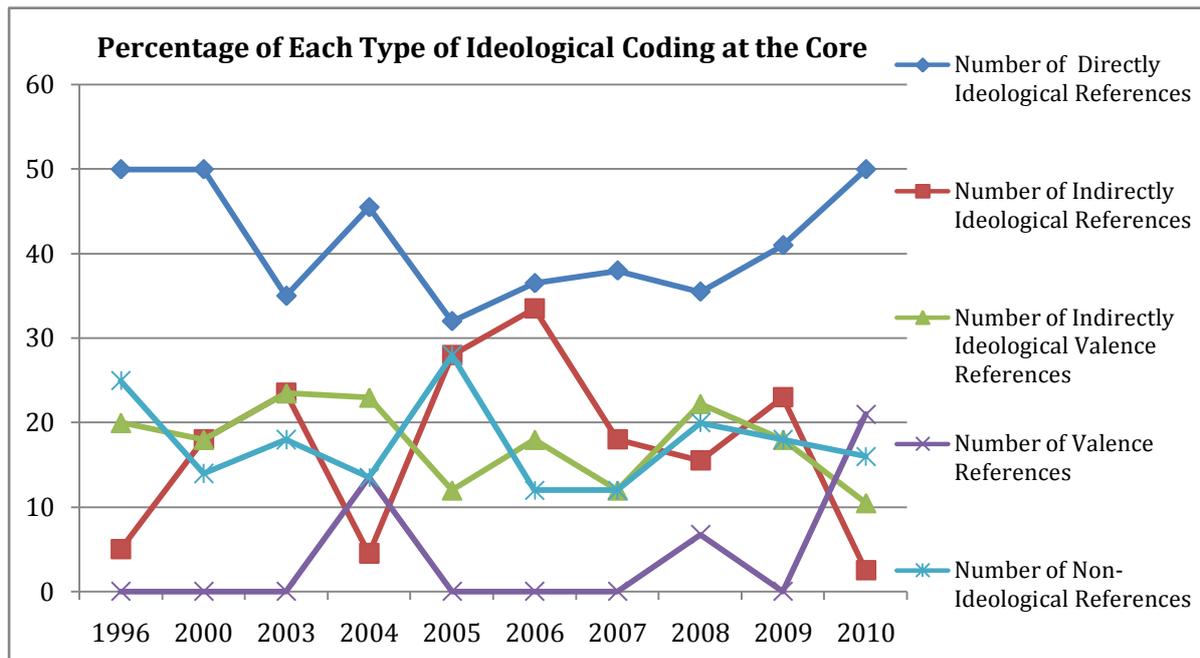


Figure 16: Longitudinal Analysis of Ideological References



In view of the multiple, conflicting narratives of the party's relationship with ideology these findings are not particularly surprising as they suggest that Cameron did not make a significant communicative change in the way he presented the party's vision. As Figure 16 conveys, he instead maintained the tradition of using directly ideological language over valence references, suggesting that even if a conscious effort was made to alter the public's impression of the party from 2005, this did not translate into a fundamental shift in the style and tone of ideological communication.

In view of this finding I turn to consider the morphological data produced through my analysis in greater detail, focusing on the ideas injected into the party's message from 2005. As the analysis of the last chapter has shown there is no consensus as to whether this shift marked a new ideological agenda, an attempt to reinvigorate traditional ideas, or a re-branding exercise. In view of this ambiguity I examine the degree of continuity and change between Cameron's utterances and those of previous party leaders, seeking to discern the extent to which these new ideas indicated a moment of ideological change. The data produced through my analysis is too expansive to present in full as 98 references were continuously evident, 57 were dropped from 2005, and 183 references were introduced by Cameron. Rather than listing all 338 references I have isolated examples which encapsulate the trends within this data. Each of the three categories is discussed in turn, considering first continued, then dropped, and finally new references. In analysing this data I attempt to show that the influx of new references in 2005 conceals an underlying continuity in ideological message.

Measuring Continuity and Change

In contemplating continuity it is illustrative to note a range of different trends in the period. Foremost it appears that there are significant areas of overlap between Cameron's agenda post-2005 and the leaders which preceded him. Indeed in the illustrative references below there is considerable continuity across this period with the majority of references evident either at the core (inner and outer - coloured purple) or periphery (pink). By contemplating this data I argue that there are areas of overlap with numerous references consistently apparent across the time span examined. However, in the early stages of Cameron's leadership the party does appear to shift in some regards as many previously core ideas move to the periphery or are dropped entirely from the party's agenda; suggesting an attempt to reshape the party's message in the public mind. Yet, from 2008 onwards (and to some extent in 2007) these principles began to return to the party's rhetoric, indicating that a long lasting ideological shift did not occur. In this regard a multifaceted picture of the Conservatives' ideological rhetoric in this period emerges, indicating the lack of a single clear trend. Whilst there is some danger of inferring too much regarding ideological position from these findings, due to the changing salience of different issues and policy concerns, when paired with subsequent analysis I argue that this data does offer some useful insights.

Table 16: Tabulating Continuity and Change in Conservative Morphologies

| | 1996 | 2000 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Family | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Tax | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Competition | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Choice | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Responsibility | X | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Freedom | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X |
| Society | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Immigration | | | | X | | | X | | X | X |
| Europe | X | X | X | X | | | X | | X | X |
| Government | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Bureaucracy | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | X |
| Waste | | | X | X | | X | | X | X | X |

To expand on the above narrative, Table 16 indicates that throughout these speeches the Conservatives have demonstrated areas of continuity in their message, specifically in relation to family. To illustrate, in 2000 Hague stated '[w]e will govern for hard-working families' (Hague, 2000), a message still apparent in 2008 when Cameron asserted that 'family is the most

important thing there is' (Cameron, 2008). Continuity is also evident in the party's message on tax and competition. Across the speeches considered here tax is a key concern and dominates the party's agenda. Major's simple assertion that 'low taxes are right' (1996) encapsulates the party's approach before 2005 and despite the concept appearing at the periphery in that year it is evident that Cameron does ascribe to this sentiment, commenting that '[e]veryone knows that our economy needs lower and simpler taxes' (2005). Whilst a change in message is evident from 2006 with Cameron making a clear attempt to move away from the idea that the party believes only in tax cuts, he nevertheless remains committed to the idea that 'a low tax economy is a strong economy' (2006); indicating a consistent message despite a change in tone. Similarly the party remains constant in its message regarding the need to retain 'competitive advantages' (Hague, 2000), a point echoed in Cameron's 2006 assertion that '[i]n this age of globalisation and fierce international competition from India, China, Brazil, we cannot afford to sit back'.

Further continuities are apparent when considering the values espoused by the Conservative Party. From 1996 choice, responsibility and freedom represent core commitments. Major attests that choice is 'the core of what I believe in' (1996) whilst Hague argues '[w]e are the only party believing that if you give people freedom and responsibility, they will grow stronger and society will grow stronger' (2000). These values underpin the party's message pre-Cameron but remain in evidence at the core and periphery from 2005. Hence, in 2005 Cameron states the party has got to 'give choice to parents, freedom to schools', arguing elsewhere that responsibility is 'the most important word' (2008), demonstrating the continued pertinence of these ideas. Closely linked to these themes post-2005 is the idea of society, with Cameron arguing in 2006 that the foundation of society is 'individual freedom' and that 'if we really want to make our society stronger, then you have got to make families stronger and society more responsible' (2007). Whilst society is almost continually evident in these morphologies, from 2005 it gains greater prominence, indicating a reframing of ideas which were entrenched in the party's outlook. In this sense continuity should not be mistaken for uniformity as changes in emphasis under Cameron's leadership did reshape the party's message.

Within Table 16 there is also evidence in the last two segments that in some areas the Conservatives made an attempt from 2005 to offer a different ideological picture to the public. In relation to immigration, Europe, bureaucracy and waste there appears to have been a change in emphasis as previously core ideas (in the majority of cases) were marginalised or removed from the party's rhetoric. This is particularly evident in regards to immigration and Europe which, having been situated at the core immediately prior to 2005, were given less importance, being dropped from the party leadership's lexicon upon Cameron's election. However, these

references reappeared in 2007 with Cameron committing the party to a referendum on the European Constitution, and asserting that 'this country has benefited immeasurably from immigration' (2007); suggesting that the party may have made a brief attempt to distance itself from previous associations. This reading is supported when examining these references in greater detail as whilst the party remains committed to a cap on immigration and a referendum, there is a sustained move away from the emotive language of 'genuine refugees' which was present in 2004, indicating an attempt to rebrand the party in the public mind (Bale, 2009b) rather than fundamentally altering the party's principles.

This kind of shift is also evident in the last three references recorded in Table 16. Prior to 2005 the Conservatives emphasised the virtue of small government and railed against waste and bureaucracy. For example, Duncan Smith developed the refrain 'Government - always there when you don't need it' in his speech, arguing that the government was focused on taxation and was overly bureaucratic and accordingly did not offer support where it was needed (2003). Similarly Major commented that 'Labour still believe that government knows best. I do not', conveying a clear scepticism of big government and state control. Yet in 2005, 2006 and 2007 Cameron's rhetoric shies away from these concerns – advancing a different message which critiques the practices of the existing government rather than attacking the concept of big government. To illustrate, in 2006 Cameron comments of Labour: '[n]o one knows who's accountable. No one takes the blame when things go wrong. That arrogant style of government must come to an end' (2006). In this period bureaucracy is also dropped from the party's message and waste is only referenced in 2006 when Cameron condemns the waste of money and talent under Labour – a reference which focused on Labour as opposed to the principle of big government. However, by 2008 all three of these concerns have returned to the morphological core and are consistently present in the party's message with Cameron asserting in 2009: 'we will have to tear down Labour's big government bureaucracy, ripping up its time-wasting, money-draining, responsibility-sapping nonsense' (2009). On this evidence it appears that whilst the party briefly moved away from the ideas promoted by previous leaders, they nevertheless continued to have purchase within the party, leading to their return to prominence from 2007/2008.

Taken collectively this data therefore suggests that the party retained much of the message seen pre-2005, but that, in certain areas it moved away from traditional concerns, giving them less emphasis, rearticulating, or removing them from the party leadership's message. Nevertheless their return from 2007 onwards indicates a short lived change, suggesting that the party did not undertake an ideological shift in this period but rather sought to rebrand in certain unpopular

policy areas. To reinforce this conclusion I consider the references dropped after 2005 (which do not subsequently reappear).

Table 17: References Dropped after 2005

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Asylum System | Grammar Schools | Prosperity |
| Better life | Independence | Public Industries |
| Big People | Influence | Quiet Revolution |
| British Nation | Inheritance | Real alternative |
| Commonwealth | Law abiding Majority | Responsive |
| Constitutional Reform | Low Paid Workers | Retirement |
| Countryside | Mainstream of our Country | Role Models |
| Decent Values | Means Testing | Self-Help |
| Delivery | Mission | Single European Currency |
| Dependency | Mutual Respect | Small Government |
| Disease | Nationhood | Social Security |
| Economic Policy | Partnership | Sovereignty |
| Environmental Destruction | Peace of Mind | Sport |
| Flexibility | People of Britain | Stake |
| Future Generations | Petrol | Talent |
| Genuine Refugees | Political Correctness | Tolerance |
| Get On | Politics of Reason | Trade Unions |
| Giving back the country | Private Provision | Tradition |
| Global Trading Nation | Professional Control | Value for Money |

Considering the references dropped listed in Table 17 it could appear, if viewed in isolation, that a substantive change had occurred as better life, economic policy, mutual respect, partnership, private provision, professional control, small government and tradition were all dropped in this period. However, as in the New Labour case, I argue that many of the dropped concepts overlap with new and continued references – meaning that rather than disappearing entirely from the party’s agenda, many of the ideas have been relabelled. To give some examples; the idea of small government overlaps with rhetoric on the Big Society and government; professional control is linked to Cameron’s new reference to professionalism; and references such as British nation, big people, better life, economic policy, environmental destruction, flexibility, get on, global trading nation, independence, can feasibly be linked to continuing agendas such as Britain, Big Society, aspiration, the economy, climate change, flexible working, opportunity and free trade. This reveals widespread continuities, suggesting that far from abandoning traditional concerns the party simply rearticulated its message.

In certain cases these changes again appear to reflect an attempt to articulate an old message in new, less emotive language – exhibiting the form of re-inscription evident in the New Labour

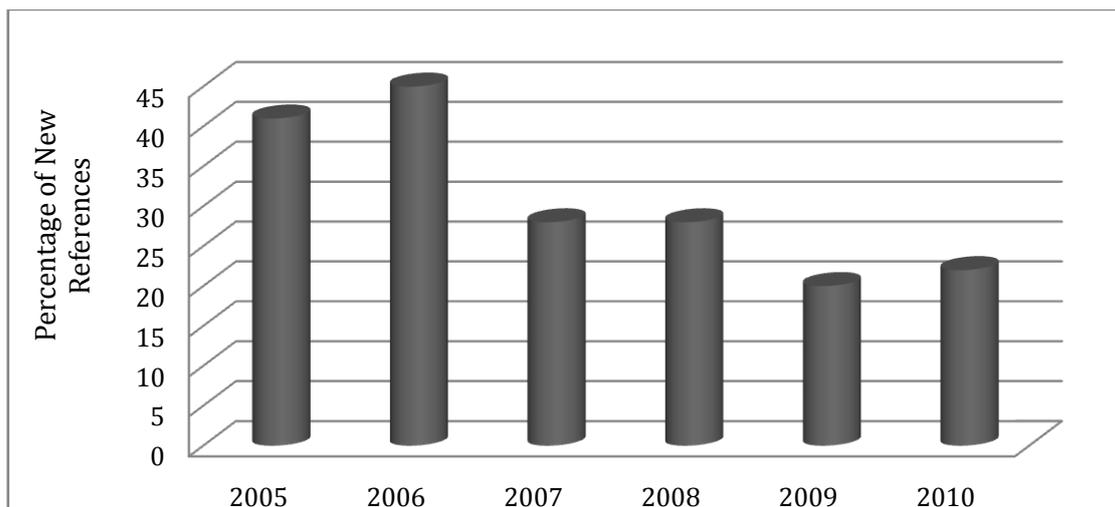
case. To illustrate, in 2003 Duncan Smith argued ‘we are now faced with an even graver danger. A threat to our very nationhood. The Euro would take away our power to decide our economic policy. But the European constitution would take away our power to decide who governs Britain’ (2003). This passage displays a clear antagonism towards giving greater powers to Europe, playing upon the ideas of patriotism and independence through the reference to nationhood. From 2005 the reference to nationhood is not apparent but euro sceptic sentiment remains. So, in 2010 Cameron states: ‘[l]et’s work together on the things where the EU can really help, like combating climate change, fighting global poverty and spreading free and fair trade./ But let’s return to democratic and accountable politics the powers the EU shouldn’t have’ (2010). This passage uses much softer rhetoric, evoking cooperation, and shared goals as well as their desire for a referendum, indicating a different approach to this policy area. Admittedly the scale of re-inscription is less extensive than that apparent in the New Labour case, however, the party does appear to disassociate its message from many of its more strident associations. This evidence, and the discussion of continued references above, suggests an attempt to redefine the party’s message in the public mind, compounding the idea that the Conservatives’ rebranded rather than undertook a substantive ideological shift.

This impression is reinforced when considering references which have disappeared entirely from the party’s message. The asylum system, commonwealth, countryside, grammar schools, inheritance and trade unions are all absent from 2005, attitudes to many of which – specifically inheritance and grammar schools - have been seen to traditionally define the party in the public mind. By moving away from such concerns the party under Cameron could be seen to be attempting to redefine its agenda, but when viewed alongside the considerable continuities and overlaps depicted above I interpret such changes as an attempt to recast public expectations rather than substantially alter the party’s message. This view chimes with the ideas of modernisers within the Conservative Party who suggested that it was not Conservative policies which needed changing but rather public perceptions, as ‘the Conservative Party, as it was then seen, was damaging good Conservative policies’ (Maude, 7th March 2012).

In detecting considerable areas of continuity and evidence of an attempt to recast attitudes towards the Conservatives, I turn to consider the 183 new references which were introduced after 2005. At face value these concepts, contextual references and motifs could be seen to indicate a new rhetorical and ideological agenda, replacing and supplementing many of the ideas introduced by previous Conservative leaders. However, in what follows I again discern continuity, arguing that the vast majority of these new references reflect an adaptive approach to ideology whereby the party continuously sought to align traditional ideological concerns with

public attitudes and contemporary events by introducing new ideas (a point supported by Figure 17 which reveals continual innovation in this period). In this sense, new ideas themselves are not indicative of a new ideological approach. Nevertheless by studying these references and their connection to the party's ideology I argue it is possible to gain greater insight into the party's relationship with ideology by discerning two distinct periods: 2005-2008 and 2008-2010. In the first phase the party is seen to react to negative public perceptions by re-branding traditional ideals to chime with public attitudes; creating an incongruous message which undermined public perceptions of ideology. However, in the second, in response to economic and political crises, the party formulated a coherent ideological message which applied traditional and new ideas to contemporary circumstances in a more consistent manner – suggesting ideological development. This examination of new references therefore underlines my contention of continuity but suggests that some form of ideological adaptation did occur in the latter stages.

Figure 17: New References Introduced by Cameron



In the existing literature attention has focused on 2005 as a moment of party change, citing the Conservative Party's new found commitment to the NHS, environment, climate change, social mobility, flexible working, childcare and civil partnerships – among other factors - as evidence. In studying these ideas and their subsequent disappearance from Conservative rhetoric scholars have argued that the party underwent a process of change from which it subsequently rowed back. Whilst such accounts draw attention to change in what follows I challenge the ideological pertinence of the references examined in Table 18 below, but also argue that the impression of a reversion to 'traditional' ideas is fallacious as throughout this period the party were adapting and reinterpreting their message. Table 18 evidences this latter point, revealing that far from being confined to 2005-2008 these ideas continued to have purchase after 2008,

suggesting a more nuanced relationship between change, ideology and the Conservatives than has traditionally been detected.

Table 18: Tabulating the Position of New References Introduced by Cameron⁸⁵

| REFERENCES: | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Childcare | X | X | | | | |
| Civil Partnerships | | X | | | X | |
| Climate Change | | | X | X | X | |
| Environment | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Flexible Working | | X | X | | X | |
| Humanitarian Intervention | | X | | | | |
| International Development | | | | X | | |
| NHS | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Quality of Life | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Social Mobility | X | | | | | |
| Women | | X | X | X | X | |

In exploring the ideological significance of these references this table initially appears to support the idea that a new ideological agenda emerged as a range of new references and different policy messages are in evidence. However, detailed analysis reveals that the ideological significance of these references has been overstated as they are rhetorically tied to traditional ideological principles. To illustrate, in discussing childcare Cameron states:

‘Britain has got the most expensive childcare in Europe. So we support the Government’s efforts to put more money into childcare. But why are they saying you should only get help if you use formal childcare? What about the grandparents, the friends, the neighbours, who for so many families provide that lifeline by looking after the kids? So let’s trust the parents in the childcare choices that they make’ (2006).

Within this passage childcare itself does not appear as an ideological commitment (due to the lack of conflict) but is subsumed within a broader ideological agenda focused on the traditional Conservative principles of choice and small government.⁸⁶ The dominance of an ideological message familiar pre-2005 suggests that far from altering the party’s outlook, these changes signal an attempt to align traditional conservative ideas with modern expectations. In this regard these new concerns reflect the perimeter concepts discussed by Freedon – appearing as new policy proposals and specific ideas rather than core ideological commitments (Freedon,

⁸⁵ In examining the novel references in Table 18 the same coding system apparent above (p.173) is used, hence core references are coloured purple and peripheral pink.

⁸⁶ The valence concept trust is also evident here, serving to reinforce the Conservative Party’s critique of Labour and demonstrate the common sense appeal of the Conservatives’ approach to this issue.

1996, p.80). This phenomenon is also evident in relation to the environment when Cameron stated:

'[g]oing green is not some fashionable, pain-free option. It will place a responsibility on business. It will place a responsibility on all of us. That is the point. Tackling climate change is our social responsibility - to the next generation' (Cameron, 2006).

In this passage he links environmental change to responsibility, a reference which once again has longevity within the party's ideological message and thus suggests the application of traditional values to new problems. This finding is evident throughout these speeches, with commitments to the NHS being voiced alongside the idea of choice, professionalism and a critique of bureaucracy (2007), and flexible working tied to family and a strong society (2006). Far from representing a new ideological perspective it therefore appears that these ideas were co-opted into the Conservative Party's message in an attempt to align the party with public attitudes and concerns; supporting perceptions of ideological continuity.

However, from 2008 some evidence of ideological change is apparent as an adapted (rather than fundamentally different) ideological message emerges. From 2008 a range of new references are evident which largely reflect the economic and political crises (i.e. the expenses scandal) occurring at the time (Figure 17), hence references to the banking system, borrowing, enterprise, investment, new economic circumstances, public finances, sound money, recession, the deficit, financial responsibility, economic recovery, decentralisation, broken politics and big government appear. Whilst of themselves these references do not indicate a radically different ideology, they do suggest the adaptation of traditional ideas to new circumstances in a more coherent manner than in the first period. To illustrate, in 2008 Cameron asserted: '[f]irst of all, I believe that government's main economic duty is to ensure sound money and low taxes./ Sound money means controlling inflation, keeping spending under control and getting debt down' (2008). Here the traditional message of low tax, small government, financial freedom and responsibility is linked directly to new ideological references such as sound money, debt and public spending. In this sense the party is reacting to contextual dilemmas by deploying old and new ideological references in tandem rather than channelling old ideological principles through new, non-ideological references. What is particularly notable about this change is the consistency with which these new and old ideas are entwined, and thus the apparent coherence of this perspective. To illustrate, Cameron argued:

'[w]hy is our economy broken? Not just because Labour wrongly thought they'd abolished boom and bust. But because government got

too big, spent too much and doubled the national debt. / Why is our society broken? Because government got too big, did too much and undermined responsibility. / Why are our politics broken? Because government got too big, promised too much and pretended it had all the answers' (2009).

In this passage a broken economy, society and politics are diagnosed as resulting from the presence of big government, a lack of responsibility, and a top down approach to governance. In turn the party developed an agenda focused on the principles of small government, responsibility and society each of which appears at the core and underpins the party's prescribed reactions. The presence of these core commitments and their persistent mobilisation to address a range of ills suggests the emergence of a more coherent ideological message. Indeed in all three areas responsibility is portrayed as key, so society is broken because government 'undermined responsibility' (Cameron, 2009), broken politics will be fixed by creating 'strong, powerful citizens...who will build the responsible society that we all want to see' (ibid.) and economic problems are seen to be solved by facing 'up to our financial responsibilities' (Cameron, 2010). Similarly, big government is, in the quote from 2009, seen to have produced economic, social and political breakdown by undermining responsibility. In this regard the themes voiced here are not only consistently applied but also overlap, resulting in an integrated policy agenda focused on creating a Big Society, reducing bureaucracy, supporting the family, tackling social problems, reducing unemployment and giving people greater power through decentralisation. In this sense the party offers not only a clearer vision for society, but also articulates these concerns in a rhetorically consistent manner.

In this sense from 2008 it is possible to discern a more coherent ideological vision which redeploys traditional ideas and appends them with new principles to project a distinct ideological vision – an outcome which suggests a degree of ideological change. Whilst by no means akin to the kind of ideological shifts evident in the New Labour case this does suggest some ideological adaptation, and reveals that the Conservatives' willingness to re-appropriate and redeploy their ideas in response to contextual pressures can have varying degrees of success.

Summary

The above analysis has therefore revealed a high degree of continuity in the Conservative Party's message as whilst references were dropped from and injected into these morphologies they marked attempts to rebrand and respond to pressures rather than the presentation of a

radically different ideological perspective. In discussing its ideology change should therefore not be overstated, but neither should it be overlooked as there is some evidence of adaptation.

In reaching this conclusion it is, however, pertinent to consider the public’s likely reaction to these trends, reflecting upon Evan’s argument that if Cameron was ‘really intent upon creating a new brand image for the Conservative Party’ he needed to ‘be consistent in the projection of that image in the political market place’ (Evans, 2008, p.303). In view of the adaptations and inconsistency evident within this period I argue that there are considerable grounds for concluding that the public were likely to treat Conservative change sceptically. Accordingly in the next section I consider the alternative motivations and context in which the party found itself, contemplating how these factors, and the Conservatives’ rhetorical consistency are likely to have affected reception of the party’s message.

Detecting Ideological Relevance

In exploring the Conservative Party’s message and the ideological vision therein I once again look to context, alternative motivations and consistency in the presentation and justification of ideas. Although context has already been discussed through the above analysis it is useful to clarify how non-ideological factors may have affected perceptions of party change.

Context and Alternative Motivations

Table 19: Election Results 1997-2010

| | Labour % | Conservatives % | Liberal Democrats % | Other % |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| 1997 | 43 | 31 | 17 | 9 |
| 2001 | 41 | 32 | 18 | 9 |
| 2005 | 35 | 32 | 22 | 10 |
| 2010 | 29 | 36 | 23 | 12 |

Source: Collated using data from Politics Resources

As with chapter five it is first useful to examine the electoral context in which Cameron was elected party leader, seeking to discern the electoral motivations for change.⁸⁷ As with Labour Table 19 shows that the Conservatives had spent a significant period in opposition, yet more strikingly had failed to significantly increase their share of the vote at each general election. Even in the face of declining support for the Labour Government the Conservatives failed to capitalise, seeing just a 0.66 increase in their vote share between 2001 and 2005 (despite Labour’s share falling by 5.34 points). This indicates negative perception of the Conservative

⁸⁷ In applying this framework more broadly other considerations such as lobbying pressures and international concerns are pertinent but I focus on elections as in the space available here this example neatly indicates the presence of alternative motivations.

Party, an occurrence which was catalogued in detail in a polling report by Lord Ashcroft which stated:

[t]he most widely chosen phrase to describe how the Conservatives had come across during the campaign was “old fashioned”. More than six times as many people selected this description (43%) as chose “modern” (7%). Only 14% had seen the party as “trustworthy”, compared to more than a quarter (26%) who thought it had come across as “dishonest”. Nearly a fifth of voters (18%) thought the Conservatives seemed “normal”, but more than one in ten (11%) regarded them as “weird”. Only half as many voters thought the party appeared “concerned about people like me” (17%) as thought it was “not concerned about people like me”, and while a fifth believed the Conservatives were “in it for what they believe is best for the country”, more than a third (36%) thought they were “in it only for themselves” (Ashcroft, 2005, p.103).

These attitudes illustrate the breadth of cynicism towards the Conservatives, indicating that the party had ample motivation to engage in a wide ranging program of change. Moreover, the fact that Lord Ashcroft, a senior figure within the Conservative Party, published these findings in a publically available document is significant. By placing this data in the public realm Ashcroft opened the debate about the future direction of the Conservative Party to a public audience, explicitly outlining the need to change attitudes in order to secure electoral success. In this sense the party underwent a very public debate over its future direction – explicitly outlining the electoral motivation for change to the audience the party would have to convince of the genuine nature of its shift. Accordingly the likelihood of the party being seen to have changed its ideology rather than simply changing its policy focus, was undermined by this public debate.

However, as seen in the New Labour case, if a coherent, developed and accepted ideological message is advanced by the party it is possible for ideological change to appear genuine. This leads me to examine the consistency of Cameron’s utterances, concentrating on the overlap between speeches and the policies advanced, and the consistency with which new ideas, such as flexible working, were justified in the party’s rhetoric. Drawing on these two analyses I argue that the new social agenda promoted by the party between 2005-2008 was likely to be perceived as the product of electoral rationale due to a range of inconsistencies and incoherencies in message. However, from 2008 I argue that the Conservatives did exhibit a more coherent message but that this is likely to have been overshadowed by earlier scepticism.

Judging Consistency: Policy and Policy Justifications

In studying the party's policy agenda I examine policies presented under the heading 'Make Britain the most family-friendly country in Europe' within the party's 2010 manifesto, seeking to discern the consistency with which policies were presented. Attention is specifically directed to the 'new' principles such as childcare and flexible working to examine whether the party were consistently concerned with these ideas, and thus whether it was likely to be seen as committed to the new agenda.

Table 20: Tracing Continuities in Family Focused Policy Commitments between the Conservative Manifesto and Previous Speeches⁸⁸

| Manifesto Policy Pledges | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 | 10 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| End couple penalty in the benefit system | X | | X | X | X | |
| Make savings from welfare reform plans | | | | | | |
| Recognise Marriage and Civil Partnerships in the tax system | X | | X | X | X | X |
| Freeze Council tax for two years | | | | | | |
| Reduce Government spending on consultants and advertising | | | | | | |
| Scrap plans for council tax revaluation | | | | | | |
| No tax credits to households earning over £50,000 | | | | | | |
| Reform administration of tax credits | | | | | | |
| Link pensions to earnings | | | | | X | |
| Protect winter fuel payments | | | | | | |
| Protect free bus passes | | | | | | |
| Protect free TV licenses | | | | | | |
| Protect disability living allowance and attendance allowance | | | | | | |
| Protect the pension credit | | | | | | |
| Right to request flexible working extended to all those in the public sector. Long term aim of extending the right to request flexible working to all. Oblige Job Centre Plus offices to ask employers if their vacancies could be advertised on a part-time or flexible basis | | X | X | X | X | |
| Flexible parental leave introduced | | | | | | |
| Support free nursery care through diverse providers | X | X | | | | |
| Review regulation of the childcare industry | | | | | | |
| Put relationship support funding on a long-term, stable footing | | X | | | | |
| Review family law | | | | | | |
| Prevent marketing or advertising companies found to be in breach of rules on marketing to children to be banned from bidding for government advertising contracts for three years | | | X | | | |
| Ban companies from using peer-to-peer marketing techniques targeted at children and tackle marketing on corporate websites targeted at children | | | X | | | |
| Establish a new online system that gives parents greater | | | X | | | |

⁸⁸ Here all references to these ideas are recorded rather than explicit policy commitments – reflecting the fact that the Conservatives undertook a policy review in 2005 and made only a few policy announcements ahead of the general election.

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| powers to take action against irresponsible commercial activities targeted at children | | | | | | |
| Empower head teachers and governors to ban advertising and vending machines in schools | | | | | | |
| Sure start supported | | | | | X | |
| 4,200 more health visitors | | | | X | X | |
| Ensure than new sure start providers are paid in part by results | | | | | | |
| Bring all funding for early intervention and parenting support into one budget to be overseen by the new Early Years Support Team | | | | | | |
| Set out a new approach to help families with multiple problems | | | X | X | | X |

Source: Conservative Party (2010).

As noted in the last chapter policy pledges made prior to the manifesto and those in the final document normally differ to some extent as parties flesh out their ideas in the run up to an election. However, this table reveals a high percentage of references to be novel, indicating that the party did not consistently outline the kind of policy vision they were hoping to enact. For example, references to flexible parental working, reforms to sure start and making savings from welfare reform were not foreshadowed ahead of the manifesto; suggesting that the party was not formulating policy on the basis of a coherent ideological vision. In addition to this point the table also reveals that certain ideas, particularly those associated with the party's supposed new ideological agenda, were not consistently advanced. This is particularly the case in relation to childcare and relationship support which, whilst referenced early in Cameron's leadership disappear from the agenda in 2006. This indicates that the party were inconsistent in the policies they advocated and hence were liable to appear unreliable. However, there are exceptions as flexible working - a new theme - was consistently advanced, indicating some ideological longevity. But it is important to note that this commitment was accompanied by repeated pledges to recognise marriage in the tax system and remove the couples' penalty in the benefit system - policy aims aligned more closely with the party's old rather than supposed new ideological agenda. In this sense the Conservatives are not seen to have consistently outlined how they would enact their ideology, and moreover they display a dubious commitment to the new ideas seen by some to indicate ideological change. In this sense a broader analysis raises further questions about the party's apparent commitment to its new agenda in this period and thus the relevance of this ideological rhetoric.

This interpretation is reinforced when examining the justifications used to present the party's new ideas as inconsistency and a lack of development is apparent. To illustrate I examine the party's rationale on flexible working as outlined in 2006, 2007, 2008 and the manifesto.

2006: 'So recognising marriage more directly in the tax system is not enough. / Flexible working. Family centres. Relationship advice. All of these things matter. Let us as a society and as a culture value and recognise marriage more' (Cameron, 2006).

2007: 'But I don't just want to give people a tax cut. I want to give people a time increase. Time for many families is the most precious commodity of all - time you can spend at home, time to help with the homework, time you can do things in the house, and that's why I think it's time not just for these benefit and tax changes I've spoken about, but also to say to all employees in all companies with children that you should have the right to ask for flexible working. / Companies that have adopted this have found that they are able to grant the request in the vast majority of cases - they have actually found that productivity has gone up, profits have gone up, staff morale has gone up and keeping staff is easier. / I think at the next election we will be able to offer people the strongest family package any party has put together. Yes we will recognise marriage in the tax system, yes we will take the couples penalty out of the tax system and yes we will give people more time, more flexibility, so we can be the party of the family once again' (Cameron, 2007).

2008: 'It's because I want to strengthen families that I support flexible working. / To those who say this is some intolerable burden on business, I say "wrong". / Business pays the costs of family breakdown in taxes - and isn't it right that everyone, including business, should play their part in making Britain a more family-friendly country? / Do you know what, if we don't change these antiquated business practices then women..... / ...half the talent of the country..... / ...are just put off from joining the workforce' (Cameron, 2008).

The above three passages are striking because of the different ways in which they discuss the party's support for flexible working. The first presents the policy as part of a broader scheme to recognise the importance of marriage and commitment within the family. Whilst those policy commitments are evident in the later speeches the precise justification advanced for flexible working is markedly different. In 2007 the rationale is primarily economic, emphasising the advances in productivity, profit and morale bought through the provision of extra time with the

family. In this regard flexible working is seen as having broader social and economic advantages as well as contributing to the party's family agenda. Whilst the third passage appears, initially, to correlate with this message, on closer inspection Cameron inverts his argument, asserting that businesses 'should' play a part in making a more family friendly country as they and everyone suffer from family breakdown through higher taxes. This is a very different line of justification, emphasising not the advantages to be gained through flexible working, but rather the disadvantages which arise from the lack of such policies. Furthermore, by going onto discuss how businesses are holding back the talent of the country due to their antiquated practices, the very actors he was trying to persuade in 2007 are portrayed as inhibitors to the female workforce. This indicates confusion around the party's position in relation to the family, business, women and work – suggesting that the intersection of these different ideas has not been coherently determined. On this basis it appears that the Conservatives do not have a consistent message on flexible working and in turn do not possess a clear ideological rationale for this commitment. This impression is compounded by the manifesto:

2010 Manifesto: 'We will help families with all the pressures they face: the lack of time, money worries, the impact of work, concerns about schools and crime, preventing unhealthy influences, poor housing. We will not be neutral on this. Britain's families will get our full backing across all our policies...'

'...Making Britain more family-friendly means helping families spend more time together. That is why we will initially extend the right to request flexible working to every parent with a child under the age of eighteen. We want our government to lead from the front, so we will extend the right to request flexible working to all those in the public sector, recognising that this may need to be done in stages. In addition, we will:

- in the longer term, extend the right to request flexible working to all, but only in the light of experience and after full consultation with business on how to do this in a way which is administratively simple and without burdening them with extra costs; and,
- oblige Job Centre Plus offices to ask employers if their vacancies could be advertised on a part-time or flexible basis' (Conservative Party, 2010).

Unlike the 2007 and 2008 passages here the justification offered lacks an economic dimension with no mention of tax or financial incentives, rather the policy is seen as a self-evident good;

allowing families more time together and creating a more family friendly environment. These justifications echo the argument advanced in 2007 related to time, but there is not significant overlap between this justification and the earlier rationale. This suggests that rather than being advanced in accordance with a clear ideological vision, flexible working is instead a pragmatic addition to the party's message – designed to change perceptions of the party rather than representing an ideological shift.

The significance of these trends lies, as noted, in their likely impact upon public perceptions of change and the place of ideology within a party's rhetoric. The above evidence therefore suggests that far from being seen to project a coherent, developed ideological vision, the Conservatives fluctuated in their commitments and justifications. When viewed alongside the party's publically evident alternative motivations for change these shifts in message are arguably likely to be perceived as the product of instrumental calculations regarding the most electorally expedient policy course, rather than as ideologically informative/ed changes. If accepting this point interpretations of the Conservative Party's ideology could go one of two ways; first the party could be seen to be non-ideological, acting simply in accordance with pragmatic rationale, or second, they could be seen to have some vestige of ideology, but not act in accordance with it, making ideological statements unreliable guides to behaviour. In arbitrating between these possibilities I argue that the continued presence of a set of traditional ideological ideas such as choice, responsibility and small government indicate that the party is likely to be deemed ideologically unreliable rather than entirely pragmatic.

However, as indicated above, I argue that the party did go on to offer a more coherent ideological message from 2008, but if these conclusions are supported it is unlikely that a subsequently developed, more coherent ideological message would receive a more favourable reception. In this sense the party faces a legacy of public scepticism regarding ideological change and the reliability of their ideological pronouncements. This means that the Conservatives still have a considerable amount of work to do if they want to entrench perceptions of change, demonstrate a genuine commitment to the policy agenda they project and regain public trust in their rhetoric. This point is neatly illustrated by a recent poll which suggests continued public scepticism about Conservative message and beliefs. Commenting on the findings of the survey on gay marriage Peter Kellner states:

[w]e asked people why they thought the Prime Minister pledged his backing [to gay marriage]. Just 21% thought it was because 'he genuinely believes it is the right thing to do', while as many as 63 % felt

‘he does not believe it is right, but is doing it for political reasons’
(Kellner, 12th March 2012).

Accordingly whilst academically it is possible to discern the beginnings of a coherent ideological programme based on the adaption of traditional principles, publically the Conservatives are likely to have been seen to have undergone a rebranding exercise rather than undertaking substantive ideological change.

Returning to the Existing Literature

The above analysis has tested the prevalent belief that Cameron attempted to change the party’s ideology in 2005-2007, and reverted to more traditional Conservative concerns in 2008. In the face of this narrative I have argued that the party underwent a process of contextually reflective ideological adaption which, although initially giving the impression of incoherence, did lead to the projection of a more coherent economic, social and political narrative from 2008. Nevertheless I have concluded that publicly these changes are likely to have given rise to cynicism, being seen to reflect instrumental calculations rather than genuine ideological change within the party.

In tracing this complex picture a number of questions remain regarding the most appropriate ideological frame through which to view the Conservative Party’s message. As discussed in the last chapter scholars have begun to posit characterisations which draw attention to the co-option of New Labour themes and ideas, the resurgence of One Nation or Thatcherite ideas, the presence of ideological innovation and the pre-eminence of electoral rather than ideological rationale. The scholars advancing these narratives do not all reflect on the entire period 2005-2010, nevertheless they provide a useful lens through which to assess the changes discerned above. Hence I consider the arguments that:

1. Cameron’s Conservatives have changed their ideology
2. Cameron’s Conservatives display ideological continuity
3. Cameron’s Conservatives are ideologically innovative, and
4. Cameron’s Conservatives are not ideological

Using these arguments as analytical frames I explore my morphological outputs to assess these depictions, arguing that the third and fourth explanations have the greatest utility in accounting for the ideological change in this period. Whilst the fourth is seen to most adequately encapsulate the shifts in the first period (i.e. 2005-2008), I argue that the principle of ideological innovation is most appropriate for depicting change thereafter.

New Labour?

In examining characterisations which cite the influence of New Labour on the Conservatives it is vital to reassert the caveats attached to these depictions. Unlike in the New Labour case where the party was seen to have capitulated to Thatcherite ideas, here Labour's social agenda is seen to have been influential in shaping, rather than being commensurate with the party's outlook (Driver, 2009). Hence to recap, Williams and Scott argue that whilst the party can be seen to emulate New Labour's approach to employment between 2005 and 2008, after that point Thatcherite ideas became more influential. Elsewhere authors like Griffiths have highlighted continuities in the parties' adherence to the 'quasi-market model (2009, p.105) but also detected differences – suggesting that whilst an understanding of New Labour can help explain some changes the two parties are not ideologically identical.

To guide my analysis I focus not on policies or party outputs but rather on the references used by both Labour between 1994 and 1997 and the Conservatives between 2005 and 2010. By examining the rhetorical overlap between these two parties I aim to show that an understanding of New Labour is highly informative in appreciating the lexical changes made by Cameron. However, in view of my conclusions regarding the continuity between Cameron's message and past Conservative leaders this explanation alone is not seen to be sufficient to capture the various trends evident in this period.

Table 21: References Apparent in the Labour Party 1994-1997 and the Conservative Party 2005-2010

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Context | Armed Forces | Environment | Pensioners |
| | Benefits | Europe | Politics |
| | Britain | Free Trade | Public Finance |
| | British People | Housing | Public Services |
| | Business | Immigration | Public Spending |
| | Country | Individuals | Savings |
| | Crime | Industry | Tax |
| | Defence | Jobs | Technology |
| | Discipline | NHS | Transport |
| | Drugs | Northern Ireland | Welfare System |
| | Economy | Parents | World |
| | Education | Pensions | Young People |
| | Concept | Accountability | Government |
| Aspiration | | Growth | Respect |
| Borrowing | | Hope | Responsibility |
| Bureaucracy | | Interests | Revolution |
| Change | | Investment | Rights |
| Choice | | Leadership | Security |
| Community | | National Interests | Skills |
| Competition | | Needs | Social Justice |
| Deficit | | New Generation | Society |
| Democracy | | New World | Standards |
| Duty | | Opportunity | State |
| Enterprise | | Patriotism | Support |
| Equality | | Peace | Trust |
| Fairness | | Potential | Unemployment |
| Family | | Poverty | Universalism |
| Freedom | | Power | Vision |
| Future | | Progress | Work |

This table reveals widespread conceptual overlap between Labour and the Conservatives, and a common focus on many contextual issues. In total 83 references overlap these two periods but, as the orange highlighting conveys, these terms are not always used in the same ideological way, and different visions arise from their usage. Many of these references, contextual and conceptual, are long term features of the parties' rhetoric, so contextually the economy, NHS, welfare, housing, immigration, crime, armed forces, business, drugs and discipline are evident, and conceptually accountability, aspiration, bureaucracy, fairness, patriotism, progress, social justice and universalism. However, there are a range of references, apparent in New Labour's rhetoric which were utilised by Cameron from 2005 onward. In interpreting this data it is

important to note some grounds for caution because it is possible for references to reflect contextual factors rather than the influence of another party, or to be inscribed with different meanings. For example in the case of equality Cameron uses the term to argue that 'equality isn't putting them all in the same class and teaching at the same speed. It's setting by ability, it's taking the brightest pupils and stretching them and helping those that are falling behind' (2007). This differs from Labour's egalitarian critique of the market (Blair, 1994), meaning that congruence should not automatically be assumed.

Taking this into account there are, however, numerous instances in which New Labour appear to have influenced Conservative language and policy objectives as ideas which had previously been overlooked or actively opposed by the Conservatives have been adopted by the party under Cameron's leadership. The most obvious example relates to the environment which, other than a fleeting reference in 2003 to the need for Europe to tackle environmental destruction had not been a feature of the Conservatives vision. Indeed, as Chris Huhne, countering Cameron's attempt to co-opt the green agenda, noted a study by Greenpeace in 2004 had 'found that the Conservatives were not just the least green party in Britain, but the least green in the whole of the European Union' (Huhne, 22nd December 2005). In this sense the party can be seen to have accommodated itself to a policy agenda which had previously been the preserve of Labour (and the Liberal Democrats and Green Party). In other policy areas the Conservatives also appeared to move onto territory previously owned by the Labour Party, integrating a concern with young people, benefits and technology into their agenda. In places the similarities between the parties are rhetorically striking, thus as Blair argues in 1994 that '[t]here are a million young people, more than a million who are neither in employment, nor in education, nor in training' (2004), Cameron states in 2007 '[t]here are nearly one million young people in this country who have no work or training or education' (2007). Such instances suggest an alignment between the parties, but there is also evidence that the Conservatives moved to adopt Labour concepts when articulating their societal vision.

In the table above community, enterprise, equality, interests, investment, leadership, new generation and new world are all New Labour references which were used by Cameron. The latter two of these can be largely explained as an emulation of New Labour's modernisation and change agenda, but the other references reveal a more interesting shift. Whilst the Conservatives had previously talked of communities, under Cameron the concept of community was not explicitly used, so whilst Blair was concerned with building 'a thriving community' (2004), Cameron came to assert 'family, community, country. These are the things I care about' (2009); illustrating his equal commitment to this issue. Similarly on the topic of investment Cameron echoes Labour's calls for 'long-term investment' (Blair, 1996a) by arguing that the

country still 'needs more investment in the north', leading the party to back initiatives such as the high speed rail network (Cameron, 2008). As investment had previously been the preserve of Labour the Conservatives' acceptance of the need to promote investment rather than rely on market conditions indicates the co-option of New Labour's economic framework.

In other places there is evidence that, as well as sharing a policy agenda and conceptual emphasis, Cameron appropriated many of the framing devices introduced by New Labour – structuring his language in a manner which closely emulates Blair. To illustrate it is useful to consider the following passages:

'Look at the wreckage of our broken society, see Britain through the eyes of our children. Are we really proud of our society today - drugs, violence, youngsters hanging around street corners with nothing to do?' (Blair, 1995a).

'I want hospital resources released from the administrative chaos of opting out, so that nurses can actually nurse again, which is what the public want to see them do. I want schools released from form-filling and red tape, so that teachers can teach again. And I want our uniformed services freed from paper pushing, so that they can go and catch the criminals terrorising our society' (Blair, 1994).

Both of these passages, and others besides, could easily be mistaken as having come from Cameron. The close links in the frames applied to examine these issues and the connections and associations made indicate a clear overlap between the two parties' rhetorical approaches. Whilst different policy prescriptions are offered such continuities suggest that Labour had a profound influence on the rhetorical tone taken by Cameron, indicating the pertinence of comparative study.⁸⁹

Shown in this light, Cameron's Conservatives were clearly aware of the impact of New Labour's legacy and the need to appropriate ground which had previously been ceded to them, but they by no means fully capitulated to New Labour's agenda. Some Labour ideas such as investment and community, and policy concerns such as the minimum wage do appear to have been genuinely integrated into the Conservative message. However, the Conservatives did not uncritically subsume New Labour's ideas and programme as policies such as constitutional reform, public ownership and greater working rights were not adopted and scepticism towards equality and civil rights remained. This suggests the form of adaptation and reinterpretation

⁸⁹ It could also be argued that this demonstrates the influence of Conservative ideas on New Labour.

which characterised earlier analysis and also suggests that whilst an appreciation of New Labour is important to understanding why certain new ideas entered into the party's projected message, its impact should not be overstated. In this regard, I agree with authors such as Driver (2009) and Williams and Scott (2011) that whilst there is insight to be gained from studying the continuities between the parties this prism alone is not sufficient when attempting to characterise the Conservatives' ideology.

One Nation or Thatcherite?

As seen in chapter five arbitrating between the applicability of past traditions within a party is a fraught business, particularly when there is a lack of consensus over the indicators of different ideological traditions. Rather than rely on any one of the benchmarks set out by the scholars examined under this heading I offer my own conceptions of One Nation ideas and Thatcherism to direct this analysis. In so doing I once again remain cautious of constructing straw men from the existing literature as whilst scholars have highlighted the pertinence of these ideological frames, other ideational influences are also seen to be present. Following these principles I argue that whilst evidence of a greater social agenda is apparent under Cameron, many of the guiding principles seen to be indicative of the One Nation tradition are not, suggesting that this frame has only limited use in casting light on the party's direction. In contrast Thatcherism is seen to exert a more direct influence, particularly on Cameron himself.

One Nation?

One Nation ideas are closely associated with the Conservative Party's position in the 1950s and 1960s when, under Harold MacMillan, the party adopted a Keynesian rationale which strove for full employment and accepted the need for generous welfare provision.⁹⁰ Yet, in assessing this tradition I draw upon Andrew Heywood's depiction which emphasises how, under Benjamin Disraeli, the Conservatives 'believed that society is naturally hierarchical, but also held that inequalities of wealth and social privilege give rise to an inequality of responsibilities. The wealthy and the powerful must shoulder the burden of social responsibility which in effect is the price of privilege' (Heywood, 2003, p.87). When assessing the modern party's One Nation credentials I therefore consider the presence of social responsibility and the party's commitment to the welfare state, seeking to discern whether this agenda is structured through a paternalistic narrative, or whether the party have moved on from this hierarchical conception of society.

⁹⁰ It should be noted that other figures such as Benjamin Disraeli, Stanley Baldwin and Edward Heath are also associated with this tradition,

Table 22: Assessing the Conservatives' One Nation Credentials

| LIST OF REFERENCES | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Responsibility: | | | | | | |
| Financial Responsibility | | | | * | | * |
| Fiscal Responsibility | | | | * | | |
| Irresponsibility | | | | | * | |
| Moral Responsibility | | * | | | | |
| Mutual Responsibility | | | | | | * |
| Responsibility | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Social Responsibility | | * | * | * | * | |
| Other values: | | | | | | |
| Equality | | * | * | | | |
| Inequality | | | * | | | |
| Morality | | | | | * | |
| One Nation | | | * | * | | |
| Social Justice | | | | * | * | |
| Social Solidarity | | * | | | | |
| Support | | * | * | * | * | * |
| Wealth | * | | | | | |
| Wealth Creators | | * | | | | * |
| Public service rationale | | | | | | |
| All in this together | * | | | | * | * |
| Big Society | | | | | | * |
| Big Society Spirit | | | | | | * |
| Choice | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Citizens | | | | | * | |
| Citizenship | | | | | | * |
| Civilised Society | | | | | | * |
| Communities | | * | | | | |
| Community | | | * | | * | * |
| Government | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| National Unity | | | | | | * |
| One World | | | | * | | |
| People Power | | | | | | * |
| Personalisation | | | * | | | |
| Public Services | * | | * | * | * | * |
| Public Spending | | * | * | * | * | * |
| Society | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| State | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| State Monopoly | | | * | * | | * |

Table 22 illustrates the different references apparent from 2005 which align with these traits; demonstrating a clear focus on responsibility and other concepts aligned with One Nation principles. However, as the third segment illustrates there are also a range of ideas which

appear to stand in contrast to these principles, suggesting the predominance of an alternative rationale.

In contemplating the first and second sections of this table it appears that Cameron draws heavily on the language of One Nation conservatism. A vision of social (and an array of other kinds of) responsibility is in evidence as are a range of other One Nation ideas such as equality and inequality, morality, social justice and social solidarity. Indeed Cameron even directly references 'One Nation' in 2006 and 2007, suggesting that the party is drawing upon this tradition in shaping its ideas. The social agenda pursued by the party compounds this impression as the focus on public services and welfare provision emulate Disraeli's policy agenda, leading many scholars to cite the pertinence of this ideological tradition (Dorey, 2007). However, when looking at the way in which these references are used and the broader ideological vision of which they are a part, I argue that the One Nation label offers an erroneous account of the party's ideological direction.

The grounds for this claim originate in the disjuncture between the ideas apparent in Heywood's definition and the way in which the same concepts are deployed by Cameron's Conservatives. For instance, in relation to social responsibility, whilst Heywood associates this concept with a benevolent, paternalistic vision of social responsibility, Cameron uses the term to envisage a 'Britain where instead of always turning to the state for the answers, we turn to each other and ask: what more can we do together to solve this problem' (2006). This usage does not emulate the idea that the privileged and wealthy have social responsibility, but rather offers a more expansive vision in which all individuals are seen to have a social responsibility. Similarly in 2009, Cameron argues that society will be rebuilt by increasing responsibility not only amongst the Government, but amongst individuals, families and companies – revealing a broader vision of responsibility than the One Nation tradition implies. Other 'One Nation' references also depart from Heywood's definition as references to equality – as seen - relate to the need to set children in the education system, whilst social solidarity is evoked to highlight support for the NHS rather than solidarity between the privileged and poor. Even support does not convey a benevolent, paternalistic attitude to helping families, but rather indicates the determination to use state mechanisms to help families overcome their own problems (2007). In this sense the language associated with One Nation ideology, whilst evident in Cameron's rhetoric, is not imbued with the same principles and perspectives evident in Heywood's account.

The final section in Table 22 reveals the extent of this departure as the rationale for public services and welfare reform is guided by the principles of small government, people power and

the Big Society spirit. Furthermore, the emphasis on choice, personalisation and ending the state monopoly suggest the predominance of market economics rather than Keynesian principles of intervention. The presence of ideas which appear to depart so significantly from the One Nation frame suggest that whilst the party may have exhibited a concern with public services and welfare, and adopted the language of One Nation thinkers, they did not ascribe to the philosophy underpinning this tradition. In this sense the pertinence of this frame lies in its rhetorical congruence with contemporary Conservatives rather than a substantive ideological overlap.

Thatcherite?

In the existing literature much has been made of Cameron's personal ties with Thatcherite ideas and his personal admiration for Thatcher's time as party leader (Evans, 2010), however, admiration alone does not dictate a party's ideological direction hence it is necessary to establish a further benchmark for analysis. As discussed in chapter five Thatcherism is an ideologically amorphous label which is exceedingly difficult to pin down. Whilst discussed through the prism of New Right ideas in chapter five, here I utilise a definition which focuses on Thatcher's policy priorities and personal traits. By combining this with the form of economic scrutiny conducted in the last chapter (pp.135-138) I argue that Thatcherism was not embraced rhetorically by Cameron, as many of the motifs which underpinned her policy agenda were avoided, however, the rationale behind those pledges is in evidence – suggesting that in understanding Cameron's Conservatives it is useful to grasp the Thatcherite agenda and the continued resonance of these ideas within the parliamentary Conservative Party.

In conducting this analysis I draw on Eric Evans' belief that:

'Thatcher had no difficulty identifying what she was *against*: state interference with individual freedom; state initiatives that encourage an ethos of 'dependency'; woolly consensuality; high levels of taxation; the propensity of both organised labour and entrenched professional interests to distort market forces; and a reluctance to be 'pushed around'; either personally or as a nation-state. In one sense, being 'against' all of these implies that their obvious antitheses will guide policy: individual rights; private enterprise within a free market; firm, perhaps authoritarian, leadership; low levels of personal taxation; union and vested interest bashing; simple patriotism' (Evans, 2004, p.3).

Inspired by this conception I focus on the presence of a rights agenda, the promotion of enterprise and free market, strong leadership, a low tax and anti-union focus, and a patriotic ethos. This allows a view into the form of economic and social vision projected by the party and the congruencies with Thatcherism, but I also examine whether Thatcherite language (such as dependency, consensus and high taxation) was evident in Cameron’s rhetoric.

Table 23: Thatcherite Language in Cameron’s Rhetoric

| LIST OF REFERENCES | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Competition | * | * | * | * | * | |
| Compromise | | | | | | * |
| Control | | | * | | | * |
| Economy | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Enterprise | | | | * | | |
| Entrepreneurs | | | | * | * | * |
| Free Enterprise | | | * | | | |
| Free Trade | | | | | * | |
| Freedom | * | * | * | * | | * |
| Growth | * | | * | | * | * |
| Leadership | | | * | * | * | * |
| Market | | | | * | | |
| Patriotism | * | | | * | * | * |
| Rights | | * | | | * | |
| Tax | * | * | * | * | * | * |

In examining Table 23 it is apparent that the vast majority of references inductively associated by Evans with Thatcherism are apparent within Cameron’s rhetoric. Every reference bar trade unions and the free market is present, and even here free trade and the market are in evidence. Accordingly it is possible to conclude that the party was influenced by the ideas widely seen to have characterised Thatcherism. However, what is remarkable in examining these references is the close association between these Thatcherite traits and Cameron himself as the party leader rhetorically links many of these principles to his own capacities and approach. This occurs most obviously in the case of leadership where Cameron argues:

‘[t]hese difficult times need leadership, yes. / They need character and judgment. / The leadership to unite your party and build a strong team. / The character to stick to your guns and not bottle it when times get tough. / The judgment to understand the mistakes that have been made and to offer the country change. / Leadership, character, judgment. / That’s what Britain needs at a time like this and that’s what this party now offers’ (2008).

Elsewhere he also articulates his personal commitment to enterprise and entrepreneurship, stating 'I understand enterprise. / I admire entrepreneurs. / I should do - I go to bed with one every night' (2008). Further, he comments 'I am deeply patriotic about this country and believe we have both a remarkable history and an incredible future' (2008). These examples indicate an overlap between Thatcherite principles and Cameron's own attempt to define his public persona – indicating the purchase of these ideas on the party leader. However, there are instances in which the Conservatives' message departs from Thatcher. For example, in relation to rights Cameron focuses on the need to restrain a rights focused agenda, arguing the 'human rights act culture, has infected every part of our life' (2008) and should be replaced with a Bill of Rights which does not 'hamper the fight against terrorism' (Cameron, 2006). Similarly no reference is made to trade unions or specifically to the free market, indicating that whilst clearly influential on Cameron and the party's rhetoric Thatcherite ideas were not imported wholesale into the party's approach.

This departure is also evident when contemplating the language through which Cameron's Conservatives conveyed those policies associated with Thatcherism. As noted in Evan's quote Thatcher decried dependency, woolly consensuality and high levels of taxation, yet Cameron's rhetoric does not emulate these depictions – indicating a rhetorical departure from the previous leader. Dependency, a key component of Thatcher's rhetorical depiction of welfare policy, is notably absent from Cameron's rhetoric. Whilst the idea remains in evidence – apparent in statements such as 'the benefit system itself encourages a benefit culture, and sends some pretty perverse messages' (Cameron, 2008), the shift suggests a change in emphasis. Similarly in relation to taxation, whilst Thatcher opposed high levels of taxation Cameron retains the commitment to low taxation but voices it in a less strident fashion, arguing instead that 'everyone knows that our economy needs lower and simpler taxes' (2005; see also 2006). In other regards the party leadership has distanced itself from ideas with negative associations, moving away from criticism of consensus to actively emphasise areas of agreement (as in 2006 when Cameron stated 'we support the Government's efforts to put more money into childcare' (2006)). Such shifts signal an attempt to distance the Conservatives from the negative associations of Thatcherism by redefining many of those ideas in new language – suggesting a substantive commitment even if rhetorically some distance has emerged.

In considering this data it therefore appears that Thatcherism continues to have resonance in the Conservative Party, particularly for Cameron who has sought to personally align himself with many of the traits seen to define this political ideology. Whilst some evidence of policy and rhetorical change is apparent there remain significant overlaps between Thatcherite ideas and

the Conservatives' agenda under Cameron. Yet these ideas are not synonymous with the party's entire programme as this logic does not account for Cameron's references to ideas such as the Big Society and the focus on citizen power. In this regard, whilst an awareness of Thatcherism is informative in attempting to trace the ideological influences upon Cameron's Conservatives this alone does not account for the party's ideological message.

Innovation?

Scholars advancing a narrative of innovation within the Conservative Party's ideology come, as noted in the previous chapter, in two forms. The first argues that the Conservatives cannot be equated solely with previous ideological trends or the Labour Party's agenda, but rather have drawn on these influences in an innovative manner (McAnulla, 2010; Beech, 2009; Kerr, 2008; Kerr, Byrne & Foster, 2011; 2012). The second concentrates instead on Cameron's attempt, under the heading of conservative liberalism, to reconcile different ideological traditions within the Conservative Party (Evans, 2008; Heppell and Hill, 2009). Based on the above analysis these arguments have intuitive appeal yet due to the perceived relevance of New Labour the first explanatory strand has greater resonance.

In reaching this conclusion I do not dismiss the second explanation but rather argue that it does not go far enough. In many regards this tradition has great explanatory purchase because Cameron did combine Thatcherite with social concerns, overcoming a previous antagonism within the party between economic and social liberalism. As illustrated above the party did come to advocate a concern with the family, community and society alongside an economic agenda emphasising market freedom and competition. Yet, as has been shown, this social agenda has considerable continuities with New Labour's policies and rhetoric, suggesting that whilst an understanding of the Conservatives' ideological influences is pertinent, there is also insight to be gained from considering ideological traditions beyond the party.

This leads me to advocate the kind of depiction advanced by McAnulla, Beech and Kerr, authors who draw attention to the legacy of New Labour (and the continuities between the parties) but who are also conscious of ideological traditions within the party. To explore this approach it is useful to return to Beech's depiction of Cameronism and his assertion that it is 'economically neo-liberal, espousing a One Nation approach to social policy, is eurosceptic in a Thatcherite fashion and Tory in his or her regard for tradition and social institutions' (Beech, 2009, p.30). Whilst the above analysis has called the party's One Nation credentials into question it is nevertheless possible to discern different ideological strands within the party. Hence it is possible to detect a neo-liberal economic approach based on low public spending and greater

private provision ('[t]here will have to be cutbacks in public spending' (Cameron, 2009)), a greater emphasis on social policy - viewed here through a New Labour rather than a One Nation lens ('if we win the election we will be responsible in government for bringing together all our work to help mend the broken society' (ibid., 2009)), a Thatcherite scepticism of greater European control ('we will campaign with all our energy for that referendum on the European constitution' (Cameron, 2008)) and a desire to uphold traditions and social institutions: ('Britishness is not mechanical, it's organic. It's an emotional connection to a way of life, an attitude, a set of institutions' (Cameron, 2009)). By drawing attention to the different strands of thinking apparent within Cameron's message this characterisation highlights the flexibility of the Conservatives' ideological ties and the tendency within this period to adapt pre-existing ideas to contemporary circumstances rather than offering a radically different ideological perspective.

This depiction also holds appeal because it reflects the eclecticism of the Conservative Party and the many different ideological pressures within the party for change (Driver, 2009, p.96); pressures exacerbated by the limited consensus behind Cameron's project. Alongside context and public attitudes this variable is seen to have created a climate in which different ideas and policy agendas were combined in an innovative way – illustrating the pertinence of considering the array of different influences examined above. In this sense this depiction tallies with the climate in the Conservative Party, the presence of the multiple different ideological strands detected in my morphological analysis, and the depiction of ideological adaptation seen to characterise the party. Collectively these points lead me to deem the ideologically innovative narrative most appropriate for characterising the second period of change evident above as between 2008 and 2010 the party began to develop the kind of coherent message which was noticeably absent before this period.

Non-Ideological?

In contemplating the final narrative it is clear that my own analysis – in line with the existing literature – has offered considerable evidence to support the idea that the Conservative Party did not alter their ideological agenda but rather adapted their focus and rhetoric to convey the impression of change. For this reason it is pertinent to revisit my earlier analysis to outline the continuities between this depiction and the findings of my morphological analysis.

In considering the new agenda introduced in 2005 the above analysis has demonstrated considerable evidence that the ideas injected were of little ideological significance. Whilst some attempt may have been made to embark on a new ideological project the predominance of

traditional principles and the lack of a coherent, consistently articulated vision centred upon those new ideas undermined the impression of ideological change. Instead the party appeared to alter its position for pragmatic reasons, changing first in response to negative public attitudes and again when confronted with economic and political crises. This willingness to adapt suggests the predominance of pragmatic rather than ideological concerns and thus lessens the pertinence of this latter explanatory frame.

This depiction aligns with Bale's narrative, seeing an instrumental concern with decontamination and rebalancing as the most apt characterisation of the Conservative Party between 2005 and 2008. In line with my earlier conclusions I therefore view this explanation to have considerable purchase in describing the first period of change discussed here. But as the analysis above suggests this depiction is not seen to be applicable to this entire period as a form of ideological innovation is seen to be in evidence from 2008 onwards.

Summary

In considering these different characterisations of ideological change it is clear that all have some degree of purchase in explaining the processes of change evident within the Conservative Party in this period, but in accounting for this time span I argue that the third and fourth are the most indicative. Within this chapter I have offered significant evidence that the change evident between 2005 and 2008 was not ideologically motivated and was unlikely to be seen by a public audience as ideologically indicative. However, I have also argued that between 2008 and 2010 a more coherent ideological message emerged around the themes of small government, responsibility, society and decentralisation. In categorising the latter period I assert that some degree of ideological innovation is in evidence as the agenda projected by Cameron can be characterised as an amalgamation of Thatcherite ideals on the economy and New Labour's social agenda. In this regard I argue that it is most appropriate to conceive of change in the Conservative Party as a two stage process, the first of which reflected non-ideological motivations whilst the second exhibited a form of ideological innovation and adaptation best captured by the third narrative.

Conclusion

This chapter has revealed the Conservative Party's relationship with change and ideology to be far from simple as multiple apparently contradictory trends are in evidence. Whereas in the Labour case analysis focused on the changes before and after the creation of New Labour here two periods of change are discerned under Cameron's leadership. Whilst both evince ideological

continuity with past leaders they are nevertheless seen to merit different ideological characterisation. These conclusions align with the three claims laid out in the last chapter:

1. That whilst the Conservative Party made an attempt to change they did not outline a clear rationale for change, manage expectations or secure party support. These failures are cumulatively seen to have damaged the party's ability to achieve modernisation in this period,
2. That Cameron's attempt to inject new concerns into the party's agenda in 2005 did not mark a new ideological direction for the party,
3. That from 2008 the Conservatives formulated a more coherent ideological narrative in response to social, economic and political problems. However, this vision did not differ radically from the party's previous ideological perspectives, raising questions as to the degree of ideological change achieved.

In relation to modernisation I have highlighted the lack of a consistent modernising rationale, suggesting that whilst the idea of change was evident within the party – the direction and extent of that shift was not clearly distilled. Whilst some scholars may deem the presence of change to be evidence of modernisation I believe a clear rationale for modernisation – be it progressive, responsive or perpetual – is required if parties are to attain the consensus needed to alter their current position. Cameron, as argued in the last chapter, failed to offer a coherent narrative of change, oscillating between progressive and responsive modernisation and thus creating confusion as to the extent of the shift required. In arguing that the party did not modernise I do not contest the presence of some change as the Conservatives' did implement organisational reforms (with varying degrees of effect) and introduce some new concerns onto the agenda, however, I argue that these shifts should not be seen as synonymous with modernisation. Following this logic, to have modernised, or to modernise in the future it is necessary for the Conservatives to outline a clear rationale for change, secure party consensus for that shift, and pursue a programme of change consistent with that impetus.

This conclusion feeds directly into my second assertion; that the injection of new ideas into the party's agenda in 2005 did not mark a radical departure from its previous ideology. The above analysis has demonstrated that rather than symbolising a new ideological message these ideas (e.g. flexible working, quality of life *etcetera*) were introduced through the prism of traditional ideological principles such as choice, small government and responsibility. In this regard the new agenda appears to be an appendage through which to advance established principles –

suggesting minimal ideological movement. Additionally analysis of alternative motivations, context and justification has revealed that far from seeming to mark a moment of ideological shift the inconsistencies and incoherence apparent in the party's message are likely to have led to perceptions of instrumentally motivated, rather than ideologically reflective, change. For these reasons such shifts are likely to have undermined the apparent relevance of the party's ideological pronouncements by demonstrating a willingness to depart from those ideas.

However, in passing this judgment I do not deem the Conservative Party from 2005 onwards to be devoid of ideology, rather I argue that instead of presenting a clear, pre-formulated alternative ideology, the party displayed a tendency towards ideological adaptation and experimentation; an approach which allowed it to respond to the contextual opportunity provided by the banking crash. Indeed, from 2008 I argue that it is possible to discern a more coherent ideological message which innovatively applied ideas readily apparent within the Conservative Party's past ideological messages to diagnose and respond to social, political and economic crises. In twining together the ideas of responsibility, society (and the Big Society), decentralisation and a smaller state the Conservatives came to offer a more coherent ideological vision which – although damaged by previous inconsistencies in message – did appear to represent a more genuine moment of ideological adaptation (if not change).

This depiction of the Conservatives differs dramatically to the New Labour case, suggesting that far from embarking on a clear vision of change led by a coherently formulated and articulated ideology the party reacted to events as they unfolded. Whilst new ideas were introduced this was done, at least initially, with little thought to their compatibility with existing ideas or their longevity in the party's vision. This haphazard approach and perceptions of unreliability mean that the party still has some way to go if it wishes to be seen to have altered its ideological perspective.

These conclusions demonstrate the kind of detailed insights available through morphological analysis, but this chapter has also advanced some further methodological points regarding the grounds on which a party comes to be seen as non-ideological. By examining context, alternative motivations, policy and policy justifications I have demonstrated that whilst academically changes within the Conservative Party could be deemed ideologically informed/ative (Norton, 2008), the inconsistencies in message, justificatory strategy and focus were likely to produce public scepticism of the relevance of the party's ideological message. Understanding this point makes it possible to comprehend why, as seen above in the case of gay marriage, the public remain unconvinced by Conservative rhetoric and therefore why the party still faces a

significant challenge in changing its image (a challenge all the more difficult in a period of coalition government).

The party political ideology approach I advance is therefore seen to offer a range of different insights which aid understanding of change in the Conservative Party, helping to develop existing accounts of the period 2005-2010. To reflect on its full capacities and future applications it is now useful to draw together the insights of these two case studies in my concluding chapter.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

In this final chapter I revisit the themes of this thesis, returning to reflect upon ideology, ideological change, ideological relevance and modernisation. In so doing I seek to reappraise the substantive findings of this thesis and evaluate the theoretical and methodological principles laid out in this work. Such inquiry is vital for drawing together and reflecting on the different conclusions of these case studies and contemplating future applications of this approach. For these reasons I re-examine the analytical and methodological insights advanced to assert the pertinence of this form of inquiry for my purposes and future research.

In structuring this chapter I first direct attention to the two cases examined, exploring these examples to contemplate parties' relationship with ideology, ideological relevance, the indicators of modernisation, and the relationship between these two areas of analysis. Having done so I, second, turn to explore the theoretical and methodological insights of this approach, discussing the unique capacities of my party political ideology framework. Finally, I contemplate future applications, considering extensions to my own analysis and the wider potential of this framework. Accordingly in this chapter I revisit the contribution this thesis makes to understanding of the relationship between ideology and political parties.

Ideology and Modernisation

The previous four chapters have offered a number of insights into the specific cases I have examined, demonstrating the process by which I discern ideology and the range of analytical conclusions which can be extrapolated from these outputs. The longitudinal nature of findings has also allowed a detailed analysis of the ways in which ideology and ideological communication changes over time. And comparative analysis has facilitated a study of ideological characterisation, allowing me to explore the most apt prism through which to understand parties' ideological pronouncements. By entwining these insights with a broader analysis of modernisation I have attempted to foreground the different kinds of change evident within political parties. Whilst modernisation is often declared on the basis of a range of disparate indicators of change I contended the need for a clear rationale, coherent programme and party support (or tolerance). If a party possesses these traits it is capable of modernising organisationally and ideologically, but these processes of change should not be seen as synonymous.

The analyses conducted within this thesis have illustrated the need for this distinction as whilst New Labour is deemed to change ideologically and modernise these two processes

are not identical. Indeed, in this case the ideological vision outlined, whilst connected to the modernisation rationale, could have proceeded without the broader programme of change. In this sense there is ample possibility that these two processes could have occurred separately, making it informative to examine both levels independently but simultaneously.

The need to enforce this distinction is also readily apparent in the Conservative case as despite modernisation not being seen as successful and ideological change deemed insubstantial, there are indications that some form of ideological shift did occur. As my analysis has detailed, the latter stages of the period examined indicate a shift in ideological message, not tied to a modernisation agenda but rather inspired by events. Appreciating the possibility of different processes of change within political parties is seen to be vital to understanding the dynamics of these organisations and the relationship between ideational and organisational change, hence I enforce this distinction.

Further attention is given below to the different processes of ideological change and modernisation discerned in relation to these cases, but here it is pertinent to note that a joint examination of these issues has the capacity to offer a range of additional insights. In these cases the study of modernisation offered a useful point of contrast when examining ideological change as it was possible to assess the extent of politicians' commitment to reform, their success in achieving changes and the different visions which underpin their actions. In these cases the desire for change was seen to be prominent but the two processes were not always seen to occur simultaneously. Indeed, whilst New Labour exhibited ideological change in this period the broader process of organisational modernisation (apparent in the policy review process undertaken by Kinnock) originated much earlier, suggesting that whilst connected the two processes were not commensurate. In this regard this examination underlines my contention that the two forms of change should be studied separately, and that modernisation claims should be subject to stricter definitional criteria in order to appreciate the different kinds of repositioning political parties undertake.

These conclusions indicate that a study of modernisation *and* ideology provides a range of fruitful findings as it allows existing narratives to be assessed and new insights developed. With this in mind I now turn to discuss the ideological conclusions reached in this thesis before moving to contemplate modernisation in greater depth.

Ideology

The approach to ideological study advanced in this thesis offers an innovative form of inquiry which, whilst drawing on and inspired by the range of different approaches to

analytical study evident in the existing literature, nevertheless strives to offer a novel form of investigation. This novelty derives from my examination of ideology as decoded,⁹¹ a level of study which reflects the distinction between speaker intention and audience interpretation and explores the implications of this for ideological perceptions. In conducting analysis at this level it becomes pertinent to not only examine the content of an ideology but also how it is conveyed and what is likely to affect (and potentially distort) perceptions of ideological relevance. In so doing I have sought to gain a greater appreciation of the way in which ideology is perceived by the public and, through this dimension, explore the notions of ideological irrelevance and negativity which underpin other predominant explorations of this topic. In so doing my analysis does not seek to challenge the basis of other definitions, but to rather expand the tradition of ideological inquiry epitomised by Freedman by considering why such perceptions may arise and whether they are an inexorable feature of party politics.

In pursuing this agenda I have outlined a range of analytical techniques for conceptualising and studying ideology in political parties. Whilst vital for situating my approach vis-à-vis the existing ideological literature this inquiry has also been shown to be important when studying specific cases as scholars often do not define ideology or specify the basis of their findings, complicating comparative analysis (see tables 1 and 15). In seeking to avoid this tendency in the opening chapters of this thesis I have outlined my definition of ideology and the focus of my study, complementing this with a discussion of the rationale behind this approach, and the processes which constitute my methodological inquiry. In this regard I have endeavoured to avoid ambiguity, facilitating further analysis in this tradition and allowing my approach to be situated within the broader literature.

In adapting Freedman's form of morphological analysis to reflect the pertinence of other motivations and pressures I have offered two tools for the study of ideology which contribute in the cases examined to understanding of ideology and ideological change. These are first, an appreciation of the different means by which ideology is communicated (i.e. through concepts, motifs or contextual references) and second, a framework for examining the different ideological status of references (which can be directly ideological, indirectly ideological, valence, or non-ideological). These adaptations offer a range of additional techniques through which to study the communication and interpretation of

⁹¹ Other scholars have discussed ideology as decoded. For example see: Hirschman, 1998. But my analysis is distinguished by the application of this approach to the party context and the attention directed to questions of ideological relevance.

ideology, helping to explore questions of ideological change and relevance. To underline this point I turn to discuss these forms of analysis in greater detail.

Monitoring Ideological Change

In regards to the specific insights of these cases, articulating an ideological vision and successfully achieving a process of ideological change is seen to be far from simple. Whilst parties and party leaders may possess a clear sense of their own guiding values and the vision of society they would like to see, conveying that vision to the public is not always straight forward as it requires a high degree of consistency in the presentation and pursuit of ideas. In both the cases examined in this thesis an attempt was arguably made to change the party's ideological message (if not position), yet whilst Labour succeeded the Conservatives are not seen to have modernised or changed ideologically. Through my analysis I have shown how Labour's ideological vision dramatically changed post-1994, with the language used and the form of articulation shifting dramatically from this year on.⁹² In contrast, whilst Cameron did make an initial attempt to convey change, this was abandoned, leading the party to foreground ideas which had defined their message pre-2005. By examining the differences between these cases it is possible to draw some tentative conclusions about the conditions required for ideological change.

Both Labour and the Conservatives displayed continuity and change between the message projected in the supposed periods of modernisation (1994-1997 and 2005-2010 respectively) and the parties' position prior to these time spans. Yet, as asserted in my own analysis, Labour is seen to have projected a convincing impression of change, whilst the Conservatives did not. On many levels this could be seen as surprising as Cameron, like Blair, made a concerted attempt to brand his conservatism as new and emphasise the language of change and modernisation. In explaining this divergence I argue it is necessary to consider the consistency with which the vision for change was advanced, and the rhetorical cues each party gave to indicate change.

This first point has been discussed extensively in chapters 5 and 7, foregrounding how Labour consistently emphasised the same set of concepts in their message from 1994 onwards, and the lack of a corresponding consistency in the message projected by the Conservatives from 2005. As detailed through longitudinal analysis in chapter five, New Labour placed continued emphasis on opportunity, society, government and responsibility, emphasising concepts which had not been prominent in the party's morphologies in the 1980s. In this sense the party created an impression of change and conveyed its

⁹² This is not to deny the indicators of change apparent in Kinnock's rhetoric.

commitment to that change by altering its projected vision to reflect the rhetorical assertion of a divide between Old and New Labour.

In contrast, whilst the Conservatives introduced new references such as quality of life, the environment, childcare and women, these were not consistently invoked or emphasised as many moved to the periphery, were dropped or were not reflected in the party's policy agenda. Alongside this, references which had previously defined the party's identity such as family, tax, responsibility and society continued to be not only present but also prominent. This reveals that the Conservatives did not exhibit the same form of ideological break with the past as Labour, as they remained wedded to many of the ideas which had previously defined their position and failed to consistently advance a new agenda.

This comparison suggests that an assertion of change is not itself enough. To convincingly exhibit ideological change parties must rhetorically and programmatically alter their position to foreground new concerns and articulate a noticeably different vision for society. To do so convincingly parties must remain committed to new ideas, developing a consistent narrative for change and reflecting those principles in their policy agenda. Unless such traits are evident parties are likely to be seen, as in the Conservative case, not to have changed ideologically but rather to have attempted to rebrand the party's image in the public mind. Accordingly consistency is seen to be a vital attribute of successful ideological change.

Supplementary to this point I direct attention to the way in which New Labour, unlike the Conservatives, exhibited a clear rhetorical juncture between their old and new ideology, not simply by asserting a change but by changing the way in which their ideological message was communicated. As Figures 12 and 13 in chapter five suggest, under Blair Labour changed the type of reference used to convey ideology (concept/motif/context) and the way in which it was indicated (valence/conflict/indirect *etcetera*), coming to privilege concepts and emphasise indirect ideological communication as opposed to the previous reliance on context and conflict. In so doing Labour audibly altered their message to the public, reinforcing their assertions of change. In contrast the Conservatives' exhibited no such shift, continuing to use the same language and presentation skills to discuss the supplementary concerns injected into the party's rhetoric. In this sense Labour offered an implicit and explicit cue that the party's position had altered, whilst the Conservatives failed to evince significant change in either forum. Although such implicit shifts are not pivotal to change, in this instance they served to underline Labour's message and hence are of interest to parties attempting change in the future.

On this basis I therefore argue that the Conservatives did not achieve ideological change because they did not exhibit a clear break with the past, did not consistently outline a new position, and did not communicatively demonstrate a shift in outlook. For parties seeking to change perceptions of their ideological position these three dimensions can be seen to be significant, suggesting the need for parties to communicate what is new in their ideological perspective, to consistently advance and apply those new ideas, and to communicate how the new perspective differs from the party's past ideas. In offering these conclusions it is important to state that I do not prescribe a universal recipe for successful ideological change, or conclude that all attempts to shift position must emulate New Labour's strategy. Rather these conclusions foreground factors which are likely to be significant to public perceptions of ideological change, making it pertinent to consider them when embarking on a process of ideological transformation.

Characterising Ideological Position

The applied analysis of the Labour and Conservative parties conducted here is also seen to offer insight into the difficulties of characterising ideology vis-à-vis other ideological traditions and political party outlooks. As depicted in chapters four and six a range of different characterisations of first New Labour's and the Conservatives' ideological position have been offered which suggest the resurgence of internal party traditions, the dominance of non-ideological traits, the influence of the current government's ideas, or a form of ideological innovation. In seeking to arbitrate between these different accounts I used my own framework to scrutinise these characterisations. In both studies I discerned a degree of innovation with old ideas, contemporary influences and pragmatic considerations directing the development of a party's ideological position.

Whilst these judgements were formed through detailed analysis I believe that this approach to ideological categorisation is apt in the vast majority of cases as it reflects the range of institutional, contextual and historical factors which affect actors' choices. Whilst past and contemporary political ideologies are, as Figure 7 in chapter two illustrates, relevant to understanding party political ideology, to see party positions as entirely commensurate with traditions such as social democracy or One Nation conservatism belies the influence of context and alternative motivations on the precise ideological formulation that party actors project. Accordingly I argue that when seeking to discern the form of a party's ideological position it is often most illustrative not to align the party with one pre-existing ideology (i.e. labelling New Labour Thatcherite) but rather to explore the different ideas and aims which define their own approach. This style of analysis allows an appreciation of the range of

different ideological and non-ideological influences past and present which affect parties' ideological formulations.

In line with this argument I call for an alternative form of ideological categorisation which does not seek to depict parties solely through one lens, but rather acknowledges the range of potential influences on their ideological message. Interestingly this approach is apparent in the literature on the Conservative Party where claims are heavily qualified and alternative trends signposted (see p.162). Whilst in this case this reflects the relative infancy of this literature I believe that this approach is beneficial as it avoids over-generalisation and inspires the form of detailed analysis I seek to advance when studying party political ideology.

Communicating Ideological Relevance

In examining parties' ideological messages as decoded by an audience I have also sought to foreground questions of ideological relevance, allowing for the possibility that parties are not always seen to be ideological. Whilst other definitions of ideology have emphasised questions of relevance relatively little attention has been paid to this concern by those interested in defending ideology. I view this issue to be vital and seek to recognise that the ideological picture a party projects is subject to a range of additional pressures which can affect its interpretation. In light of this point I have contemplated why perceptions of irrelevance may arise, and how they could be countered, directing attention to alternative motivations, context and consistency. Through this analysis I have examined the likelihood that politicians' ideological utterances will be deemed relevant when seeking to understand their behaviour, and hence explored the way in which rhetoric can contribute to perceptions of ideological irrelevance.

In applying this logic to the case studies a range of insights have been gleaned, highlighting how the presence of alternative motivations and context can be overcome or how they can affect the interpretation of parties' messages. In the Labour case the party faced considerable alternative motivations for action as they had experienced successive electoral defeats and were not aligned attitudinally with the majority of the population. The widespread awareness of these electoral failures could easily have led to changes in the party's agenda being seen as a pragmatic attempt to secure office (and indeed these changes have been interpreted thus by some). However, by offering a consistent rationale, clearly presenting new (or re-invigorated) guiding principles, and reflecting those ideas in their policy agenda, the party's new articulation of their ideological position seemed to offer a reliable guide to their behaviour. In this regard the change appeared genuine, as rather than

reverting to previous ideas or pragmatically reacting to contextual pressures, the party appeared committed to their new, publically stated agenda. In this regard it appears that the rhetorical strategy adopted by Labour contributed to the apparent success of their ideological shift.

In contrast, the Conservative case details how a breakdown in communicative consistency can detrimentally affect perceptions of a party's position. As discussed in chapter seven (and foreshadowed in chapter six) the party failed to outline a coherent vision which was consistently deployed to justify their stances and formulate policy. This is likely to have undermined perceptions of their ideological pronouncements, appearing to indicate that the party was reacting to circumstances rather than acting in accordance with a clear vision. In addition to this point alternative motivations for action were readily apparent as the party had significant electoral impetus for change and had publically debated the need to rebrand (Ashcroft, 2005); indicating the presence of plausible alternative explanations for their behaviour. For these reasons change within the Conservatives party is far more liable, than in the Labour case, to being interpreted as a product of non-ideological impetus, undermining the apparent relevance of ideology.

On this reading consistency in presentation and application are vital for a parties' ideological message (and change therein) to be seen as indicative. This suggests the importance of the rhetorical decisions politicians' make when conveying their message to the public, as if constantly reacting to new ideas and contextual pressures as opposed to communicating an underlying agenda they are likely to appear ideologically unreliable. This finding offers a useful insight into why ideology can come to be seen as irrelevant, yet it is also informative to further consider the evidence of ideological quietism to develop this theme.

Ideological Quietism

Ideological quietism, as outlined in chapter three (pp.57-58) and discussed further in relation to the New Labour case (pp.115-117), concerns the possibility that parties can articulate their message in a manner which does not convey ideology but rather appears to be common sense or managerialist (Temple, 2000). In presenting my second adaptation to Freedman's approach I outlined the means by which to study this phenomenon by examining whether parties defined their message in direct conflict (and hence appeared ideological), whether they indirectly conveyed their vision, whether they evoked valence references (for ideological and non-ideological purposes), or whether they were non-ideological. Studying the different usages of these references in the New Labour case was shown to be highly

insightful as it revealed a shift from 1994 away from directly conflictual references towards indirectly ideological and indirectly ideological valence references. In this sense Blair's articulations did not present the party's message in overtly conflictual terms but rather evoked a vision for society indirectly. Hence, when Blair stated: '[h]ow do we create in Britain a new age of achievement in which all of the people - not just a few but all of the people - can share?' (1997) he conveyed an ideological vision of the desirability of a society in which there is opportunity for all, but he did not do so using conflict. Rather he outlined an indirect vision which evoked valence concepts and hence appeared less ideological. Such utterances indicate how the way a message is framed can affect the interpretation of parties' ideological status, with a lack of conflict leading to impressions of ideological quietism.

Acknowledging this possibility can help explain why contemporary parties such as New Labour are deemed to be non-ideological, focusing direct attention on the rhetorical choices which political actors themselves make. However, it is important to note that in the Conservative case this trend is not apparent, hence ideological quietism should not be deemed a dominant feature of contemporary party politics. Nevertheless it is important to note this possibility as it can help explain public perceptions of political parties' ideological status and reveal how party communication is affecting public attitudes.

Taken together this discussion of consistency and ideological quietism is highly informative when seeking to understand ideology as it is decoded by the public because it directs attention to the way in which rhetoric itself can contribute to perceptions of irrelevance. Grasping these points is vital if seeking to advance a more overtly ideological message as they indicate the need for consistency and a willingness to embrace ideological conflict. However, it is important to note that politicians themselves may not want to appear more ideological. The pejorative sense in which politicians use the term ideology, and the tendency to appeal to pragmatism and common sense are vital devices by which politicians demonstrate their competence and efficiency to the public. Indeed, in an era when vast ideological divides are not seen to separate the political parties competence is seen to be as, if not more, important than ideology. This is because if seeking to garner the largest number of supporters, claims of competence are seen to be universally appealing whilst ideology, by its very nature, remains divisive and can harm the construction of a winning electoral coalition. For these reasons attempts to persuade parties to foreground antagonism in their rhetoric are not likely to succeed, yet it is important to note these traits to raise awareness of the ideological implications of rhetorical choices. For, if parties continue to pursue the course of ideological quietism and eradicate conflict from their message, it is likely that perceptions of ideological irrelevance will become further entrenched.

Modernisation

In turning to consider modernisation it is clear that the two cases studied here offer equally divergent findings as those uncovered when examining ideology, because whilst New Labour is seen to have modernised, the Conservatives, as yet have not. Once again it is pertinent to compare these two cases to explore the criteria seen to be necessary for modernisation and thus the requirements for future modernisation attempts.

In chapter three I diagnosed modernisation to be a reaction to external conditions which prompts parties to alter the status quo. This process can involve organisational change and ideational shifts, but to be successful I argue that parties must outline a clear rationale for change and secure a consensus for that change. Without a clearly stated motivation and party support (or lack of opposition) I argue that attempts to modernise are unlikely to succeed because of a lack of collective will. In assessing the Labour and Conservative cases I found that whilst both party leaders identify the need for change, different rationales for change are in evidence, as are different levels of support. It is these traits which I see to be significant, making it pertinent to explore them at greater length.

As detailed in chapter four, within the Labour Party an externally focused rationale was offered from 1994 which pinpointed global pressures to which the Labour Party needed to respond. In reaction Blair and other party modernisers outlined and consistently deployed a progressive case for change in order to pre-empt the effect of global competitiveness, changing patterns of work and shifting attitudes. The emphasis placed upon these factors in justifying modernisation is highly significant as it created a seemingly inevitable case for change, arguing that such shifts could not be sidestepped and thus could not be ignored. In so doing a consensus for modernisation emerged which allowed a transition from old to new ideas, and a reform of party structures with relatively little internal opposition.⁹³ Accordingly the presence of a seemingly inexorable rationale, widely supported, consistency advocated and used to inform policy developments is seen to have been crucial to Labour's modernisation.

In contrast Cameron is seen to have offered an incoherent vision which was inconsistently advanced and viewed with suspicion and hostility by members of the Conservative party. In combination these traits are seen to undermine the party's attempt to modernise, producing instead a series of limited changes. To expand, when outlining a vision for modernisation

⁹³ This is not to deny the presence of opposition, rather that opposition did not succeed in drawing concessions from the party leadership as there was an overwhelming acceptance of change within the party.

Cameron and other Conservative modernisers initially appeared to draw upon the same progressive logic as Labour; citing the global impetus for change in the form of economic and social shifts. However, he also offered an alternative rationale for change, advancing a responsive reasoning which cited the need to react to change in the Labour Party in order to reclaim concerns which had been ceded to the opposition. These two explanations created different expectations of change, as whilst progressive rationale signalled a need to fundamentally shift the party's position, responsive rationale indicated a more cosmetic reappraisal of the party's agenda. In this sense the scale and nature of change was thrown into doubt by the presence of two competing justifications. When paired with the hostility to change within the Conservative Party itself these traits are seen to have disrupted any attempt to modernise, an outcome symbolised by a series of u-turns (on, for example, proposals to select more representative candidates and to stop building new grammar schools).

For these reasons I do not see the Conservative Party as having modernised, but this does not rule out the possibility of future change. Indeed Cameron himself has asserted that:

'[y]ou can't just change an organization (*sic*) by slapping on some paint, you have to take everyone with you, And I think a lot more needs to be done on that. Modernization (*sic*) is something that doesn't really stop, because a country's always changing and a political party needs to keep in touch with the country it's trying to govern and also modernize (*sic*) its own structures and organization (*sic*)' (Jones, 2010, p.295).

This quote suggests that Cameron himself sees modernisation as an ongoing process rather than a discrete task. Future modernisation could therefore be on the cards for the Conservatives.⁹⁴ To achieve this process I argue that Cameron would need to do three things: 1. establish a clear rationale for change, 2. identify the impetus for that change, and 3. enact those stated principles (even when facing internal opposition to change) in the party's policy agenda and organisational structure. However, it should be noted that to achieve change Cameron and other aspiring modernisers have a relatively brief window because if expectations are not immediately established it can be difficult to subsequently convince the party of the need for change.

⁹⁴ It is, however, notable that modernisation is easier to achieve in opposition when parties have the space and opportunity to contemplate change.

These insights have implications beyond the two cases here as they suggest the difficulties faced by new party leaders who have a relatively short period in which to shape and control expectations. Whilst change can be initiated mid-term the practicalities of doing so are exceedingly difficult as identifying new impetus for unavoidable change can be challenging if events do not fortuitously provide a crisis to which parties must react. Accordingly leaders such as David Cameron and Ed Miliband face ongoing difficulties in the quest to modernise their parties because they did not provide an initial, coherent diagnosis of the need for change.

Identifying Modernisation

In addition to these case specific insights in the course of this thesis I also outlined three alternative rationales for change which can be used to assess whether a party presented a coherent justification and what expectations of change they established. In so doing I sought to react against the tendency to see any evocation of change as indicative of modernisation. Instead I use this framework to assert the need for parties to diagnose the impetus for change, manage party and public expectations and act consistently on the basis of that diagnosis. In reflection of this belief I offer the distinction between progressive, responsive and perpetual rationales for modernisation, asserting that each form identifies different impetus for change and accordingly envisages different reasons for modernisation. In this way a progressive rationale indicates a proactive attempt to pre-empt external factors, responsive suggests a need to align to contemporary circumstances, and perpetual relates to a need to constantly react to contemporary conditions (for more see pp.74-75). By introducing these different categorisations I aim to direct analysis of modernisation to consider parties' rationale *and* behaviour when seeking to discern whether modernisation has occurred. In this sense my discussion of modernisation does not only facilitate a consideration of the different forms of change apparent within parties but also offers some guidance for future analysis in this area.

Theory and Method

The analytical findings of this thesis have proved fruitful in illustrating the different capacities of, and the varied array of findings which can be gleaned from, an analysis of party political ideology. Indeed, as the above analysis has shown it allows an exploration of parties' ideology, ideological change, behaviour and identity – addressing the third question posed in the introduction to this thesis (see p.3). Yet, in addition to exploring these areas I also endeavour to present a new theoretical and methodological approach to the study of ideology in political parties, answering two further questions: how is ideology manifest in

the party context? and how can it be studied? In addressing these points I advocated a study of party rhetoric through the prism of morphological analysis – exploring the ideas evoked by party elites to map their message and the consistency with which those ideas were presented.

In answering the first question – how is ideology manifest in the party context? - it is clear that many different conceptions of ideology are apparent within the existing literature, each of which offers its own theorisation of the relationship between party politics and ideas. Whilst some have aligned the term with dogma or emphasised the decline of grand ideological traditions, others have contended the relevance of ideological study. My work can be situated within this latter tradition but it is informed by the first two depictions as I have sought to examine how parties communicate their ideas to the public and how this affects attitudes towards ideology. This inquiry is seen to be crucial as whilst a range of scholars have asserted the relevance of ideology and ideas in the realm of party politics and beyond (Béland & Cox, 2011; Blyth, 2002; 2007; Bevir & Rhodes, 2008; Finlayson, 2004a; Hay 2004a), others have continued to depict ideology in parties as negative, dogmatic or subservient to other more pragmatic concerns. Indeed, a number of recent textbooks have depicted parties as less ideological and in a ‘post-ideological engagement’ (Driver, 2011; Heffernan, 2011, p.543). Whilst these depictions do help to explain one dimension of parties’ relationship with ideology they can obscure the continued role that ideas play in driving parties actions and distinguishing parties from one another. Accordingly in theorising how ideology is manifest in the party context I have sought to acknowledge the range of different pressures and motivations which affect party behaviour; leading me to distinguish between ideology as possessed and ideology as projected. By offering this novel characterisation I have sought to offer a *via media* which entwines different aspects of the existing literature to produce a novel form of ideological analysis.

In presenting this rationale I have gone to great lengths to ensure the clarity of my argument. For this reason in the opening chapters I outlined the premise of my own analysis and developed a theoretical framework through which the thinking behind my approach and the basis of my own analysis can be grasped. As Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7 reveal, significant attention was directed to theorising my conception of ideology and focus on ideological rhetoric. The process of doing so is seen to serve two purposes: first it helps to situate my approach in relation to existing analyses by detailing the conceptual foundation of party political ideology. And, second, it opens the door for further analyses of ideology as whilst I concentrate on projected ideology, Figure 4 indicates that an ideology can also be possessed by a party, revealing another avenue of inquiry. Similarly, whilst I focus on elite articulations

of ideology, Figure 7 suggests the pertinence of studying ideological debates within parties. Accordingly, by outlining the basis of my own approach in detail I attempt to open up this area of analysis for new studies of the interaction between parties and ideology.

In answering the second question; how can ideology be studied, I adopted a similar tactic – detailing at length the rationale for, and methodological principles underpinning my own analysis. This approach was deemed necessary as whilst a range of different techniques for studying ideology through texts have emerged, none was seen to be compatible with my focus on rhetoric and desire to examine ideology as decoded. Accordingly significant attention was paid in this thesis to detailing and demonstrating my mode of ideological inquiry. In so doing I sought to directly react against the lack of methodological guidance offered by Freedman and the tendency within existing manuals of textual analysis to provide scant guidance on how to apply *and* interpret texts (Fairclough, 2003; Locke, 2004; cf. Fowler, 1991). This led me to outline the principles of morphological rationale, present detailed coding guidance and exhibit, through applied analysis, the inferences which can be drawn from such investigations. In so doing I have allowed room for future adaptations of this approach because, as discussed in chapter three, a range of other modes of investigation - such as rhetorical or oratorical analysis - have the capacity to bring additional insights regarding the ways in which emphasis and meaning is conveyed. Hence, whilst offering my own intervention on how ideology can be studied I have also allowed space for this mode of inquiry to be developed by scholars in different traditions.

In adopting this approach to theory and method I have attempted to demystify the process of textual analysis. This is vital for not only the re-application of this approach to other contexts, but also for understanding the precise contribution to ideological understanding which a party political ideology approach can make. With this in mind I turn to consider future applications of this framework.

Future Applications

In contemplating future extensions to, or adaptations of, my party political ideology approach I identify three different avenues of inquiry. First, I discuss possible extensions of the current frame of investigation, outlining how the scope of my analysis could be extended. Second, I move to discuss the reapplication of this method to examine the ideological position of other collective organisations such as pressure groups. Third, I consider the possibility of examining the impact of the wider political system on parties' ideological message, considering the effect that other institutions and the processes of

government have on parties' ideological aims and outputs. Each aspect is explored here in turn.

Extending Inquiry

Throughout this investigation consistency and coherence in message have been seen as key traits necessary for apparent ideological pertinence, yet, within this thesis attention has been paid only to the annual conference speech made by party leaders. Whilst this source selection was justified in chapter three citing available space, this singular focus does limit the claims it is possible to make as consideration is not given to the consistency of message across speakers, or the coherence of arguments voiced by the party elite and other party members. Such an inquiry is far beyond the scope of this work but it is possible to envisage a number of extensions which would allow the claims voiced in this thesis regarding ideological change and modernisation to be further scrutinised.

First, attention could be paid to other speeches made by party leaders in the course of each parliamentary year. Whilst admittedly restricted to one individual this would allow a single actor's consistency to be assessed, revealing whether they adapt their rhetoric to cater for different audiences. This is interesting because it is possible for the ideological message projected to a meeting of party members to differ from that conveyed to an audience of businessmen. Such possibilities pose interesting questions for an analysis of ideology through rhetoric, directing attention to consistency in front of different audiences, and the compatibility of messages projected to different groups of individuals.

Second, analysis could be extended by contemplating the ideological utterances of a range of elites within the party, using different speeches and texts to assess the consistency of message among prominent party figures. This analysis could concentrate on members of the (shadow) cabinet, or focus on modernisers within the party, using analysis of their utterances to test the findings of this preliminary investigation.

Third, a comparison could be conducted by comparing elite rhetoric with the internal, communicative rhetoric apparent within parties. Such inquiry directs attention to the fact that attempts to persuade are not confined to party elite's public pronouncements but are also evident in internal policy debate or local campaigning activities (such as election leaflets and hustings). These different levels and forms of debate pose an interesting counterpoint to my elite focused investigation, making it possible to examine divergences in elite/member rhetoric, and external and internal rhetoric.

Fourth, inquiry could also be extended to contemplate the effect the media has on the ideological picture of a party the public receive. By examining how utterances are framed and introduced by journalists and television programmes it is possible to cast light on the factors beyond parties' control which affect the interpretation of their position.

These four examples illustrate some of the ways in which my study of party political ideology could be extended and hence reveal the dexterity of this framework.

Adapting Focus

Although this thesis focuses exclusively on the interaction between political parties and ideology, the model outlined here can be easily applied to consider ideology in a range of other aggregative or collective organisations. The form of analysis conducted here focuses on ideology as projected hence if seeking to transpose the method exhibited in this thesis it would be necessary to examine organisations and associations such as pressure groups, professional associations, trade unions and think tanks which also consciously project an ideology.

In conducting such inquiry it would also be necessary to explore the alternative motivations, contextual variables and norms particular to those organisations in order to ensure the correct interpretation of texts. Hence, if attempting to study a pressure group it would be necessary to consider institutional constraints and the need to maintain influence alongside context, history and (potentially) membership. Through such inquiry it is possible, as with parties, to discern the form of an organisation's ideology, change over time, engage in ideological characterisation and discern apparent ideological relevance. In this regard my form of party political ideology provides a mode of analysis applicable beyond the realm of politics which can potentially cast light on the relationship between ideology and a range of other bodies.

Exploring Parties

Finally, this mode of inquiry can also be extended by examining how the ideology projected by a political party is translated into practice, and how institutional constraints affect the enactment of ideas. Whilst attention here focuses on the consistency between ideas and proposed policies, it is possible for the outcomes parties desire to be distorted by process, undermining the consistency of its message. This renders it fruitful to explore how ideology is translated into policy, examining the governance processes and institutional constraints which affect implementation. Such a discussion allows the impact of institutional norms and political compromise on the ideological objective of parties to be mapped, leading to greater

understanding of why ideas do not always translate in policy. Insights of this kind inform my quest to illustrate the continued pertinence of ideological inquiry as they can explain why outputs do not always reflect ideological intent and thus why ideology remains relevant.

These different extensions have the capacity to augment this form of inquiry, advancing understanding of the interaction between parties and ideology and illustrating the relevance of further ideological study. Away from the party context this approach is also capable of developing understanding of different forms of ideology and the wealth of factors which can inform and affect analysis at this level. In this regard the party political ideology approach presented in this thesis is seen to open the door to a range of different insights.

Contribution

In reflecting on the above it is pertinent to examine the contribution that this thesis makes to the existing literature. As outlined in the introduction I sought to offer a new theory and method by which to understand the interaction between ideology and political parties, conduct a detailed appraisal of two high profile cases of apparent ideological change and modernisation, and assert the relevance of ideological inquiry. On each account I have met my objectives.

Theory: First, I have presented the concept of party political ideology, which takes account of how the specific context of political parties affects ideological study, and advanced the case for particular analysis of ideology. By distinguishing between ideology as possessed by parties and ideology as projected I prepared the ground for a new level of analysis.

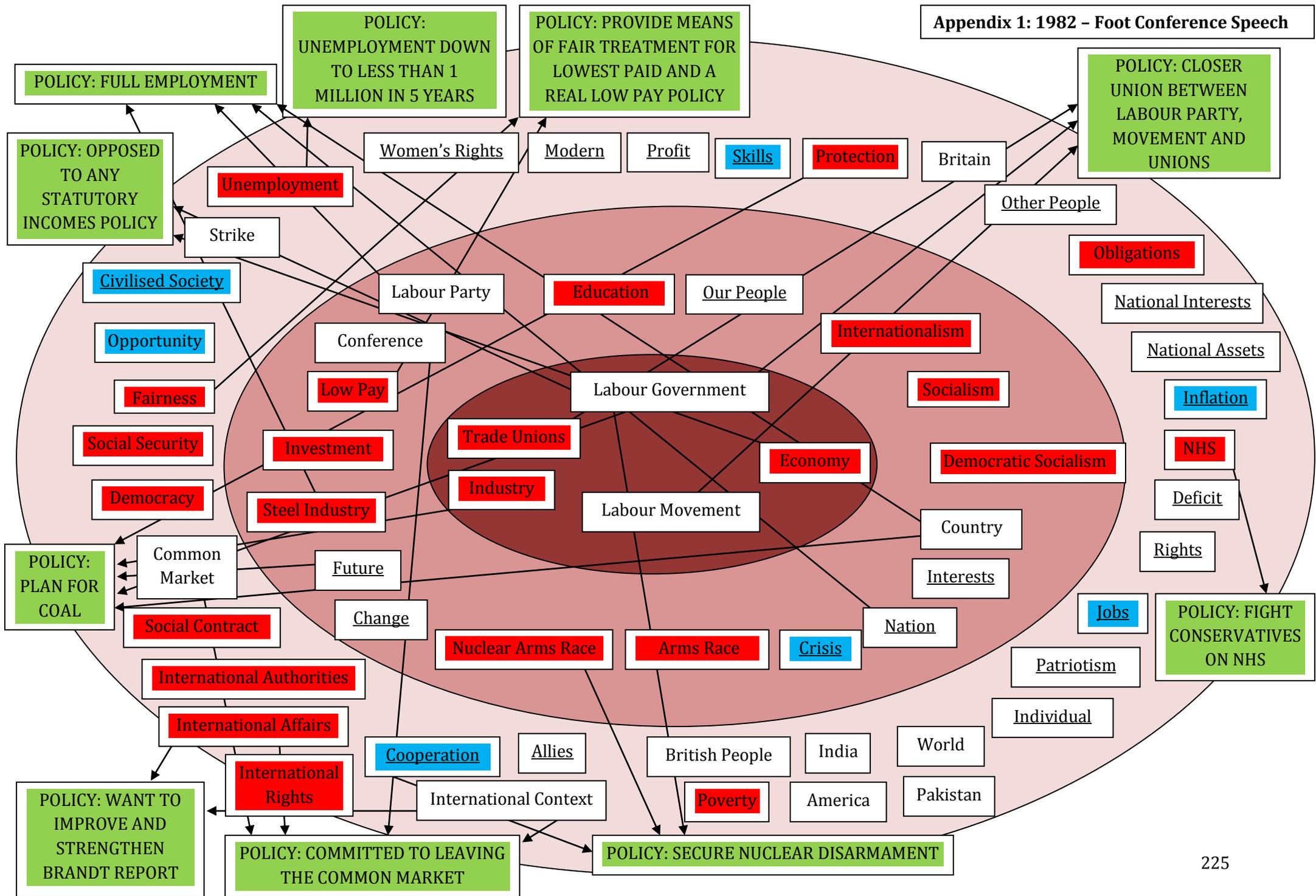
Method: Second, I have presented a method capable of operationalising this theoretical approach, adapting Freedden's morphological framework to map the ideological message projected by a party at any one point in time (through rhetoric). The outputs constructed can also be used to examine ideological change and engage in ideological characterisation. Methodological consideration was also given to the apparent pertinence of ideology, reflecting the possibility that parties can appear non-ideological and assessing the likelihood of such a judgement.

Application: Third, in applying these principles to study the Labour and Conservative Party I have illustrated the capacities and practicalities of this approach, offering a range of novel insights on ideology and modernisation which reveal the pertinence of inquiry at this level. Furthermore, by drawing on these cases I have also considered the relationship between political parties, ideology and modernisation more generally, offering a range of conclusions which could help to inform future attempts at party change. In conducting this applied

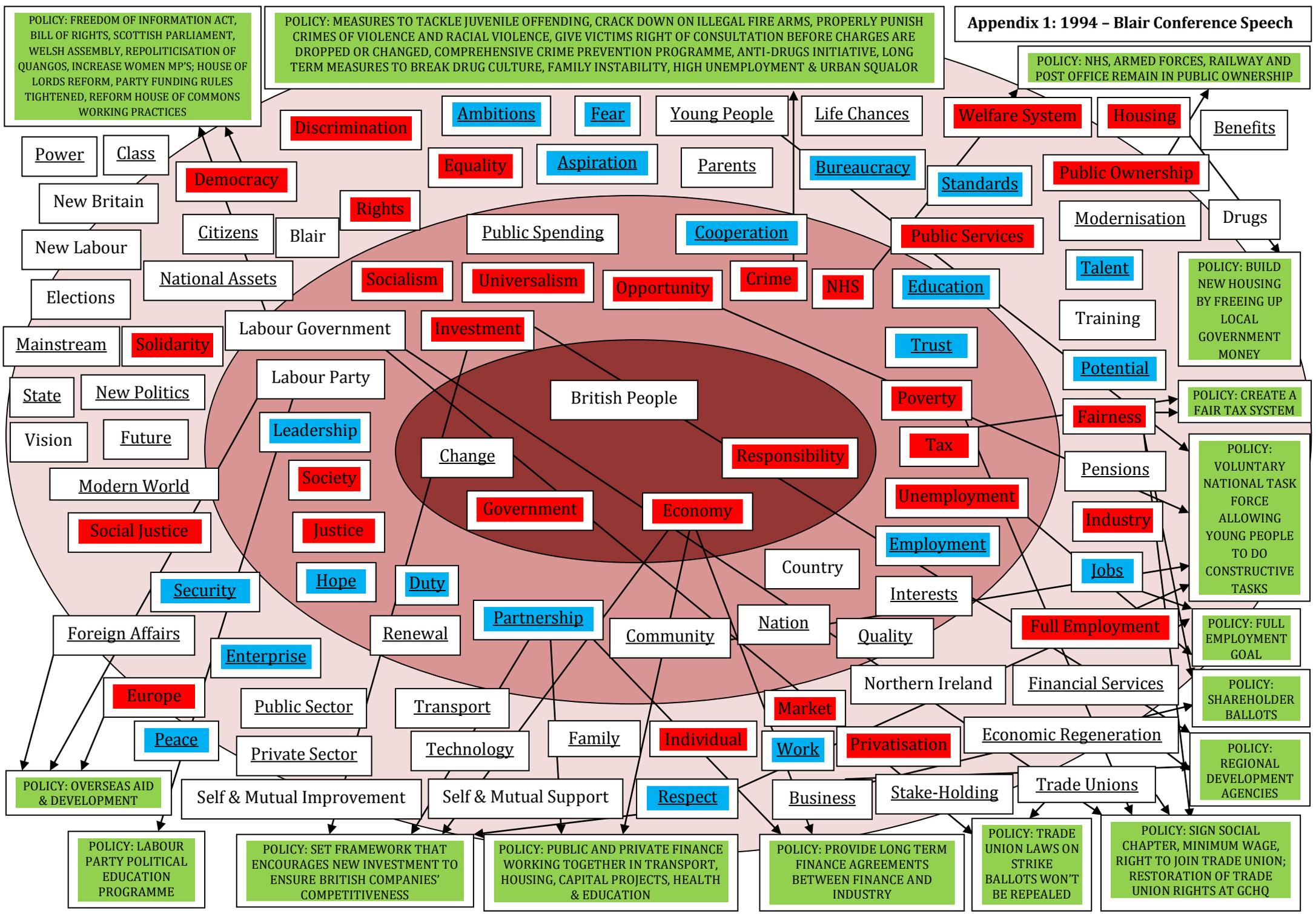
analysis I have also detailed the process by which inferences are drawn from morphological investigation, providing scholars with the tool kit by which to contemplate ideology, ideological change, ideological relevance and modernisation.

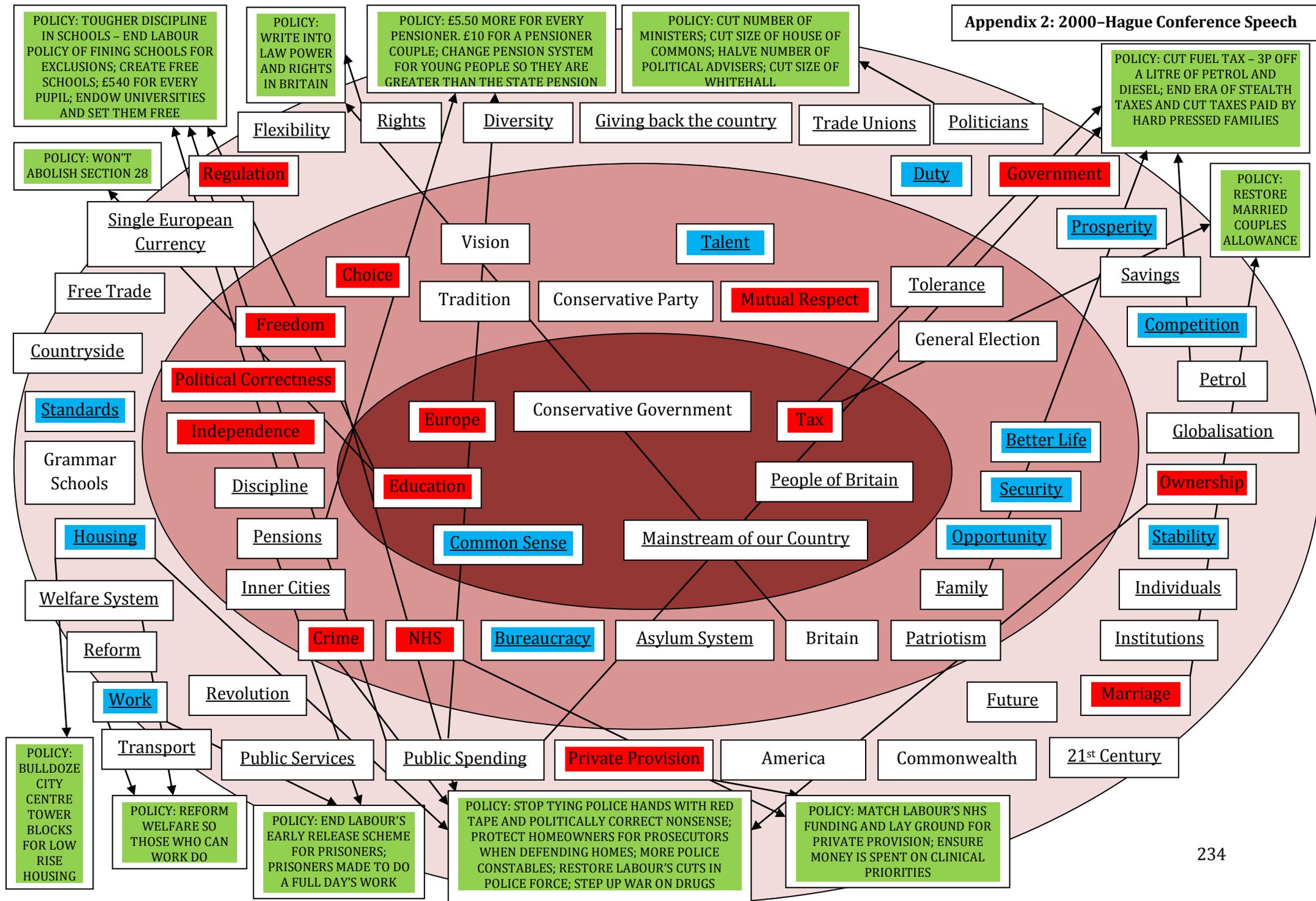
Relevance: Finally, having examined and catalogued ideology in detail I have underlined the continued presence of ideology and thus the pertinence of ideological study. I have also outlined potential reasons for negative or indifferent attitudes to ideology, such as ideological quietism, which help to explain and thus offer routes by which to counteract these attitudes.

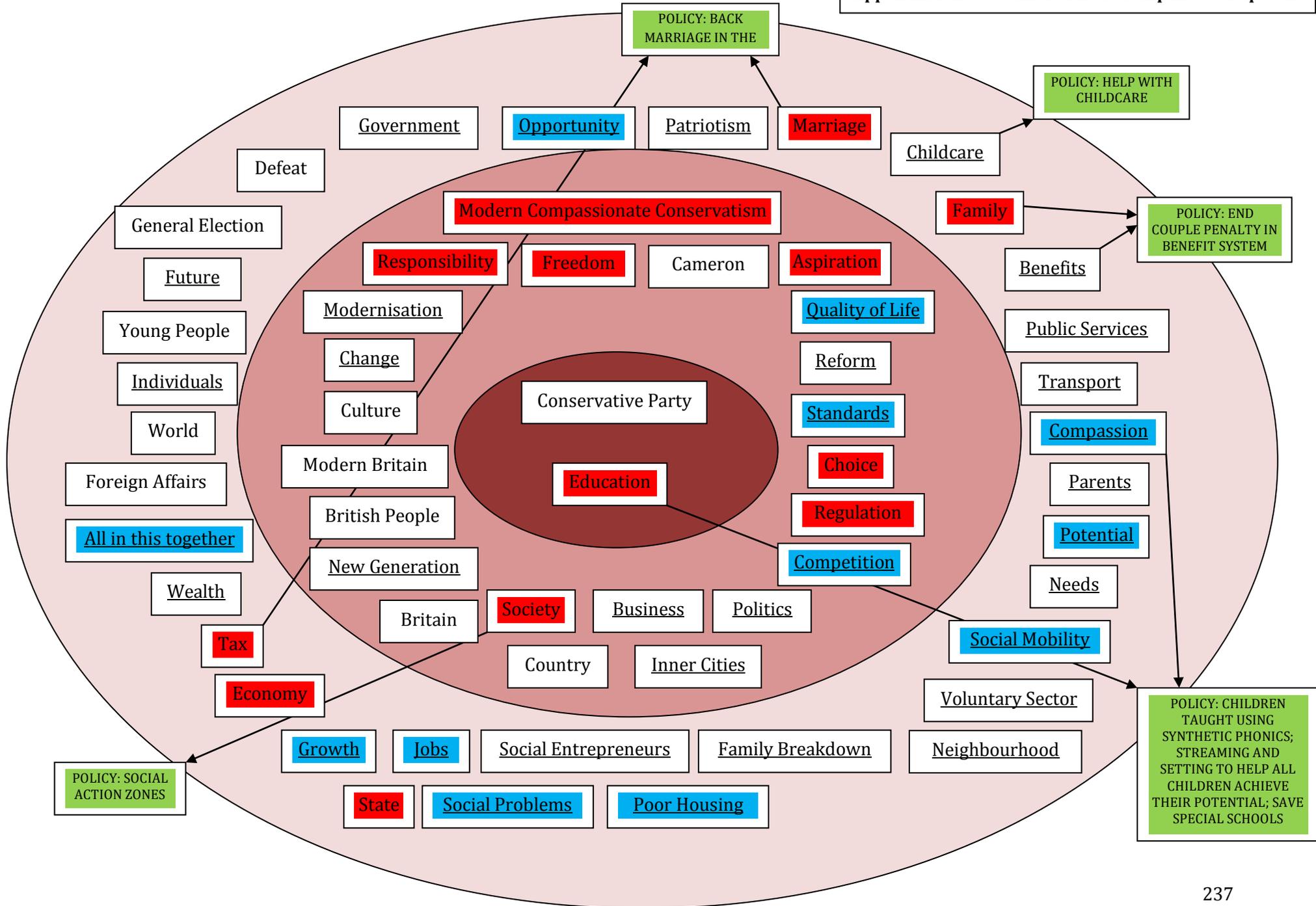
Accordingly within this thesis I have offered theoretical, methodological and applied analysis which not only defends the pertinence of ideological study but also offers a range of innovative insights on the interaction between ideology and political parties.

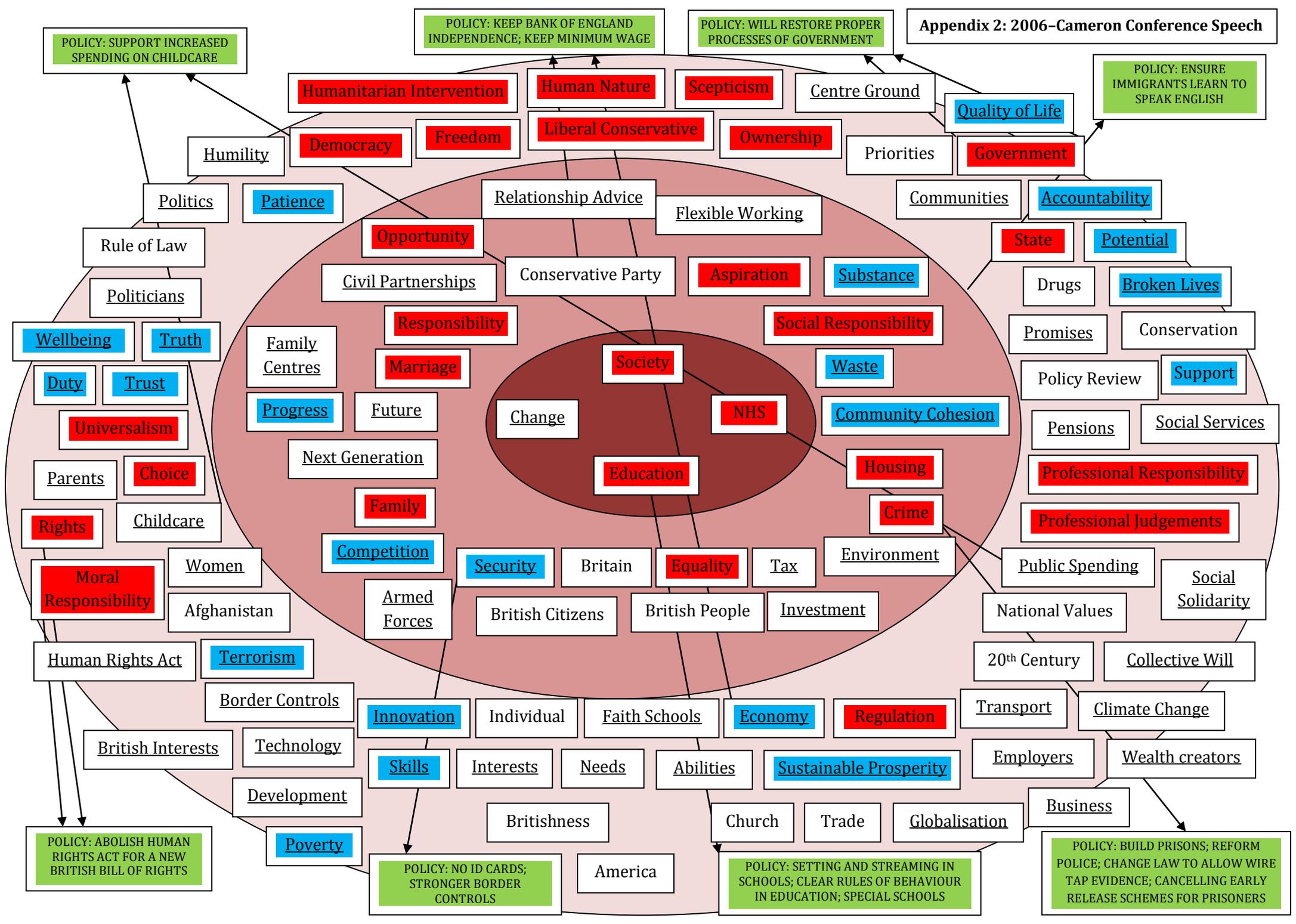


Appendix 1: 1994 - Blair Conference Speech

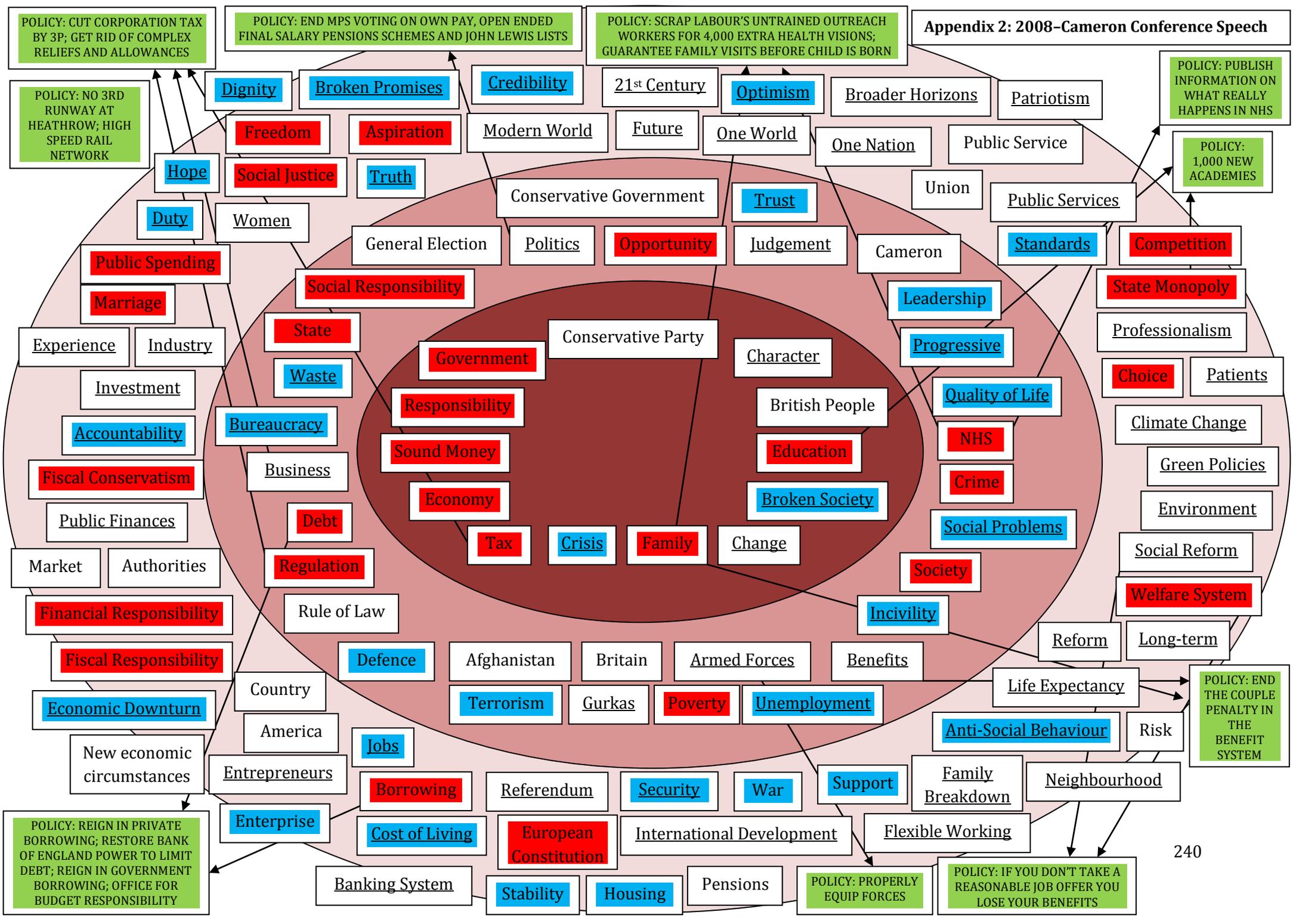








Appendix 2: 2008-Cameron Conference Speech



Appendix 3

David Cameron's 2010 Leader's Conference Speech

() Important due to conceptual connections and number of references*

*(**) Important due to rhetorical techniques used*

[L?] Indicates the level at which the reference is situated in the four morphological rings depicted in the diagrammatic representation of this speech.

References Invoked:

[L2] ()** Freedom - *Want a more free country. Freedom for local councils to keep more money. Give police more freedom*

[L1] (*/)** Fairness – *Want a fairer country. Cuts will be made fairly and will protect NHS. Asking those on higher wages to shoulder more of the burden than the lower incomes. Means giving money to the poorest in society; the sick, vulnerable and elderly. Fairness can't be measured by spending on welfare, means supporting people out of poverty not dependency. Not just about help from state but also about tax. Fairness is about what people deserve.*

[L3] Environment – *Want a more green country*

[L3] Decentralisation – *Want a more decentralised country*

[L3] Mutual Responsibility – *Build a country defined by mutual responsibility*

[L3] Patriotism – *Country I love*

[L2] (*) Country – *Conservatives serving the country. Country is a mess, needs to change. Countries that succeed will find new ways of doing things. Defined by what we contribute. Transforming the country is what this government wants to do and it will take Big Society spirit. Tory vision of a more powerful country*

[L1] (*/)** Conservative Party – *Victory because of past changes. A party for all generations. Party puts country first and leaves vested interests to others. Delivering policies*

[L3] National Interests – *Conservatives seeing national interest. Conservatives party of national interest not self-interest as shown by the coalition. Always pursued but some lines can't be crossed*

[L1] (*/)** Government – *Conservatives giving Britain strong government. Conservatives are in government due to party members. Wrestling with challenge of building prosperous, competitive economy, good public services and paying for pensions. Changing under Big Society. Conservatives taking power away from central government and giving it to people*

[L1] (*/)** British People – *Have given Conservatives a chance. Conservatives gave a vision of more powerful people of big citizens believing in themselves. A more fulfilled life for everyone. Need to start businesses and seize opportunity*

[L2] ()** All in this Together – *A call to arms. Society is not a spectator support its time to sit up and own it. Coming together for national interest*

[L2] ()** Leadership – *Country wants leadership not partisanship*

[L3] Hung Parliament – *Voters wanted responsibility not political games*

[L2] ()** Responsibility – *In hung parliament. Cameron has a responsibility as Prime minister. Labour tried to boss people around and undermined responsibility*

[L2] (*) Coalition Government – *Cameron set out to form a strong, stable coalition government. Share values and a way of doing business. Founded on respect, trust and reasonable debate. Achieving in the national interest. Social change is the radical heart of the coalition. Believing in and trusting people. Will balance budget and boost enterprise, reform public services and devolve power. A new kind of government because it is realistic about what it can achieve but is ambitious about what we can achieve together. Acting to build a more entrepreneurial economy. There to help, encourage and break down barriers for people*

[L2] (*) Cameron – *Patriotic*

[L3] Clegg – *Don't agree about everything. Not just in government for a few concessions*

[L2] ()** Family – *Help out troubled families. A strong family offers a route out of poverty. Cameron wanted clear pledges on the family as part of coalition agreement*

[L3] Europe - *European Parliament. When I told Clegg what I really thought of the European parliament, he said: "My God, it's worse than I thought. An EU referendum to protect our sovereign powers*

[L3] Shared Values – *Between Clegg and Cameron and a recognition that they could work together*

[L3] Politics – *Rational people find a way to overcome disagreements*

[L3] Liberal Democrats – *Proper partners, making big decisions. Shaping what is done and taking responsibility*

[L3] Compromise – *We'll have to do things we might not like*

[L3] Electoral Reform – *Backed by Clegg. Will be referendum. Cameron doesn't want to change voting system and will get out and win vote*

[L3] Referendum – *On voting system and EU*

[L1] (*/)** Education – *Route out of poverty. Make sure those from the poorest homes go to the best schools. Some children didn't learn to read, write or do maths under Labour government. Free schools letting other providers deliver education*

[L2] (*) Tax – *Corporation tax and jobs tax abolished. Bank levy introduced. Tax could be cut using interest payments. Cut tax for business. Citizenship isn't a transaction in which you put your taxes in and get your services out*

[L2] (*) Crime – *People smashing things up. Violent crime has risen under Labour. State is failing on crime. High reoffending rates. Too much bureaucracy. Local people should become special constables and there should be less paperwork. Reform needed*

[L2] ()** Bureaucracy – *Targets in police scrapped. HIPP dropped, quangos closed. Slashed red tape. Stripped down bureaucracy in health service and policy. Labour left endless ridiculous rules and regulations and quangos and bureaucracy and nonsense*

[L3] Regulation - *Labour left endless ridiculous rules and regulations and quangos and bureaucracy and nonsense. Labour failed to regulate the city*

[L3] Immigration – *Capped*

[L3] Transparency – *Salaries of fat cats revealed. Transparency brought to government as information is power*

[L3] NHS – *NHS protected. Cancer drugs fund. Cooperatives encouraged. Protecting NHS spending from cuts. Inequalities got worse under Labour. GPs are delivering local services – ending state monopoly*

[L3] International Development – *Aid promise kept*

[L1] (*/)** Public Spending – *Savings already. Reducing spending will be difficult. Will be at same level as 2006 once reduced. Higher public spending didn't deliver better public services*

[L3] Pensions – *Linked to earnings. Government striving to pay for pensions*

[L3] Entrepreneurs – *Will get economy going. Coalition government will stimulate enterprise where private sector is weak*

[L2] ()** Armed Forces – *Support troops and withdraw by 2015*

[L3] Afghanistan – *In Afghanistan for national security*

[L3] Security – *In Afghanistan for national security*

[L3] Terrorism – *Terrorists trained in Afghanistan. Conservative government will use every resource at their disposal to tackle terrorism*

[L2] ()** Foreign Policy – *New direction under Conservatives by not neglecting important relationships*

[L3] War – *Needs right resources*

[L2] ()** Defence – *Budget in a mess, defence review to match commitments with resources. Changes but no risks taken on security*

[L1] (*/)** Change – *In defence. Needed as more spending didn't deliver improvements. Change needed in politics*

[L3] Britain – *Reputation for doing what is right. Cameron will work with others to give Britain a brand new start*

[L3] Reputation – *Conservatives will address Britain's reputation. Bloody Sunday apology. Setting Lockerbie bomber free was wrong*

[L3] Northern Ireland – *Cameron will continue to work to bring peace*

[L3] Peace – *To Northern Ireland*

[L3] Union – *Cameron upholds British union*

[L2] ()** Individuals – *Fate of country determined by individuals as well as government. Need to change the way we think about ourselves. Contribution not consumption*

[L3] Choice – *Fate of country determined by what we choose to do. Conservatives made a choice on welfare. Choice over hospitals and education*

[L3] Banks – *Not forced to risk other people's money. Government forcing banks to start lending to small businesses*

[L3] Benefits – *People sitting around waiting for benefits. Fairness in relationship to tax*

[L2] ()** Citizenship – *Not a transaction where you pay tax and get services but a relationship where you are part of something bigger and your views matter. International citizens*

[L1] (*/)** Society – *Needs to change. Individuals rule in society. Government's striving to build a strong society. Big Society spirit needed to stimulate society*

[L2] (*) Big Society Spirit – *Need cooperation, activism, dynamism. People taking the initiative and working together to get things done. Means facing up to debts not shirking responsibility. Should drive reforms*

[L3] Quality of Life – *Government to improve quality of life*

[L2] ()** Economy – *Government building prosperity, competitive economy. Big Society spirit needed to stimulate economy. Labour must not be let near the economy again, Conservatives building an entrepreneurial economy*

[L3] Public Services – *Government striving to build good public services. Saying to people do things your own way. Open them up to other providers*

[L2] ()** State – *Need to find better alternatives to the old-fashioned state. Statism lost, society won*

[L3] Common Good – *Need to find new ways of harnessing the common good*

[L3] General Election – *Statism lost, society won. Conservatives leading change*

[L3] People Power – *Instead of state power. Reform to give more people power*

[L3] National Unity – *Not individualism*

[L3] National Purpose – *Not individualism*

[L3] Big Government – *Now Big Society*

[L1] (*/)** Cuts – *Big Society not a cover for cuts. Responsible. Need to act decisively to hold confidence and interest rates. Would be bigger under Labour's plans. Pull together now for rewards later. Will deliver more money in your pocket, more investment in businesses, growing*

institutions, better jobs and stronger prospects for young people. Programmes will be cut by 25% in departments over 4 years. Will be made in a fair way

[L2] ()** Big Society – *About government changing its role, building a nation of doers and go-getters. Where people step forward and come together to make life better*

[L3] Financial Responsibility – *Spending cuts, need Big Society spirit*

[L3] Public Finances – *Conservatives inherited finances that can only be described as catastrophic*

[L3] Borrowing – *Conservatives inherited catastrophic finances and are currently borrowing more money than is spent on the NHS*

[L3] Interest - *£43bn to stand still, could be spent on tax cuts*

[L3] Debt – *Labour’s plans would see national debt growing as a percentage of national income*

[L3] Respect – *The more state control the less respect for the police*

[L3] Emergency Budget – *Put Britain back on the path to fiscal responsibility*

[L3] Trust – *In economy shown by credit rating. Coalition trusts people*

[L2] (*) Business – *Investment in business delivered as a result of spending cuts. Businesses have had to make cuts in recent years too. Getting people ready for work. Allowance to help people start their own business*

[L3] Industry – *Growing industry delivered as a result of spending cuts*

[L2] ()** Jobs – *Better jobs delivered as a result of spending cuts. Will be lost as a result of cuts*

[L3] Prospects – *For young people delivered as a result of spending cuts*

[L3] Children – *Left to pay debts under Labour*

[L3] Civilised Society – *Looking after sick, vulnerable and elderly*

[L3] Support – *Supporting people out of poverty by a strong family, a good education, a job. Local support for policy through accountability*

[L2] ()** Poverty - *Fairness means supporting people out of poverty, not trapping them in dependency*

[L3] Welfare System – *Supporting people out of poverty – a bold choice which measures success not by the amount of money spent*

[L3] Investment – *In early years*

[L3] Marriage – *Recognised in tax system*

[L2] ()** Work - *Ensure that work pays for everyone in the country. If you can work you should if you refuse to you can’t live off the hard work of others*

[L3] Injustice – *Of tax penalties on low paid*

[L2] (**) Deficit – *Tackling the deficit is what has to be done. Dealing with it so interest rates stay low*

[L3] Growth – *Gained with Big Society spirit*

[L3] Wealth Creators – *Will get economy growing. Admired by Cameron. Government needs to get behind wealth creators*

[L3] Technology – *Tory investment will develop green technology of the future*

[L3] Future – *Tory investment will develop green technology of the future*

[L1] (*/**) Power – *Given to the people. Radical shift in power. More power for local communities, more choice in schools and hospitals. Tory vision of more powerful people and country. Coalition government gives people power*

[L3] Waste – *Power in people's hands to detect waste*

[L2] (**) Revolution – *In power holding. Conservative radicals breaking apart the old system with a massive transfer of power*

[L3] Radicalism – *No more top-down, bureaucrat driven public services. Services in people's hands*

[L2] (**) State Monopoly – *Broken apart to get new ideas into education and crime*

[L2] (**) Reform – *Needed in police due to drugs policy, prisons and bureaucracy. Bottom up reform*

[L3] Drugs – *Addiction funded by tax payer. Rehabilitation from social enterprises*

[L3] Accountability – *Police help to account by people through police commissioners. Change*

[L3] Olympics – *Work together to make Olympics great for Britain and the world*

[L3] Young People – *Inspiration given by government and opportunity to serve community. Will be stronger prospects for our young people as a result of tackling deficit*

[L3] Community – *People should be leading their own projects*

[L3] Control – *Government gives control to people*

[L3] Chance – *Government giving chances to people*

[L3] 21st Century – *People hungry for Big Society in 21st century*

[L3] Vision – *Cameron's vision is not just a vision of a more powerful country. It is a vision of a more powerful people.*

Policies:

WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN BY 2015; RENEW TRIDENT

INQUIRY INTO MISTREATMENT OF DETAINEES

PUPIL PREMIUM; FREE SCHOOLS

RECOGNISE MARRIAGE IN TAX SYSTEM; MAKE SURE WORK PAYS

HIGH SPEED RAIL; SUPERFAST BROADBAND; CARBON CAPTURE STORAGE; GREEN INVESTMENT BANKS

£1BN REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

ENTERPRISE ALLOWANCE

ELECTED POLICE COMMISSIONERS

SCRAP HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES; COMMUNITY ORGANISERS TO STIMULATE SOCIAL ACTION IN POOREST AREAS

NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE; INTERNATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE

Delivery:

NEW GENERATION OF TECHNICAL SCHOOLS; 200 NEW ACADEMIES; 10,000 UNIVERSITY PLACES; 50,000 APPRENTICESHIPS; CORPORATION TAX CUT; JOBS TAX CUTS; BANK LEVY UP; EMPLOYEES TAX REDUCED; POLICE TARGETS SCRAPPED; IMMIGRATION CAPPED; ID CARDS ABOLISHED; 3RD RUNWAY STOPPED; HIPS DROPPED; FAT CAT SALARIES REVEALED

NHS PROTECTED; CANCER DRUGS FUND INTRODUCED; AID PROMISE KEPT; QUANGOS CLOSED; MINISTERS PAY DOWN; £6BN SAVED; EMERGENCY BUDGET TO BALANCE BOOKS; EU REFERENDUM; EARNINGS LINK RESTORED WITH PENSIONS; OPERATION ALLOWANCE DOUBLED; CHILD BENEFIT REMOVED FROM HIGHER EARNERS

How Rhetoric Conveys Emphasis:

1. *'what we must do together, and what we can achieve together'*
Repetition draws attention here to the idea of being together – emphasising the idea of 'all in this together' which is developed in the speech.
2. *'Three defeats. Thirteen party conferences – 4,757 days in the wilderness.'*
A three part list is used to emphasise the scale of the Conservatives' victory
3. *'William Hague got us back on our feet. Iain Duncan Smith helped us get back our heart. Michael Howard gave us back our confidence.'*
The three part list focuses on the contribution of each of the prior party leaders and emphasises the changes within the party that allowed success; foregrounding the Conservative Party.
4. *'The country wants leadership, not partisanship.'*
The comparative pair used here draws attention to the message of leadership.
5. *'Nick and I didn't agree about everything. He wanted clearer pledges on PR. I wanted them on the family.'*
Here a comparison is used to emphasise the importance placed upon the family by the Conservatives by singling this policy out against the party's broader agenda
6. *'Two hundred new academies. Ten thousand university places. Fifty thousand apprenticeships.'*

The three part list used here serves to underline the Conservative Party's policy agenda and delivery as part of the coalition Government – emphasising the Conservative Party.

7. *'Corporation tax – cut. The jobs tax – axed. Police targets – smashed. Immigration – capped. The third runway – stopped. Home Information Packs – dropped. Fat cat salaries – revealed. ID Cards – abolished. The NHS – protected. Our aid promise – kept./ Quangos – closing down. Ministers' pay – coming down. A bank levy – coming up. A cancer drugs fund – up and running.'*

Here a staccato list formation is used to underline the Conservatives delivery on their policy agenda, emphasising the party's importance.

8. *'In our first few weeks in office, we set a clear new direction. Focused. Hard-headed. Time-limited.'*

Here a three part list is used to underline the government's new direction and the need to act immediately – emphasising their subsequent message on deficit reduction.

9. *'For those who have served; for those who bear the scars; and for those who will never come home, this country has gratitude beyond words.'*

The three part description used here emphasises the Conservatives commitment to the armed forces.

10. *'Already we are restoring ties with India, with allies in the Gulf, with our friends in the Commonwealth.'*

Three examples are given, emphasising the party's commitment to a new approach to foreign affairs.

11. *'Today, we're geared up to fight old wars. We have armoured brigades ready to repel Soviet tanks across the German plain./But we struggled to provide enough helicopters for our soldiers in Afghanistan, for the real war we are really fighting.'*

A comparison is used here to underline the problems with the county's defence strategy, foregrounding this policy area.

12. *'They left us with massive debts, the highest deficit, overstretched armed forces, demoralised public services, endless ridiculous rules and regulations and quangos and bureaucracy and nonsense./ They left us a legacy of spinning, smearing, briefing, back-biting, half-truths and cover-ups, patronising, old-fashioned, top-down, wasteful, centralising, inefficient, ineffective, unaccountable politics, 10p tax and 90 days detention, an election bottled and a referendum denied, gold sold at half price and council tax doubled, bad news buried and Mandelson resurrected, pension funds destroyed and foreign prisoners not deported, Gurkhas kept out and extremist preachers allowed in.'*

A listing format is used to underline Labour's failures – creating an impression of broad failures and thus the need for the Conservative Party and a change in strategy. This emphasises the latter two ideas.

13. *'Yes, Labour failed to regulate the City properly. But they didn't force those banks to take massive risks with other people's money./ Yes, Labour tried to boss people around and undermined responsibility. But they weren't the ones smashing up our town centres on a Friday night or sitting on their sofas waiting for their benefits./ Yes, Labour centralised too much and told people they could fix every problem. But it was the rest of us who swallowed it, hoping that if the government took care of things, perhaps we wouldn't have to.'*

Three examples are given to demonstrate the broader societal problems which need to be resolved, using comparisons to indicate the need for change.

14. *'But citizenship isn't a transaction in which you put your taxes in and get your services out. It's a relationship – you're part of something bigger than you, and it matters what you think and feel and do.'*
Comparison is used to underline the Conservatives' conception of citizenship.
15. *'The old way of doing things: the high-spending, all-controlling, heavy-handed state, those ideas were defeated'*
Here a three part list is used here to indicate the party's anti-statist focus and the need for society, emphasising this latter reference.
16. *'From state power to people power. From unchecked individualism to national unity and purpose. From big government to the Big Society.'*
Here a three part, comparative list is used here to underscore the transition from state power to people power, emphasising the references to big government, Big Society and power.
17. *'It's not government abdicating its role, it is government changing its role.'*
Comparison is used here to challenge preconceptions about the Conservatives' attitude towards the state; underlining the references of change and government.
18. *'A country defined not by what we consume but by what we contribute. A country, a society where we say: I am not alone. I will play my part. I will work with others to give Britain a brand new start.'*
A comparative pair emphasises the need for individual contribution to the Conservatives message, a point which is compounded by the subsequent three part list which emphasises the message of the Big Society and the idea of being 'all in this together'.
19. *'I wish there was another way. I wish there was an easier way. But I tell you: there is no other responsible way'*
The three part list used here draws attention to the message of responsibility and deficit reduction.
20. *'Every doctor's salary. Every operation. Every heating bill in every hospital. Every appointment. Every MRI scan. Every drug. Every new stethoscope, scalpel, hospital gown./ Everything in our hospitals and surgeries – paid for with borrowed money,'*
The repetition used here creates a cumulative effect which compounds the message on borrowing, helping to support the Conservatives message on deficit reduction.
21. *'The International Monetary Fund, the G20, yes even the EU. They support what we're doing.'*
The three examples used support the Conservatives message on deficit reduction.
22. *'I tell you what: these Labour politicians, who nearly bankrupted our country, who left a legacy of debts and cuts, who are still in denial about the disaster they created. They must not be allowed anywhere near our economy, ever, ever again'*
A three part sentence structure compounds the message that Labour ruined the economy – indicating the importance of this reference.
23. *'There are programmes that will be cut. There are jobs that will be lost. There are things government does today that it will have to stop doing.'*
Three examples are given, drawing attention to the impact of the public spending cuts planned by the Conservatives.
24. *'Fairness means supporting people out of poverty, not trapping them in dependency.'*
Comparison is used here to underline the Conservatives' emphasis on fairness and poverty.

25. *'Let's support real routes out of poverty – a strong family, a good education, a job.'*
A three part list is used here to underline the Conservatives message on poverty and draws attention to the mechanisms they use – here family, education and a job.
26. *'So to that single mother struggling and working her heart out for her children, we can now say: "We're on your side; we'll help you work; we will bring that injustice to an end."'*
The three part composition of this quote underlines the Conservatives message on work.
27. *'On 11 May, a great shadow was cast over the empire of the quangocrats, the bureaucrats and the power-hoarders.'*
Here a three part list is used to underline the references of change, government and bureaucracy.
28. *'More freedom for local councils to keep more of the money when they attract business to their area, to finance big new infrastructure projects and to run new services.'*
The three part list used here draws attention to the concept of freedom.
29. *'breaking apart the old system with a massive transfer for power, from the state to citizens, politicians to people, government to society.'*
The three part comparative list used here draws attention to the concept of power.
30. *'Health inequalities got worse. Almost four in ten children left primary school unable to read, write and do maths properly. There were nearly a million violent crimes a year.'*
Three examples are used here, underlining the party's message on public spending.
31. *'The old targets and performance indicators that drove doctors, nurses and police officers mad – they're gone.'*
The reference to three different professions in the public service draws attention to the concept of bureaucracy.
32. *'Already, businesses are getting people trained and ready for work. GPs are coming together to deliver local NHS services. And next year, the first generation of free schools will open in the state sector.'*
The three examples used here emphasise the concept of state monopoly; giving three examples of its manifestation.
33. *'The danger that your child might go to school and turn out to be a winner. Anti-aspiration. Anti-success. Anti-parents who just want the best for their children.'*
The three part list serves to underline Labour's approach to education and the differences in Tory policy in that area.
34. *'The more you've been controlled by the central state, the less people have respected you.'*
Comparison is used here to emphasise the references of decentralisation and power.
35. *'This is the reform our public services need. From top-down to bottom-up. From state power to people power.'*
Comparisons are used here to emphasise the references to reform and revolution in the public services.
36. *'Our job is to help them, encourage them, break down the barriers that stop them.'*
The three part sentence structure used here draws attention to the different vision of government advanced by the coalition.
37. *'So that great project in your community – go and lead it. The waste in government – go and find it. The new school in your neighbourhood – go and demand it./The beat meeting on your street – sign up./The neighbourhood group – join up. That business you always dreamed of – start up.'*
Two three part lists are used here to emphasise the Big Society theme and the idea of 'all in this together'.

38. *'Yes, we will play our part – but the part you play will mean even more.'*

A comparative sentence structure is used here to underline the importance of the British people to the Conservatives' vision.

39. *'Your country needs you. It takes two. It takes two to build that strong economy. We'll balance the budget, we'll boost enterprise, but you start those businesses that lead us to growth./ It takes two to build that Big Society. We'll reform public services, we'll devolve power, but you step forward to seize the opportunity.'*

Here two three part sentence structures are used here to underline the connection between government and the people.

40. *'So come on – let's pull together. Let's come together./ Let's work, together, in the national interest.'*

The three part sentence structure used here draws attention to the motif of 'all in this together' developed in the speech.

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