

Ideological Divergence and Issue Convergence:
Explaining Paradiplomacy in Quebec

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Abstract

This thesis explores the role of nationalism in *paradiplomacy*, the phenomenon of sub-state entities engaging in international affairs. In regions characterized by strong nationalist movements, paradiplomacy is utilized by regional actors to project a minority identity distinct from that of the majority centre. Quebec has sustained the world's most advanced case of paradiplomacy, despite wholesale alternation between two ideologically divergent parties, the sovereigntist Parti Québécois (PQ) and federalist Parti Libéral du Québec (PLQ). This work proposes party competition for issue ownership as a causal explanation of this convergence. The central argument of this thesis is that regional parties are galvanized by a nationalist electorate to take stances on international relations which promote their electoral competitiveness to voters vis-à-vis rival parties. The greater the emphasis a party places on itself as the most capable “owner” of the issue of the region's international interests, the greater its commitment to paradiplomacy will be.

Keywords: Quebec; paradiplomacy; nationalism; valence theory; Parti Québécois; Parti Libéral du Québec

Résumé

Cette thèse explore le rôle du nationalisme dans la *paradiplomatie*, le phénomène des entités sub-étatiques qui s'engagent dans les affaires internationales. Dans les régions caractérisées par des mouvements nationalistes forts, la paradiplomatie est utilisée par les acteurs régionaux pour projeter une identité minoritaire distincte de celle du centre majoritaire. Le Québec offre le cas de paradiplomatie le plus avancé au monde, malgré l'alternance au pouvoir de deux partis idéologiquement divergents, le souverainiste Parti québécois (PQ) et le fédéraliste Parti libéral du Québec (PLQ). Cette thèse propose la compétition électorale pour la possession d'enjeu comme une explication causale de cette convergence des partis. L'argument central de cette thèse est que les partis régionaux sont galvanisés par un électorat nationaliste à prendre des positions sur les relations internationales qui favorisent leur compétitivité électorale vis-à-vis les partis rivaux. Plus un parti met l'accent sur lui-même comme “propriétaire” le plus apte à s'occuper de l'enjeu des intérêts internationaux du Québec, le plus son engagement envers la paradiplomatie sera intense.

Mots-clés: Québec; paradiplomatie; nationalisme, théorie de valence; Parti québécois; Parti libéral du Québec

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

For over fifty years, Quebec has distinguished itself as the most internationally active sub-state region¹ in the world (Keating, 1997; Balthazar, 1999; Balthazar, 2004; Michaud 2006; Criekemans, 2010; Nossal et al, 2015; etc). Its *Ministère des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie* (MRIF) oversees dozens of offices abroad, with staff and budgetary resources surpassing all nine other Canadian provinces or fifty American states *combined* (Bélanger, 2002). Quebec's international engagement - beginning with a "momentum it would never really lose" (Duran, 2016: 21) - is particularly striking considering that it has been sustained and expanded upon by both pro-sovereignty and pro-federalism regional parties.

Paradiplomacy,² the practice of sub-state entities engaging in international affairs (Kuznetsov, 2015), is an understudied phenomenon at the intersection of international relations and regional politics. In an international system increasingly characterized by the diffusion of power from state to non-state actors, regions are an example of the latter while possessing more characteristics of the former (Kuznetsov, 2015). Paradiplomacy may equally be conceptualized as the international dimension of territorial politics. A correlation between sub-state nationalism and paradiplomacy is widely acknowledged (Lecours and Moreno, 2003; Kirkey et al., 2016),

¹ Kuznetsov (2015: 22) defines a *region* as "the territorial and administrative unit on the first level of authority after the central government in both federal and unitary state systems."

² How best to conceptualize sub-state international engagement has been controversial since the 1980s, when the term *paradiplomacy* first entered the literature. Scholars have consistently acknowledged the difficulty in agreeing on a term applicable to all cases (Duchacek: 1984, 13), given the often highly divergent characteristics across time and place. Whether a sub-state entity's international engagement runs parallel, complimentary, or conflictual to that of the central state (Criekemans, 2009: 1) is one such consideration among multiple others. As a full overview of the advantages and disadvantages of each proposed term falls outside the focus of this thesis, the following terms will be used interchangeably: *paradiplomacy*, *paradiplomatic activities*, *sub-state international relations*, *sub-state international engagement*, and *sub-state international affairs*. For the most comprehensive analysis of paradiplomacy's terminology debate, see Aguirre (1999).

with the most advanced cases being minority nations in multinational Western states, namely Quebec, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Flanders and Wallonia (Bélanger, 2002; Lecours and Moreno, 2003). Keating (1999: 13) notes that “in those cases where regions encapsulate a sense of distinct national identity and a nation-building project, external projection is qualitatively different from those cases where it is motivated only by functional considerations.”

1.2 Research Puzzle

The observed correlation between the strength of a region’s nationalist movement and its international presence has not developed into causal explanations. Nationalism is the single most important variable in paradiplomacy (Lecours and Moreno, 2003) and paradoxically, the literature’s most neglected (Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005). We know very little about the domestic parties, elites and institutions actually responsible for the formulation and execution of regions’ foreign affairs. As a consequence of this gap, it remains unclear how nationalism is operationalized to provide political support for paradiplomacy (Kuznetsov, 2015). Aldecoa and Keating (1999: introduction) emphasize the “need to add political explanations [for paradiplomacy] derived from the goals and strategies of substate elites, building to promoting their region or, in some cases, preparing the way for national independence.” It is argued even more forcefully that “paradiplomacy, at least in its most developed form, needs to be re-conceptualized through a theoretical linkage with substate nationalism” (Lecours and Moreno, 2003: 267).

Conventional logic would suggest that paradiplomatic activities are pursued most intensely by ruling parties in favour of eventual independence, and comparatively less so by

those which are opposed. This assumption is empirically false. Pro-federalist regional parties have at times been observed to demonstrate a similar or even *greater* commitment to international relations than their independence-seeking rivals (Balthazar, 1999; Keating, 1999; Michaud, 2006; McHugh, 2015; Jeyabalaratnam and Paquin, 2016). This paradox is exemplified by Quebec, where a highly developed international presence has been sustained despite five decades of wholesale alternation between two ideologically divergent parties, the sovereigntist Parti Québécois (PQ) and federalist Parti Libéral du Québec (PLQ).

1.3 Research Contributions, Questions and Arguments

This thesis seeks to address two of the most fundamental limitations to our understanding of why regions go abroad: theory building and units of analysis. Scholars have been far more successful in conceptualizing paradiplomacy's descriptive qualities than providing theoretical *explanations* for its development (Bursens and Deforche, 2010; Cornago, 2010; Kuznetsov, 2015). By extension, there is a lack of hypotheses discussing under what conditions what kinds of regions will develop what kind of activities (Bursens and Deforche, 2010).

Cross-national studies overlook domestic actors entirely, preferring instead to treat regions as macro-level units of analysis (see Blatter et al., 2008; Criekemans 2009; Criekemans 2010). The lack of micro-level analyses has two negative implications. First, this gap perpetuates the misleading impression that a region's international motives, goals and strategies are stagnant rather than dynamic. Second and most importantly, *why* regions engage in paradiplomacy can only be fully understood if the domestic actors responsible for its formulation and execution are analyzed. Kuznetsov (2015: 107) argues that "it is reasonable to assume that a political shift on

the regional level can accelerate or hamper the international activity of constituent units [...] Consequently, we need to scrutinize the impact of the subnational ruling elite on regions' aspirations and self-identification in international relations domain."

Three interrelated research questions therefore underline this thesis:

1. *What role does nationalism play in the paradiplomacy positions and strategies adopted by regional parties?*
2. *Why do ideologically divergent regional parties converge on the issue of paradiplomacy?*
3. *Is a greater commitment to paradiplomacy demonstrated by regional parties ideologically in favour of, or opposed to sovereignty?*

This study proposes party competition for issue ownership as a causal explanation of one of the most advanced cases of paradiplomacy, Quebec. In Quebec and other regions characterized by strong nationalist movements, paradiplomacy is utilized by regional actors to project a minority identity distinct from that of the majority centre (Conversi, 1997). The central argument of this thesis is that regional parties are galvanized by a nationalist electorate to take stances on international relations which promote their electoral competitiveness to voters vis-à-vis rival parties. The greater the emphasis a party places on itself as the most capable "owner" of the issue of the region's international interests, the greater its commitment to paradiplomacy will

be. This work is therefore not interested in how regional parties converge or diverge in their *execution* of paradiplomacy *per se*, but rather in how they *compete* over it as a policy issue.

1.4 Outline

The introductory chapter having discussed the context, analytical puzzle and research questions of the proposed work, the remainder of the thesis will proceed as follows. A literature review in Chapter 2 critically examines existing research approaches to nationalism and regional actors in paradiplomacy. This proposed work and its contributions are then situated within the bodies of relevant literature. The theoretical framework in Chapter 3 conceptualizes paradiplomacy as a valence issue in Quebec's party politics and proposes four hypotheses. In line with this proposed theoretical approach, the research design in Chapter 4 discusses the rationale underlying the regional and party case study selection, as well as the employed data and methods. The empirical analysis in Chapter 5 tests the four hypotheses through an analysis of the nature and frequency of Quebec parties' electoral discourses on paradiplomacy. Finally, the conclusion in Chapter 6 summarizes the key findings of the empirical analysis, addresses the limitations of the work, and discusses how these limitations could form the basis of future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The fundamentally interdisciplinary nature of paradiplomacy (Kuznetsov, 2015) presents both an opportunity and a challenge to our understanding of why regions go abroad. The most recent and comprehensive synthesis of paradiplomacy research, Kuznetsov's *Theory and Practice of Paradiplomacy* (2015), identifies eleven distinct - though often interrelated - research discourses on the phenomenon. This breadth across international relations and comparative subfields has unfortunately not been matched by a depth of adequate explanatory frameworks. On the contrary, the existing paradiplomacy literature is frequently self-critical of being far more successful at conceptualizing paradiplomacy's descriptive qualities than providing theoretical *explanations* for its development (Bursens and Deforche, 2010; Cornago, 2010; Kuznetsov, 2015).

Of greatest salience to this particular work is the *nationalism dimension* of paradiplomacy discourse. According to Kuznetsov (2015: 50), research falling under this discourse broadly perceives paradiplomacy to be factor in understanding minority nationalist aspirations in multinational and multilingual states. The following literature review will proceed in two parts. Nationalism as a variable in paradiplomacy will first be situated in the literature. The strengths and weaknesses of research specifically treating regional parties as paradiplomacy actors will then be evaluated.

2.2 Nationalism as a Variable in Paradiplomacy

The most macro-level analyses of paradiplomacy classify its variables as either external or internal (Duchacek, 1984, Kuznetsov, 2015; Duran, 2016). In his seminal paradiplomacy text *The International Dimension of Subnational Self-Government* (1984), Duchacek originally conceptualizes external factors as *complex interdependence*, a term which has largely come to be replaced by *globalization*. By contrast, internal factors are described merely as *domestic issues*, a highly simplistic and ambiguous conceptualization which illustrates a relatively poor understanding of this dimension of paradiplomacy.

Duchacek is correct, though once again rather ambiguous, in both his assertion that self-help is the prevailing goal of regions in going abroad, and that “elected subnational leaders perceive transborder regionalism and/or global micro-diplomacy as appropriate instruments derived from and consistent with their territorial jurisdictional autonomy” (Duchacek, 1984: 9). The most prominent example of a regional declaration of international competences is Quebec’s Gérin-Lajoie doctrine, named after the provincial minister of education who delivered the speech. Although attributed to a PLQ politician, the doctrine’s assertion that Quebec has the right to exercise international action on issues pertaining to its provincial jurisdiction has been supported by all major parties since its 1965 inception.

However, Duchacek’s argument that such instruments are used “in response to external opportunities or threats” (ibid) is problematic, as it overlooks the possibility of sub-state diplomacy being an international means for an *internal* end. In reality, the most active cases of paradiplomacy suggest that the opportunities and threats alluded to are themselves internal, namely a region’s motivation to promote a minority identity distinct from that of the majority

centre. In this sense, one could interpret the centre of a multinational state as a threat which is perceived to be “external” by the regional periphery.

Nationalism is evidently an example of an internal variable. Keating (1999: 1) divides paradiplomacy’s internal motives as either economic, political, or cultural, and emphasizes that the interconnectedness of all three must be stressed more. Kuznetsov (2015) identifies the same three internal motives, but departs from Keating in his assertion that one dominant motive still tends to distinguish itself from an otherwise substantial overlap. It has been argued that nationalism is the main independent variable in the *study of paradiplomacy, but it is not necessarily the sole or even primary variable in empirical cases* (Duran, 2016: 8).

Instead, we should understand nationalism to be in and of itself a composite of political, cultural and especially economic variables (ibid). Minority nations such as Quebec and Catalonia use paradiplomacy to leverage their internal autonomy (Tavares, 2015), as it facilitates the economic, political and cultural dimensions of stateless nation-building (Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005; Nossal et al, 2015; Duran, 2016). The following section analyzes the literature on the domestic actors responsible for this stateless nation-building.

2.3 The Limits of Historical Institutionalism

Historical institutionalism has been the focus of the small body of research dedicated to domestic actors in paradiplomacy (see Lecours, 2002; Bursens and Deforche, 2008; Bursens and Deforche, 2010). The central argument of this approach is that paradiplomacy outcomes are the result of domestic actors’ preferences. Bursens and Deforche (2008: 27) argue these preferences directly determine the nature and intensity of a region’s international engagement, while also

noting that a regional actor's attempts to maximize its preferences may be either constrained or empowered by domestic and international variables. Although commendable in acknowledging the role of domestic actors in what is often analyzed as a purely international phenomenon, institutionalist approaches like Bursens and Deforche's suffer from several weaknesses.

First, the "regional actors" they refer to are often highly ambiguous, with no illustrative examples provided. Lecours (2002) provides a superior framework in this regard by applying historical institutionalism to an empirical case study of Wallonia. Yet Lecours still omits specific regional parties from both the theoretical framework and empirical analysis, impeding a truly micro-level analysis.

Second, historical institutionalism emphasizes how actor preferences *facilitate* paradiplomacy, but not *why* actors have particular preferences. The former is useful for providing insights into the extent of a region's international autonomy and activities, but fails to identify underlying motives for the latter.

Finally, a region's preferences are often framed exclusively as a response to the central government. Bursens and Deforche (2008: 27) hypothesize that "the more the relations between a region and the federal level are conflictual, the more the regional level will develop particular kinds of far-flung paradiplomatic activities." They apply this proposed explanation to Quebec paradiplomacy, writing that the "path of autonomous external relations was pursued further by later governments of different political parties: successive Quebec governments had the opinion that Quebec had to develop its own international policy because the federal Canadian office of foreign affairs neglected the international francophonie, which was deemed as crucial for Quebec" (Bursens and Deforche, 2010: 164).

Regional dissatisfaction with intergovernmental relations is too simplistic an explanation for both the nascence of Quebec paradiplomacy and its remarkable continuity, especially in light of the fact that the Canadian federal government has since increased its commitment to francophone international affairs. It is certainly reasonable to assume that relations with the central government may either constrain or empower a regional party's paradiplomacy agenda, but an intergovernmental relations angle (Balthazar, 1999; Keating, 1999; Bursens and Deforche, 2008; Albina, 2010; Lequesne and Paquin, 2017) overlooks the more salient dynamics of *intra-periphery* party competition. According to Lecours and Moreno (2003: 267), a focus on multi-level politics and federalism also “marginalizes the importance of nationalism in explaining the breadth, scope and intensity of a region's international activities in [multinational states] and its absence, or lesser prominence, in [nation-states].”

It would be misleading to assert that institutionalization has not played a role in Quebec paradiplomacy. As previously discussed, the Gerin-Lajoie doctrine, the 1965 policy speech legitimizing Quebec's modern paradiplomacy, has become institutionalized by virtue of all major parties adhering to its tenets. According to Bélanger (2002: 200), the central argument of the doctrine and its underlying rationale is that “Quebec is the political instrument of a cultural group, distinct and unique in greater North America [...] the relative consistency with which this dimension of the Doctrine has been repeated by successive governments in Quebec is remarkable.”

2.4 Free Trade as an Issue in Paradiplomacy

The connection between minority nationalism, paradiplomacy and regional party politics is most effectively explored in research concerning Quebec's cross-party support of free trade (Martin, 1995; Meadwell and Martin, 1996; Shulman, 2000). The ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993 was greatly facilitated by Quebec's political parties demonstrating unanimous endorsement (Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005: 84), with Martin (1995: 3) going so far as to note that "a consensus on free trade between Quebec political parties has endured since 1988."

Shulman (2000: 375) reinforces this evaluation, writing that "only in the 1980s and 1990s have free trade and continental integration become dominant themes of separatist and autonomist nationalism in Quebec." According to both authors, this cross-party commitment to free trade is not coincidental; on the contrary, it is the direct result of both the PQ and PLQ promoting themselves as nationalist parties, albeit with distinctively different visions of what this should entail for Quebec. Martin (1995: 2) provides a convincing explanation for this party convergence:

Quebec did not embrace free trade in spite of its nationalism; it endorsed free trade largely because of its nationalism. Because nationalism is the core issue of party competition in Quebec, parties define their position on secondary issues in terms of how outcomes can affect their nationalist goals [...] thus, the bipartisan consensus and the high level of support for free trade in Quebec was a consequence of the partisan pursuit of nationalist goals.

The premise underlying Martin's argument is that both the PQ and PLQ are nationalist parties, in the sense that both promote themselves as the legitimate defenders of Quebec's "national" interests. The parties differ mainly in whether this would be achieved through eventual separation or continued autonomy, a dichotomy which he aptly characterizes as "the 'two faces' of Quebec nationalism" (Martin, 1995: 2). Shulman's (2000: 369) definition of nationalism as "the promotion of the autonomy, unity and identity of the nation" is particularly beneficial because it caters to both the secessionist and federalist visions of Quebec nationalism. Free trade and economic integration enjoy bipartisan support in Quebec due to the perceived benefits it offers the province's autonomy (Shulman, 2000: 375). Free trade equally represents a marriage of paradiplomacy's political and economic motives.

Meadwell and Martin (1996) expand on the relationship between nationalism and free trade by analyzing how support for the latter leads to nationalist mobilization. The authors postulate a theoretical explanation for the same bipartisan consensus on free trade identified by Shulman. They argue that economic integration includes elements of identity formation and institution building, both of which act as 'enabling conditions' for nationalist movements to mobilize (Meadwell and Martin, 1996: 69). For this reason, both major parties in Quebec have supported free trade to advance their respective nationalist agendas, with the main distinction being the PQ's belief that current economic interdependence would ease a future transition to independence. Meadwell and Martin's theoretical explanation is, however, somewhat constrained by their lack of clarity in explicitly stating whether this bipartisan consensus for free trade predates public support, or vice versa.

Although primarily concerned with disproving the implied incompatibility between nationalism and free trade, Shulman, Martin and Meadwell's contributions provide valuable insights regarding how and why internationally-oriented issues tend to enjoy a high degree of cross-party support in Quebec, to the extent that Balthazar (2004: 470) has characterized Quebec's international relations as "the perpetual rediscovery of the economy by each succeeding government."

2.5 Partisan Orientations Towards Quebec Paradiplomacy

This nuanced understanding of the nature of nationalism is ironically absent from works more explicitly concerned with comparing the Quebec parties' approaches to paradiplomacy. The characterization of the PQ as "the" nationalist party - to the exclusion of the federalist PLQ - perpetuates the false impression that it is the only party interested in stateless nation-building, and by extension, that stateless nation-building is pursued only as a precursor to eventual independence, rather than as an end to itself.

Characterizing Quebec's paradiplomacy according to the ideology of the incumbent ruling party is a theme present throughout the paradiplomacy literature. Kuznetsov (2015: 107) acknowledges that "the political ideology of the particular regional party can determine the intensity and the course of subnational involvement in international affairs." Four years after Quebec's first independence referendum, Duchacek (1984: 18) would observe that Quebec's international activities tend to contain a strong separatist message during periods of PQ power. Although he refers to Quebec's diplomatic offices as "proto-embassies," Duchacek (1984: 22) emphasizes that these "were initiated by the Liberal opponents of PQ separatism and would no

doubt continue in a modified network if the Liberals come back to power.” These observations, although limited by a lack of supporting evidence and elaboration of what the implied “modifications” would entail, are expanded upon in later research.

Keating (1999) supports the observation that Quebec’s paradiplomacy is influenced by party ideology. He also elaborates on the apparent paradox of the PLQ pursuing a more aggressive paradiplomacy than its separatist rival. Keating (1999: 12) claims that this discrepancy is due to the PLQ perceiving paradiplomacy as an instrument of stateless nation-building, bypassing the need to make difficult constitutional changes. This is contrasted by the PQ’s prioritization of achieving independence in order to permit a full external diplomatic presence. The implication that the PLQ is less interested in stateless nation-building than the PQ is somewhat misleading, but Keating is overall correct in asserting that paradiplomacy serves a more immediate end for an autonomy-seeking party than one which has independence as its eventual goal.

More recent studies of Quebec paradiplomacy tend to focus on its macro-level consistency than micro-level partisan fluctuations. Nossal and his co-authors (2015: 354) claim that Quebec is unique among other Canadian provinces in that its paradiplomacy includes a substantial identity dimension, in addition to the usual functional considerations, noting that “only Quebec is driven by the quest for identity and by what is called the national project,” while also emphasizing that this goal is not only sought by sovereigntists. The latter is why they believe emphasizing paradiplomacy as a tool for secession is inappropriate: “overall the international activities of the provincial government have been aimed at securing not

independence for Quebec as a sovereign state, but a paradiplomacy that strengthens Quebec identity” (ibid).

2.6 Conclusion: Taking Stock of the Literature

The lack of comprehensive theoretical frameworks is the greatest impediment to our understanding of why regions go abroad (Kuznetsov, 2015). By extension, there is also a lack of hypotheses specifying under what conditions what kind of regions will develop what kind of activities (Bursens and Deforche, 2010: 153). These shortcomings are particularly evident in cases of identity paradiplomacy such as Quebec, where nationalism is acknowledged as the main causal factor, but has yet to be operationalized for empirical testing.

Nationalism evidently plays a substantial role in determining the nature and intensity of a region’s paradiplomatic activities, but its role as an underlying *motive* of a region’s international engagement remains unclear. This is largely due to the lack of micro-level analyses specifically treating regional parties as paradiplomacy actors. The small body of research accounting for the international activities undertaken by regional parties suffers from three limitations.

First, the majority of this already small body of literature is dedicated to only two parties (the PLQ and PQ) in only one region (Quebec). Although this focus is reflective of Quebec’s status as the most studied case of paradiplomacy, the trade-off is a lack of breadth across other regions and their respective parties. Second, such studies have been conducted through a distinctively intergovernmental lens, by analyzing how relations between a ruling regional party and its central counterpart may constrain or empower a paradiplomatic agenda. This focus on the centre-periphery overlooks the dynamics of *intra*-periphery party relations. In a similar vein,

scholars have succeeded in making some descriptive contrasts between the regional parties' paradiplomacy activities, but fail to provide theoretical explanations for their positioning vis-à-vis one another. Specifically, the literature struggles to reconcile regional parties' ideological divergence on the National Question with their convergence on sustaining and expanding paradiplomatic activities.

The difficulty in operationalizing nationalism is a reflection of its frequent mischaracterization in the paradiplomacy literature. The tendency to conflate nationalism with separatism is noted succinctly by Criekemans (2010: 6), who reflects that nationalism as a variable "is often misinterpreted - what some understand as being nationalism (or worse, separatism) might rather be evaluated by others as a form of 'identity politics.'"

A case in point is the implicit or explicit designation of the PQ as "the" nationalist party in Quebec, to the exclusion of its federalist rival, the PLQ. In reality, *all* major parties may be considered ideologically nationalist by virtue of their shared belief that Quebec is a distinct, minority polity, requiring substantial autonomy from the majority centre. The nature and extent of this autonomy - specifically whether it takes the form of continued federalism or eventual secession - is the basis of the National Question in Quebec. Despite having diverging preferences about the constitutional future of Quebec, parties demonstrate a shared commitment to stateless nation-building, as well as its international dimension, paradiplomacy.

As illustrated by Martin's (1995) and Shulman's (2000) analyses of cross-party support for free trade, paradiplomacy is perceived and subsequently employed by regional parties as a means of projecting Quebec's internal autonomy (Tavares, 2016). The essential importance of paradiplomacy to Quebec and its regional parties has been likened by some to "oxygen" (Nossal

et al., 2015: 372). One is therefore presented with a strong case for treating paradiplomacy not simply as an international phenomenon, but as a policy issue in regional party competition. This thesis aims to ameliorate paradiplomacy's theory gap by applying a theoretical framework grounded in party competition for issue ownership.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Theoretical Framework: Valence Issues and Party Competition

Valence theory argues that certain decisive political issues are consensual, meaning that parties and voters demonstrate agreement over desirable policy goals (Stokes, 1963; Petrocik, 1996). Egan (2013: 18) emphasizes that *goals* and *issues* must be treated as distinct concepts in valence theory, defining an *issue* as “a related set of public debates about a goal- including the extent to which the goal is desirable, the policies best suited for achieving it, and the performance of the goal on those running the government, as well as how much the goal should be prioritized compared to others.” In this sense, it is not issues themselves which enjoy consensus, but the goals underlying such issues.

Identifying the goal at the centre of the issue is the first step in determining whether an issue may be characterized as valence (Egan, 2013: 20). The second step involves the application of what Egan (*ibid*) terms the *ceteris paribus* criterion: “Is there a consensus that the goal is (1) desirable and (2) the responsibility of government, all other things being equal?”

Cross-party consensus on an end goal does not necessarily mean that competing parties will demonstrate identical levels of commitment, strategies, or most importantly, policy positions (Bélanger et al. 2018: 20). On the contrary, a party will manipulate its positioning on the issue in an effort to differentiate itself from rival parties. This deliberate manipulation serves the purpose of demonstrating to voters that it is the most capable and legitimate defender of a particular issue- *that it owns the issue* (Petrocik, 1996). Green and Jennings (2017: 13) write that:

[...] for a party to gain ‘ownership’ of an issue, it should be closer to the preferences of a particular issue public that cares about this issue, it should take (or have taken) a greater interests in the issue than another party and it should be recognized as the party most likely to handle the issue well and deliver on it.

The father of valence theory, Stokes (1963) argues that perceptions of party ownership are partially explicable by the presence of several dimensions of political conflict. This conflict is conceptualized by Budge and Farlie (1983: 269-270) as two alternate views of confrontation: *opposing preferences* and *selective emphases*. Opposing preferences refers to the practice of parties proposing different policies on the same issue, whereas selective emphases refers to parties emphasizing different issues. The authors argue in favour of the selective emphases approach. Parties will choose to emphasize the issues they are most perceived to own, while surrendering ownership of issues they are weaker on to rival parties.

Valence issues result from the linkage of parties with conditions that are either negatively or positively valued by the electorate (Stokes, 1963: 373). The *timing* of these conditions also plays a role in determining perceptions of ownership, with Stokes (ibid) emphasizing that in future or potential conditions, “the argument turns on which party, given possession of the government, is the more likely to bring it about.” Petrocik (1996: 826) analyzes how a candidate - particularly one with track records as incumbent - frames voters’ choice as a decision between who is better able to remedy salient problems. Petrocik thus departs from Stokes and Budge and Farlie by emphasizing that valence politics is more concerned with issue *problems* than with policy solutions.

The sources of pressure in issue competition may be conceptualized along two distinct but interrelated dimensions:

1. *The vertical dimension*, in which pressure from voters forces a party to assume a stance.
2. *The horizontal dimension*, in which pressure from other parties forces issue positioning.³

In line with valence theory, Meguid (2008: 27) stresses that party ownership of an issue is not fixed. The vertical dimension includes three conditions for voter support in situations of issue-based competition (Meguid, 2008: 24):

1. The party's issue is considered salient, or important.
2. The party's position on a given issue is attractive.
3. The party is perceived to be the rightful "owner" of that policy stance.

These conditions emphasize that a central element of issue ownership is voters' perceptions of party competence (Green, 2007). Bélanger and his co-authors (2018: 15) similarly argue that the general state of public opinion is one of three factors in a party's issue positioning manipulation. The other two factors are a party's previous position on the issue and the current position of its competitors, which relate respectively, to credibility and the horizontal dimension.

3.2 Paradiplomacy: a Valence Issue in Quebec Politics?

The National Question is evidently the main valence issue in Quebec politics. Although parties diverge in their constitutional preferences regarding Quebec's future, they converge on

³ In light of the lack of precedent applying valence theory to paradiplomacy, this work will limit its focus to the horizontal, party dimension, rather than the vertical, voter dimension.

the central objective of defending Quebec's interests as a distinct nation. The nature of protecting and promoting Quebec's identity is consensual, causing all parties to support this objective (Bélanger et al., 2018: 24), which involves a complex mix of interrelated policy issues, including the economy, culture and language rights (Bélanger et al., 2018: 21). The National Question may therefore be considered a policy *theme* of issues (Guinaudeau and Persico, 2014), and given its outsized importance in Quebec politics, a *super-issue* (Green and Jennings, 2017).

It is reasonable to assume that paradiplomacy is a valence issue in Quebec, by virtue of its inclusion in the National Question theme. International relations has historically borne little electoral salience to Quebec's voters or its parties (Michaud, 2006), as provincial elections tend to focus exclusively on domestic rather than international issues (Michaud, 2006: 380; Lecours, 2008: 13). As a case in point, the PLQ's 1960 platform did not include international issues (Payette, 2011), despite the early part of the decade representing the beginning of Quebec's paradiplomacy era (Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005: 78). Bélanger et al. (2018: 74) likewise observe that international issues such as supranationalism receive comparatively little attention from Quebec parties.

However, these parties *do* perceive international activities positively as a means of developing more regional autonomy (ibid). The authors' conclusion is nearly identical to Tavares' (2016) observation that paradiplomacy is useful in developing and projecting an autonomous minority identity. Paradiplomacy may therefore be conceptualized as *the international dimension of minority nationalism*. Like the broader National Question, paradiplomacy is a multidimensional composite of economic, cultural and political motives (Conversi, 1997; Keating, 1999; Kuznetsov, 2015). In Quebec, it encompasses policies as diverse

as free trade and foreign investment, the protection and promotion of Quebec's unique culture and French language, educational exchanges, and environmental protection.

Furthermore, paradiplomacy meets Egan's (2013) two criteria for valence issues: (1) desirability of a goal, and (2) responsibility of a government. The utility of paradiplomacy for stateless nation-building holds wide appeal to Quebec's nationalist electorate, and cuts across their divergent constitutional preferences. Voters also perceive the provincial government to be both more capable and more willing to advance Quebec's "national" interests abroad (Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005) than a central government which does not account for Quebec's specificity (Conversi, 1997: 131-132).

3.3 Hypotheses

This thesis is concerned with how two independent variables, party competition and nationalism, influence party support of paradiplomacy as a dependent variable. Four hypotheses may be extrapolated from the application of valence theory to paradiplomacy:

H1: Both parties take pro-paradiplomacy positions.

Although paradiplomacy receives relatively little electoral attention *on its own*, it becomes highly salient when conceptualized as the international dimension of the National Question. Given that the latter is a "super issue" composed of multiple policy dimensions, parties must compete on them all in order to be perceived by voters as the most legitimate "owner" of the broader National Question.

I do not expect that international relations receives a significant amount of attention from either party, but that both parties *do* converge around the most competitive position to assume: *more* paradiplomacy. This “ideal” position is determined by voters. Quebec’s nationalist electorate demonstrates a preference for an ever-increasing international presence, due to the perception of paradiplomacy promoting Quebec’s unique interests abroad. A party *must* take competitive stances on these constituent issues - including paradiplomacy - as *not* doing so would result in the party being out-bid by rival parties (Guinaudeau and Persico, 2014; Green and Jennings, 2017). The status quo or decreasing Quebec’s international presence are therefore unviable positions for competing parties to pursue.

H2: Parties emphasize different motives for paradiplomacy.

Both parties agree on the end goal of increasing Quebec’s international presence, but emphasize different motives for paradiplomatic action. Paradiplomacy and the National Question are both multidimensional issues underlined by economic, cultural and political motives (Conversi, 1997; Keating, 1999; Kuznetsov, 2015). My expectation of which party emphasizes which paradiplomacy motive is informed by how each party tends to frame Quebec nationalism. I expect the PLQ to primarily frame paradiplomacy as *economically* beneficial for Quebec. Emphasizing the economic dimension of paradiplomacy - particularly Quebec’s trade relationship with the United States - serves to reinforce voters’ broad perceptions of the PLQ as the most competent party on economic issues (Bélanger and Gélineau, 2011). By the same logic, I expect the PQ to place a greater emphasis on the *cultural* dimension of paradiplomacy, due to the perception of the PQ as the most competent defender of the French language (Bélanger et al.,

2018). The PQ will therefore place more emphasis on the necessity of expanding Quebec's engagement with France and the global *Francophonie*.

H3: The federalist Parti Libéral du Québec (PLQ) demonstrates a greater emphasis on paradiplomacy than the sovereigntist Parti Québécois (PQ).

Parties converge around the same broad pole of more paradiplomacy, but differ in how strongly they emphasize the issue. Paradoxical to conventional logic, I expect that a federalist - not a sovereigntist - party displays the strongest commitment to paradiplomacy. Understanding the extent to which issue ownership changes - or not - over time may be indicative of where issue ownership originally derives from (Egan, 2013: 54). There are three main reasons to presume that international relations policy is "owned" by the PLQ rather than the PQ.

First, the PLQ benefits from ownership of the 1965 Gérin-Lajoie doctrine. This foundational document, developed by a provincial PLQ Cabinet minister, coincided with the beginning of Quebec's modern paradiplomacy era, legitimized its international activities, and continues to be upheld by all parties. The PLQ is therefore able to claim an earlier, more enduring commitment to paradiplomacy than the PQ.

Second, Quebec's status as the most internationally active sub-state region in the world has been achieved *within the existing federal system*. This fact allows the PLQ to argue that its preference for federalism is not an impediment to Quebec's pursuit of a strong international engagement. By extension, the PQ's *raison d'être* of independence is not a prerequisite for such engagement, and would in fact require unnecessary, difficult constitutional changes.

Third, Quebec's paradiplomacy underwent an intense period of expansion in the early 2000s, under PLQ Premier Jean Charest. The personality of politicians has been identified as a factor in the foreign policy development of sub-state entities (Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005; Michaud, 2006). Although public opinion on issue competence is considered distinct from public opinion about leader strengths and weaknesses (Green and Jennings, 2017: 3), Charest's leadership in this regard strengthened the perception of the PLQ as highly competent to manage Quebec's international interests (Jeyabalaratnam and Paquin, 2016). Strikingly, Charest's unmatched success in promoting Quebec's international interests has even been acknowledged by rival parties and elites (ibid).

It is therefore in the PLQ's interest to stress its commitment to paradiplomacy, as doing so almost always works in the owning party's favour (Budge and Farlie, 1983: 271). There is a central debate in valence theory regarding the best strategy for a *non*-owning party. Budge and Farlie (ibid) argue that it is more viable for the non-owning party to *divert* attention from one issue to another. For the PQ, this means emphasizing that eventual statehood would enable Quebec to have a "full" diplomatic presence in the world, rather than an existing paradiplomacy, constrained by a hostile federal government (Conversi, 1997: 131-132).

Tresch et al. (2015) propose an alternative strategy for a non-owning party: emphasizing issues which the party *does* have a reputation of owning, thereby reinforcing voters' perceptions of the party as the "associative owner" of an issue it is otherwise weaker on. Holian's (2004) earlier research finds that a non-owning party may use well-crafted rhetoric to successfully ameliorate voters' perceptions of its issue ownership. Engagement, rather than avoidance, offers the non-owning party the possibility of "stealing" an issue from the historical owning rival party.

As discussed in H2, the PQ may leverage its ownership of French language protection by attempting to frame paradiplomacy ownership along cultural terms, rather than the economic terms emphasized by the PLQ.

The arrival of a new party in the system acts as a catalyst for such issue trespassing and stealing (Bélanger, 2003). As Bélanger (2003: 553) notes, “the goal of gaining such issue ownership advantages might in turn generate battles of reputation between old and new parties.” The PLQ’s ownership of international issues was largely unchallenged during the nascent paradiplomacy era of the Quiet Revolution. However, the emergence of the PQ in 1970 galvanized the PLQ to strengthen its paradiplomacy emphases, as the PQ would attempt to challenge its credibility on international issues in subsequent campaigns.

H4: The salience of paradiplomacy to parties has increased since the 1960s.

In addition to salience across *parties*, this work is interested in paradiplomacy’s overall salience across *time*. I expect that Quebec’s paradiplomacy has become increasingly more salient to parties over fifty years. There are two reasons to support this expectation. First, the acceleration and intensification of Quebec’s international engagement since the 1960s (Kirkey et al., 2016: 136) has resulted in paradiplomacy being institutionalization as a norm. Second, globalization has strengthened this institutionalization, by “internationalizing” formerly domestic policy areas such as education and environmental protection. As Green and Jennings (2017: 8) stress, “issues *become* about competence when the politics of time makes them so [and] are only valence issues when the terms of political debate and public evaluations become about management, trust, delivery and competence.”

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Testing the aforementioned hypotheses is confronted by both theoretical and methodological concerns. Valence theory suffers from a lack of clarity regarding what constitutes “ownership” of an issue, and equally as important, how to measure it (Green and Jennings, 2017: 3). A central theoretical debate among valence scholars remains whether party ownership of an issue is stable or volatile, with Green and Jennings (2017: 16) arguing that the view of long-term, invariant ownership is incorrect. Such measurement concerns are not unique to valence theory. Paradiplomacy research is limited by a complete lack of comprehensive data sets for regional foreign policy competencies (Blatter et al., 2008: 469), rendering attempts to quantify the phenomenon largely unsuccessful (Kuznetsov, 2015: 11).

Qualitative approaches, particularly case studies, continue to be the preferred method in paradiplomacy research. As discussed in the literature review, these macro-level studies primarily treat regions as the units of analysis, overlooking domestic actors including regional parties, institutions and elites. Furthermore, such case studies have rarely been grounded in sound theoretical frameworks, and therefore lack theoretically-driven hypotheses (Blatter et al., 2008: 469). Past studies are descriptive in providing an inventory of a particular region’s foreign activities, but fail to propose and test *causal explanations*. This work innovates on the purely qualitative approach to paradiplomacy through a mixed-methods research design. A qualitative and quantitative content analysis of party manifestos will be undertaken to analyze the nature and frequency of regional parties’ discourses on paradiplomacy.

4.2 Case Selection

Given the lack of precedent applying valence theory to paradiplomacy, this work will limit its empirical focus to a single regional case study of Quebec. Although this limitation means a lack of comparative breadth across regions, the positive trade-off is a deeper analysis of Quebec as the world's most advanced case of paradiplomacy. Furthermore, there is reason to argue that conclusions from this particular case would be generalizable to other minority nations such as Catalonia or Flanders, as they all share key characteristics including strong nationalist movements, sustained paradiplomatic engagement, and multi-party systems with both pro-union and pro-sovereignty parties.

The rationale underlying the selection of Quebec as a regional case is grounded in two interrelated considerations: the periodization of its paradiplomacy and significance to the broader paradiplomacy literature. Quebec was the first region to develop a coordinated international presence in the late 1960s, which is considered a distinct historic period defined in terms of growth, dynamism, and its repercussions on the international behaviour and activities of sovereign players (Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005). Catalonia and the Basque Country would follow suit in the early 1980s (Segura, 2017), while Flanders' and Wallonia's now-extensive international activities did not begin until the mid-1990s (Lecours and Moreno, 2003). In addition to marking the beginning of the current paradiplomacy era, Quebec was the first case to attract scholarly attention in the 1970s (Kuznetsov, 2015). This outsized focus in the literature continues to endure, with Aguirre (1992: 202) observing that:

Historically, the case [of] Quebec has played, throughout North American academic literature, the role of a unique and outstanding internationally ‘centrifugal’ [...] paradigm inside the intensively studied field of federal political systems’ foreign policy processes.

Bélanger (2002: 197) places the essence of this distinctiveness in a global context:

In spite of certain fluctuations in its priorities [...] Quebec’s paradiplomacy has been sustained for forty years by an institutionalized and coherent policy that contrasts sharply with the instability and contingency that would generally characterize similar experiments carried out elsewhere in the world.

Now in its fifth decade, Quebec’s paradiplomacy provides the largest amount of relevant primary data to analyze. Within this single regional case, a comparative analysis of Quebec parties’ discourses on paradiplomacy will be undertaken. The empirical analysis will focus on the two parties which exemplify divergent positions on Quebec’s constitutional future: the sovereigntist Parti Québécois (PQ), and the federalist Parti Libéral du Québec (PLQ). Concurrent with the beginning of Quebec’s modern paradiplomacy in the 1960s, there has been wholesale alternation between the PQ and PLQ, with no third parties succeeding in either forming a government or gaining official opposition status. The PQ and PLQ therefore possess the most extensive - and only - records of international engagement as both ruling and opposition parties.

4.3 Data and Methods

There is an extensive precedent of content analysis in valence issue research (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Egan, 2013; Bélanger et al., 2018; etc). By contrast, content analysis is a method which has not been previously used in paradiplomacy research. This work takes particular inspiration from Bélanger et al.'s *The National Question and Electoral Politics in Quebec and Scotland* (2018), which analyzes the National Question as a valence issue in sub-state politics. I innovate and extend on their research context by analyzing paradiplomacy as a multidimensional valence issue, constituent to the equally multidimensional National Question.

Manifestos constitute the primary source of data in the content analysis. Party literature documents provide the clearest reflection of a party's position on an issue, as well as how this position is communicated to voters (Budge et al., 2001). Unlike government documents such as white papers or action plans, party literature is explicitly partisan, reflecting the views of a particular party rather than those of a region as a whole. Whenever possible, preference is given to analyzing party manifestos rather than party programmes. While the latter provides a broad overview of a party's future governing priorities, the former is more concerned with disseminating a party's positions on electoral issues to voters during campaigns. The timeline of 1956-2014 results in a total of 16 elections and 30 manifestos. Crucially, this six decade period encompasses nearly the entire modern era of Quebec's paradiplomacy.

These data are coded according to a custom set of pre-determined words and phrases.⁴ The selection of French language words chosen for this "dictionary" is largely informed by how best to capture paradiplomacy's multifaceted motives, particularly those which are specific to the

⁴ A copy of the coding dictionary is included in the appendix.

Quebec case (i.e. “la Francophonie” reflects a cultural motive; “free trade” reflects an economic one). The dictionary also reflects the expected importance of Quebec’s most important partner states (i.e. France and the United States) and their respective continents (i.e. Europe and North America). Coding manifestos is the most appropriate method of determining the two dimensions of a valence issue: (1) a party’s positioning on an issue, and (2) the issue’s salience. Taken together, positioning and salience elucidate the relative and absolute importance of international affairs to each party, and by extension, how these positions are communicated to voters.

The empirical analysis of the hypotheses is divided into two sections, each corresponding to a different type of coding. The first section uses manual coding to elucidate the direction of paradiplomacy proposed. Specifically, the expectation that both parties propose similar paradiplomacy positions (H1) is tested, as is the expectation that different parties emphasize different motives (H2). Manual coding is used to gain a nuanced understanding of the *nature* of each party’s approach to international relations, what each party attempts to accomplish through paradiplomacy, and how these discourses are communicated to voters. Discourse analysis is used to analyze the most salient excerpts of party literature, in order to determine how patterns in paradiplomacy discourses emerge and change across time and party.

The depth of the first section is then complemented by the breadth of automated coding in the second section. NVivo, a computer software program designed for document analysis, is used to automatically code the data. Automated coding facilitates an understanding of broad patterns in the *frequency* of different paradiplomacy discourses across both time and party, and is useful to cross-validate and expand upon the qualitative findings. The quantitative section elaborates on testing the salience of paradiplomacy motives across parties and time (H2), as well

as testing the overall salience of paradiplomacy discourses to each party (H3), and across time (H4). The findings of the combined mixed-methods approach are then discussed in the context of this work's four hypotheses.

Chapter 5: Empirical Analysis

5.1 Qualitative Analysis

5.1.1 Limited Economic Motives in Early Paradiplomacy, 1950s-1960s

It is clear that international issues greatly lacked salience to the PLQ during the fifteen year period from the end of the Great Darkness to the emergence of the Quiet Revolution. As a case in point, the party's 1956 manifesto contains only a single mention of international affairs, in the form of encouraging artistic and scientific exchanges between Quebec, other Canadian provinces, and unspecified foreign countries (Parti libéral du Québec, 1956: 24). It emerges that international relations during this time were not perceived by the party as a policy issue in its own right, but rather as an extension of intergovernmental relations.

Although similarly limited in scope, the PLQ's discourses on international relations throughout the 1960s demonstrate a gradual shift from cultural to economic motives. The 1960 manifesto declares that "the Ministry of Commerce and Industry will have greater power [...] to establish commercial agencies in Europe and elsewhere"⁵ (Parti libéral du Québec, 1960: 14), while the 1966 manifesto promises even more forcefully that "our foreign delegations will intensify their promotion of the commercial relations and will more effectively seek the foreign capital we continue to need for Quebec's increased industrialization" (Parti libéral du Québec, 1966: 24).

Although the explicit linkage of paradiplomacy to the economic dimension of nation-building is a recurring theme throughout future PLQ party literature, this discourse lacked consistency in the decade it was first introduced. Foreign investment is absent from the party's

⁵ All translations are my own.

1962 manifesto, a curious omission given that it was present in both the 1960 and 1966 manifestos. In fact, the 1962 manifesto does not include *any* reference to Quebec's place in the world, instead focussing on Quebec's place within the Canadian confederation.

It is equally striking that the 1966 manifesto fails to make any reference to Paul Gérin-Lajoie, given his partisan membership, the fact that his doctrine had been established only a year prior, and would, with hindsight, represent a watershed moment in the ongoing evolution of Quebec's paradiplomacy. It becomes apparent that Quebec's early paradiplomacy was motivated mainly by functional concerns such as economic growth. The identitary dimension, which has come to distinguish it from the international engagement of other Canadian provinces and the American states (Nossal et al., 2015), was still limited in scope during the 1960s. There was, however, a political dimension to Quebec paradiplomacy during this time, as it was perceived by the PLQ as a means of reinforcing and strengthening Quebec's autonomy from the federal government.

5.1.2 Emergence of the PQ and Political Motives, 1970s-1980s

Despite the academic literature's designation of the 1960s as the beginning of Quebec's modern paradiplomacy era, an empirical analysis of *party* literature reveals that the 1970s represent a far more intense period in terms of partisan interest in paradiplomacy, in no small part due to the emergence of the PQ as an - at times successful - challenger to the PLQ. The PLQ's initiation of Quebec's paradiplomacy in the 1960s is not reflected in its campaign literature. Dedicated sections for international positions and strategies do not appear in its party

literature until the 1970 election. Furthermore, no such sections are included in its 1981, 1994 or 2014 manifestos.

By contrast, the PQ's very first election manifesto includes a section on "Foreign Policy and Defence," and the party would include designated sections on international affairs in all but one of its subsequent campaign manifestos. The emergence of a new sovereigntist party in the 1970s is reflected in the emergence of explicitly political motives for paradiplomacy. The PQ's earliest manifestos are particularly striking for how the party frames international affairs vis-à-vis the pursuit of Quebec's independence, beginning by asking voters the rhetorical question "Quebecers, do you want to participate in international exchanges without interference?" (Parti Québécois, 1970: 29). In this sense, the PQ does not outline a position on *paradiplomacy*, but rather its vision of "full" diplomacy for a hypothetically independent Quebec. The implicit message communicated to voters is that Quebec's full international presence may only be achieved within the context of secession.

Paradiplomacy's political motives are not addressed in the federalist PLQ's 1970 manifesto. Rather, the party continues to emphasize economic motives, noting that "while maintaining Quebec's privileged relations with French-speaking states in the domain of cultural exchanges, it is essential to accentuate the economic vocation of our general delegations abroad, in order to support the work which will be done at home to create new jobs" (Parti libéral du Québec, 1970: 44).

Campaign literature from the 1970 election illustrates how the two parties's paradiplomacy discourses both diverge and converge, and provide an early indication of future patterns. As expected in H1, both parties did - and would continue in future campaigns - take

exclusively pro-paradiplomacy positions, advocating for increased international engagement. With both parties noting that Quebec has “privileged relations” with other francophone states (Parti Québécois, 1970: 29; Parti libéral du Québec, 1970: 44), cultural motives for paradiplomacy become a consensual position. As expected in H2, both parties tend to frame the necessity of paradiplomacy according to different motives.

Although each party frames the linkage differently, international affairs are stressed as a means of providing domestic benefits to Quebec’s economy- for the PLQ, by increasing the economic focus of Quebec’s delegations abroad, and the PQ, by withdrawing from costly military alliances such as NATO (*ibid*). These findings illustrate Bélanger’s (2003) theory that new parties, by their very emergence, present a potential threat to older parties’ long-established ownership of certain issues. They also support the expectation laid out in H3 that the PQ would indeed attempt to challenge - rather than surrender to - the PLQ’s ownership of Quebec’s international interests.

5.1.3 Convergence on Economic and Cultural Motives, 1990s

The theme of secession as a prerequisite for Quebec’s international relations is repeated - often word for word - in the PQ’s 1973, 1976, 1981 and 1985 manifestos. Although highly consistently for fifteen years, this narrative would gradually come to be abandoned by the PQ. Beginning in the 1990s, the political dimension of paradiplomacy was de-emphasized by the PQ, in favour of the economic motives emphasized by the PLQ. This evolution from political to economic discourses has several possible explanations. The failed referenda of 1980 and 1995 may have neutralized the electoral viability of secessionist-oriented narratives. Conversely, the

negotiation and ratification of NAFTA in the 1990s, which was strongly supported by both parties (Martin, 1995; Meadwell and Martin, 1996; Shulman, 2000), augmented paradiplomacy's economic narratives. It became more electorally strategic for the PQ to compete with the PLQ for ownership of a common narrative, rather than each party previously emphasizing different motives. Such a strategy provides support for the H3 expectation that the PQ would attempt to contest the PLQ's ownership, rather than surrender to it.

5.1.4 Direct Party Competition for Issue Ownership of Paradiplomacy, 1998-2007

The convergence of parties emphasizing the same motives results in ownership of paradiplomacy being explicitly contested in three consecutive campaigns. In 1998, 2003 and 2007, ownership entailed which party promised the most aggressive international affairs stances. Not only were the PQ's residual secessionist-oriented positions unviable to pursue, they provided the PLQ with a compelling attack line:

Since the Parti Québécois came to power in 1994, the dynamics of Quebec's international relations have greatly changed. There are several reasons for this: the ministry lost some of its leaders in an ideological purge, delegations had to close their doors; the basic mission of the ministry was greatly constrained; and the premier used the Ministry of International Relations for propaganda purposes (Parti libéral du Québec, 1998: 17).

It becomes increasingly clear that decreasing Quebec's presence abroad is a highly disadvantageous position. Imposing spending cuts on the Ministry of International Relations therefore poses a great risk to the voters' perception of ownership. To contrast the decline of Quebec's paradiplomacy under the previous PQ government, the PLQ re-affirms its position on international relations according to four axes, emphasizing that Quebec's international orientation must be redefined "by relevant international actors as a whole, and not by the government alone" (ibid). The PQ's own 1998 manifesto omits discussion of international affairs. Undoubtedly, this is because the party understood it had lost credibility on the issue, and wished to emphasize ownership of other issues it believed it could still compete on. Valence theory supports the idea that the best strategy for a *non-owning* party is to divert attention from one issue to another (Budge and Farlie, 1983: 271).

The 2003 campaign presented an opportunity for the PQ to explicitly re-assert its paradiplomacy credibility to voters, particularly on the increasingly economic dimension:

[...] The Parti Québécois is a pioneer in this respect, as the only party interested in the effects of globalization on Quebec's future. Neither the PLQ nor the ADQ proposes a vision or a progressive policy on this subject. During a future mandate, the Parti Québécois will continue to be vigilant in ensuring that Quebec makes the best possible use of open markets (Parti Québécois, 2003: 92).

The PLQ countered this attempt to claim ownership in the 2007 campaign, by arguing to voters that "[in 2003] the PQ government pursued a policy of isolating Quebec on the Canadian stage, and weakened its international action by closing of offices abroad, which does little to reassure

our international economic partners” (Parti libéral du Québec, 2007: 64). As expected, the PLQ’s critique is accompanied by an electorally competitive promise: to increase Quebec’s influence in Canada, North America and the world (ibid).

5.1.5 Consolidation of Motives and Discourses, late 2000s-present

The interlude of partisan competition over paradiplomacy has become somewhat less pronounced in the current decade. Overall, there has been a consolidation of the patterns already discussed. Not only has the PQ’s secessionist-oriented discourses been abandoned, the party has followed the PLQ by outlining how Quebec can and should have a maximal paradiplomacy within the existing federal structure. In 2008, such positions are discussed in a section titled “Intensify our International Relations,” which includes verbs strongly reflective of pro-paradiplomacy positions: *intensify*, *increase*, *give a great importance to*, etc (Parti Québécois, 2008: 28). Likewise, the economic benefits of international action have emerged as the dominant discourse in both parties’ paradiplomacy positions. In 2014, voters were informed that:

The Parti Québécois has intensified Quebec’s international action to the benefit of businesses, universities, artists and innovators. We have revived the major economic and commercial missions in all continents, and vigorously defended the economic, commercial and political interests of Quebec in all forums (Parti Québécois, 2014: 7).

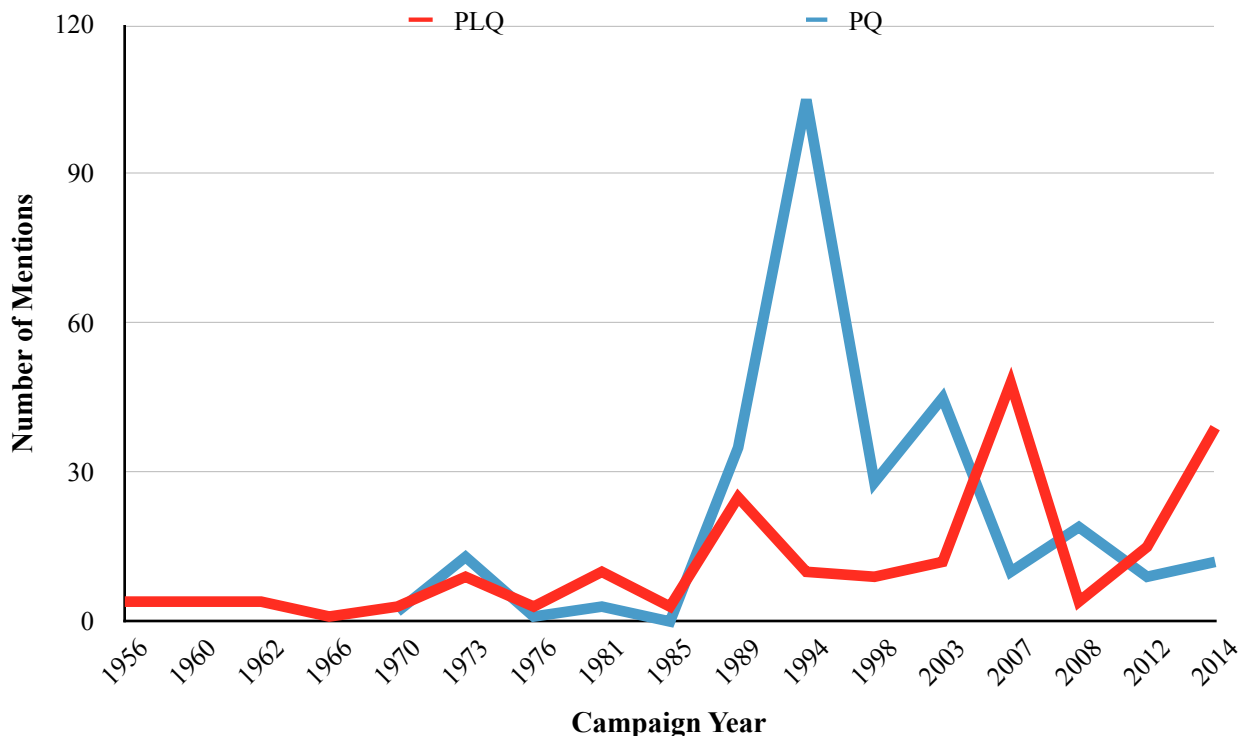
As was the case a decade earlier, the PQ was on the offensive, attempting to stress that its track record in government made it a legitimate challenger to the PLQ as an economically-minded party. Strikingly, the former party continues to lack a consistent commitment to

communicating its paradiplomacy positions. The issue was mentioned only in passing in the 2012 manifesto, and even less so in 2014. The PLQ's defeat in one election and victory in the other provides empirical support for the expectation that paradiplomacy lacks the major electoral salience of domestic policy issues, as discussed in H1. Conversely, this finding also contradicts the H4 expectation that paradiplomacy's salience has increased over time. This work's time period unfortunately excludes 2015, which marks the 50th anniversary of the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine. It remains to be seen if or how Quebec's parties, particularly the PLQ, will address this paradiplomacy milestone in their 2018 election discourses.

5.2 Quantitative Analysis

The combined salience of all dictionary terms to both parties is shown in Figure 1. The inclusion of four campaigns before the existence of the PQ is useful to demonstrate how the latter's emergence coincided with the PLQ's increased attention to paradiplomacy. As was discussed in the previous section, the arrival of a new rival party with aggressive paradiplomacy positions in the early 1970s galvanized the PLQ to devote increasing attention to its own positions. The salience of paradiplomacy to parties across time does not follow a clear trajectory. Instead, we see peaks in parties' emphasis across time. Interestingly, each party's peaks do not necessarily converge in the same campaign years; rather, the PLQ and PQ increasingly "alternate" between which party emphasizes paradiplomacy more in each campaign cycle.

Figure 1: Salience of Paradiplomacy Discourses in Manifestos, 1956-2014



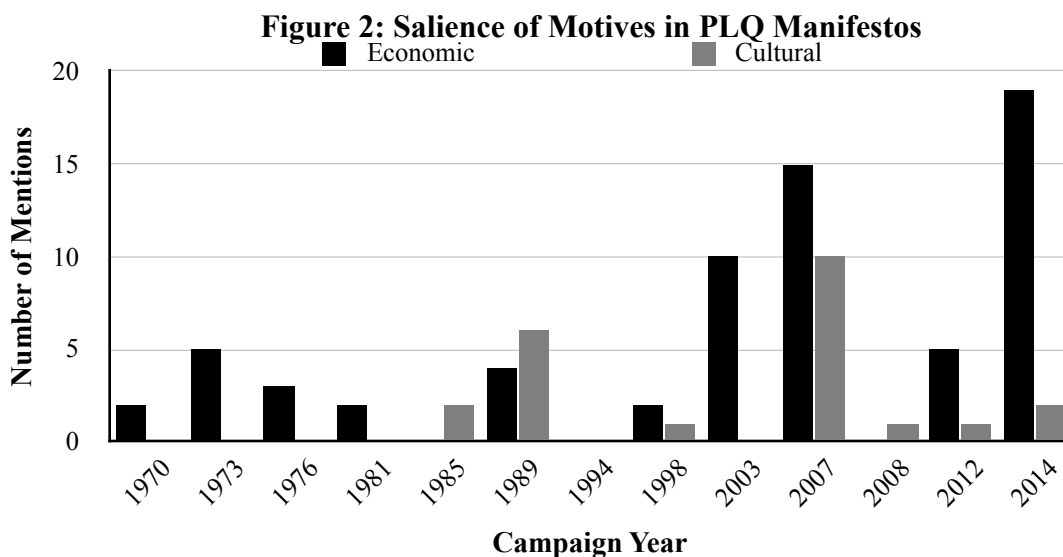
The logic underlying party competition provides a possible explanation for this alternation. A party may be *reactive* in choosing its positions on an issue and the extent to which it will emphasize them to voters. This reaction is informed by the outcome of the previous campaign, and whether the party is the incumbent or challenger- in other words, it must be on the defense or offence vis-à-vis its rivals.

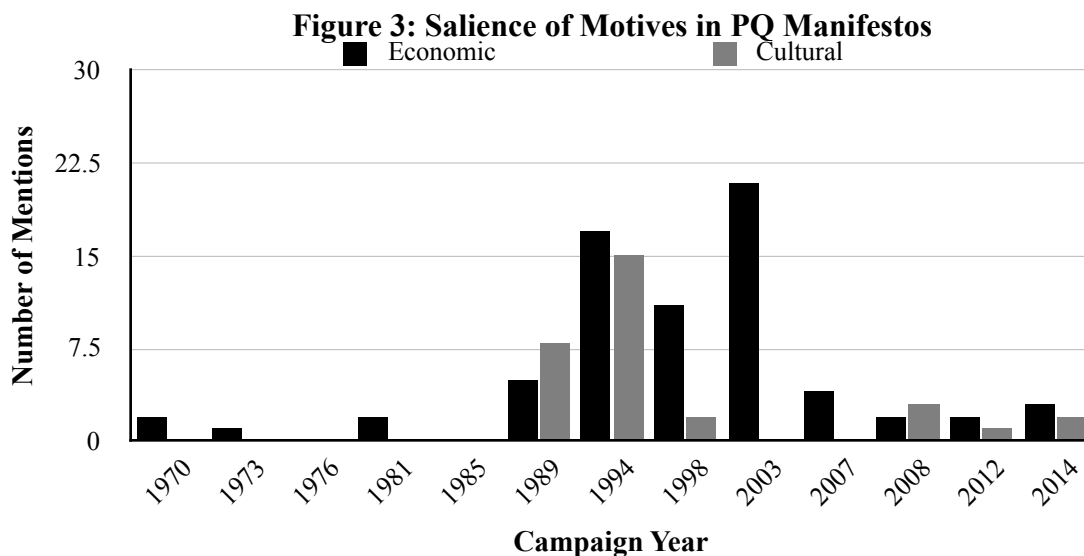
Figure 1 does not provide conclusive support for the H3 expectation that the PLQ would display significantly more emphasis on the paradiplomacy than the PQ. Compared to the PQ's exponential increases and decreases, PLQ party literature displays lower but more consistent levels of paradiplomacy salience. The 2007 peak coincides with Jean Charest's incumbency as the premier most acknowledged for his commitment to expanding Quebec's paradiplomacy

(Jeyabalaratnam and Paquin, 2016). While this salience has since slightly decreased, the PLQ's contemporary emphasis on paradiplomacy is significantly higher than in earlier decades.

Figure 1 also tempers the H4 assumption that paradiplomacy's salience to both parties has increased across time. While the issue's salience has increased *relatively* from the early paradiplomacy era of the 1960s, it has not done so in the steady, gradual manner expected. The salience of paradiplomacy to the PQ peaked in 1994; the party's manifesto during this campaign contains by far the most paradiplomacy discourses of any document analyzed. Within the context of a second independence referendum being held the following year, the stakes in 1994 were at an all-time high. The PQ faced additional pressure to emphasize to voters that it was the party most capable of defending their interests, including those on the international scene. Since this peak, PQ manifestos have gradually decreased their focus on international issues to levels slightly higher than in the 1970s.

Within the manifestos themselves, we also seen patterns in the motives underpinning paradiplomacy. Figure 2 and Figure 3 compare the parties' relative emphases on economic versus cultural motives across time, in order to test the H2 expectation that different parties emphasize different paradiplomacy motives.

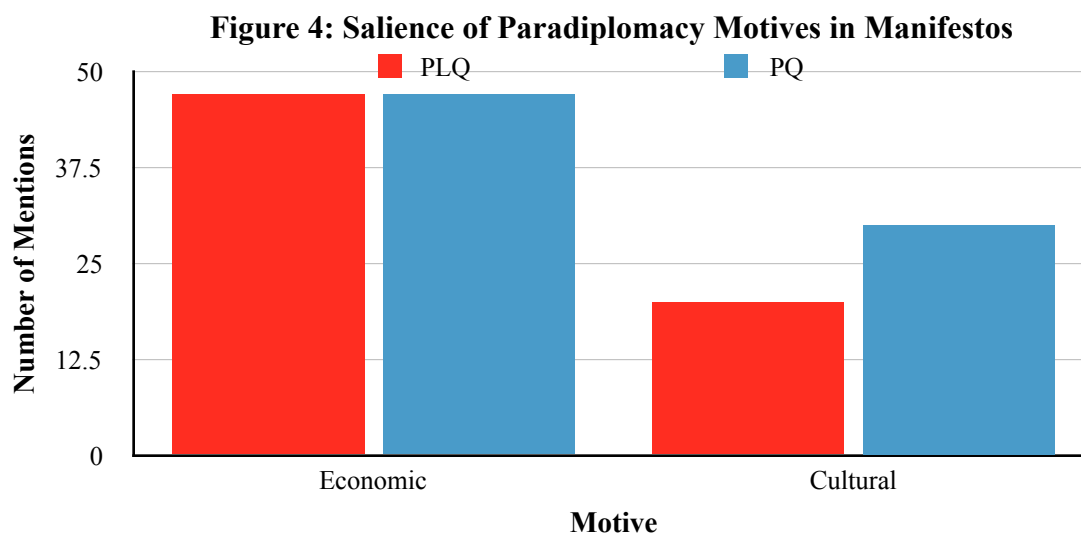




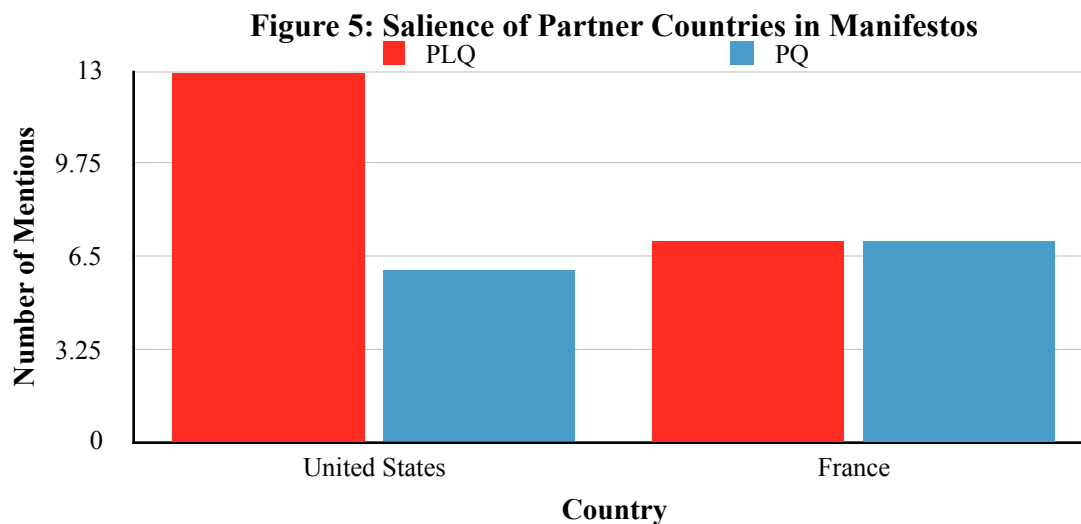
This expectation is supported, as the relative salience of economic versus cultural motives differs across both time and party. The PLQ more consistently emphasizes economic motives for paradiplomacy, particularly in 1970s and 1980s, when the PQ emerged as a viable challenging party. Although the PQ also tends to emphasize economic motives, this is a less consistent strategy, and one which peaked in the late 1980s to early 2000s- the period notable for parties' direct competition for issue ownership. Economic motives are also more salient to the parties than cultural motives in the two most recent elections, pointing to a consolidation of the economy as the most important dimension of paradiplomacy, and by extension, the dimension over which there will be the greatest level of competition for ownership.

Although relatively less salient than economic motives, cultural motives are nevertheless referenced in both parties' campaign literature. Figure 4 compares the absolute salience of each motive to each party. Within these two motives, international trade is mentioned more often by

the PLQ, and globalization more often by the PQ. Cultural motives such as pursuing stronger links with la Francophonie and its member states are emphasized significantly more by the PQ.



Parties' emphases on paradiplomacy's motives are reflected in their emphases on relationships with Quebec's two most important partner states, the United States and France, as illustrated in Figure 5. In the context of its aforementioned focus on free trade, it is unsurprising that the PLQ would make a greater number of reference - twice as many as the PQ - to a NAFTA



signatory, the United States, as well as making slightly more references to the American continent. The United States recently surpassed France as the largest recipient of Quebec's paradiplomacy expenditures (Paquin, 2016: 149), a further indication of Quebec, and its parties', focus on the economic advantages of paradiplomacy.

Given its emphasis on la Francophonie, it is surprising that the PQ does not emphasize Quebec's relationship with France more than the PLQ, nor does it make more references to the European continent. This may be explained by the fact that unlike the PLQ, the PQ's strategies surrounding which paradiplomacy motives to emphasize have undergone an evolution over several decades. Whereas the parties once emphasized different motives, drawing on existing perceptions of ownership - the PLQ as more economically-competent and the PQ as more competent in terms of language protection - the recent consolidation around economic motives has forced the PQ to test a strategy: drawing on its existing strengths and attempting to re-frame ownership of paradiplomacy in cultural terms. The empirical analysis supports the likelihood of the PQ pursuing a strategy which involves engaging with the PLQ over paradiplomacy ownership, rather than avoiding the issue altogether. This is reflective of Tresch et al.'s (2015) "engagement" strategy, rather than the "avoidance" strategy outlined by Budge and Farlie (1983).

5.3 Discussion of Results

Table 1 summarizes the four hypotheses of this work, as first laid out in the theoretical section. The nearly 60 years, 16 elections and 30 party manifestos analyzed provide support for two hypotheses, disconfirmation of one, and the necessity of further research for the final, which emerge with “mixed” results.

Table 1: Confirmation/Disconfirmation of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Result
<i>H1: Both parties take pro-paradiplomacy positions.</i>	✓
<i>H2: Parties emphasize different motives for paradiplomacy.</i>	✓
<i>H3: The federalist Parti libéral du Québec (PLQ) demonstrates a greater emphasis on paradiplomacy than the sovereigntist Parti Québécois (PQ).</i>	✗
<i>H4: The salience of paradiplomacy to parties has increased since the 1960s.</i>	mixed

The principal assumption underlying this work was that paradiplomacy is a valence issue, with both parties taking pro-paradiplomacy positions. Of the four hypotheses tested, H1 is the most strongly confirmed. A convergence around pro-paradiplomacy stances was expected, due to this position being the most attractive to Quebec’s nationalist electorate, and by extension, the most competitive vis-à-vis rival parties. In no manifesto in any campaign cycle did either party advocate for a reduction in Quebec’s international engagement, nor the status quo. The parties’ stances converge around advocating for *more* international exchanges, *more* funding to the Ministry of International Relations, a *greater* voice for Quebec on the world stages, etc.

Tellingly, the few instances of an incumbent government *reducing* Quebec's international engagement - as a result of spending cuts - are immediately denounced as "weak" by the rival party in the subsequent campaign. As expected, the latter party then advocates for increased international engagement, a calculated manipulation of paradiplomacy's "ideal" stance.

The empirical analysis also confirms the secondary expectation that paradiplomacy would receive relatively little attention from either party compared to other issues; on average, the manifesto coverage of paradiplomacy issues was 0.07% for the PLQ and 0.12% for the PQ. The PLQ - and to a lesser extent, the PQ - do consistently communicate their paradiplomacy stances in every campaign. Although coded dictionary words appear in all their manifestos, this is not necessarily accompanied by each manifesto having a section devoted to the party's international stances. However, the multidimensionality of paradiplomacy reminds us that it is an issue that is often "indirectly" salient, by virtue of being linked to other issues such as economic growth, environment protection, or cultural exchanges.

The empirical analysis also confirms that parties frame their paradiplomacy discourses around different motives, and at different points in time. The relative emphasis a party places on economic, political and cultural motives is largely informed by its issue ownership strategies, including which issues it is historically perceived to own. The PLQ has consistently drawn on its established reputation as the most economically-competent party, by framing the necessity of more paradiplomacy around economic arguments, particularly free trade with the United States. Conversely, the PQ has had to play "catch up" on emphasizing what has come to be the dominant motive of paradiplomacy, as it originally emphasized international engagement as a matter of political - or specifically, secessionist - necessity.

Contrary to the expectations of H3, the PLQ's emphasis on paradiplomacy is not decisively stronger than the PQ's. In fact, coverage of international issues was higher in PQ manifestos, and such issues were discussed by the PQ in designated paradiplomacy sections in all but one campaign year. At a more micro-level, the PQ presented a narrative of its international vision which was more consistent than the PLQ's. The factors which were anticipated to strengthen the PLQ's ownership of paradiplomacy were largely absent from the empirical analysis. Its campaign literature did not reference the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine, nor was Jean Charest's personal leadership in expanding Quebec's international outreach mentioned. It must be stressed that *emphasis* should not be confused with *ownership*. The PQ demonstrates a relatively greater and more consistent emphasis on *communicating* its paradiplomacy stances to voters, but it remains inconclusive which party is *perceived* to be the more competent owner overall.

Finally, the expectation of paradiplomacy's overall salience across time having increased since the beginning of Quebec's modern paradiplomacy era is deemed to have a "mixed" result. While international issues are *overall* more salient to both parties in 2014 than they were in 1970, when the PLQ and PQ first began competing, confirmation of H4 requires accounting for the campaigns in between. Charting the frequency of international issues in five decades of campaign literature reveals peaks and ebbs in salience, not the expected continuous increase. Such peaks and ebbs have become more common since the late 1980s, when both parties began emphasizing the economic dimension of paradiplomacy. It is perhaps the case that agreement on economic and identitary motives has made the "space" for party competition smaller. The PLQ

and PQ emphasize and de-emphasize paradiplomacy in alternating campaign cycles, depending on whether they strategize to be on the offensive or defensive to voters.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The central goal of this thesis was to propose and test a new theoretical explanation for the expansion of Quebec paradiplomacy across time and party. Three main research questions underlined this study. The first question was informed by the literature's designation of nationalism as both the most important (Lecours and Moreno, 2003) and least-studied (Paquin and Lachapelle, 2005) variable in paradiplomacy: how is sub-state nationalism actually operationalized to provide political support for paradiplomacy? The second and third questions were informed by a paradox emerging from the limited research on regional parties as paradiplomacy actors: Why do ideologically divergent regional parties converge on the issue of paradiplomacy? Is a greater commitment to paradiplomacy demonstrated by regional parties ideologically in favour of, or opposed to sovereignty?

I find that partisan politics and a shared commitment to nationalist principles strongly underly the scope and continuity of Quebec's international engagement. Automated and manual coding of party manifestos demonstrates that paradiplomacy has limited salience as an issue in its own right, but meets the criteria of a valence issue when conceptualized as the international dimension of the all-important National Question. Paradiplomacy enhances the political, economic and cultural life of Quebecers. Regional parties converge on their commitment to expanding Quebec's international engagement because this position is the most attractive to nationalist voters, and the most electorally competitive vis-à-vis rival parties.

The conclusions emanating from this work are, however, tempered by both theoretical and methodological concerns. First, a significant limitation of relying on party literature as a source of primary data is that such documents rarely provide an explicit *contrast* between a

party's position on an issue, vis-à-vis that of its rival parties (Bélanger et al., 2018: 40). The manifesto analysis confirmed there are relatively few instances of parties explicitly challenging their rivals' positions; such instances were limited to only three campaigns in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Coding party literature on its own is therefore a relatively weak method of analyzing the inter-party dynamics of issue *competition*. Semi-structured interviews with party elites would provide a valuable source of primary data to complement and cross-validate the content analysis findings. More importantly, such elite interviews would elucidate not only how each party views its own positions on an issue, but how it responds to and perceives the positions of its political rivals.

This work also focussed primarily on the party angle of valence theory. A more comprehensive analysis of paradiplomacy as a valence issue in Quebec would require analyzing the voter angle as well. The electorate's perceptions of both the importance of paradiplomacy as an electoral issue and its perceptions of which party is deemed to be most capable to meet objectives related to the issue are two questions which neither the literature on paradiplomacy nor that of valence theory have previously addressed. This future research angle does present its own set of challenges. The first difficulty is reconciling the sometimes divergent perceptions parties and voters have towards issue ownership. As Bélanger et al. (2018: 38) stress, "[...] it may be one thing for a party to claim ownership of an issue - for example by emphasizing it in its manifestos and campaign speeches - and another to be perceived as the rightful owner of this issue and to be rewarded as such by voters at the polls."

In a similar vein, other scholars of valence theory have noted that it is “not always possible to disentangle a party’s issue ownership from its popularity overall” (Green and Jennings, 2017: 5). The latter observation is particularly applicable to paradiplomacy as an issue in electoral politics, as its electoral salience depends largely on whether and how parties frame international relations as a constituent element of the National Question theme of issues.

Finally, while I sought to provide an in-depth analysis of the domestic politics of paradiplomacy in the world’s most internationally-active region, the limitations of a study reliant on a single case are evident. Given the empirical similarities between Quebec and other internationally-active minority nations in Spain (Catalonia and the Basque Country) and Belgium (Flanders and Wallonia), a comparative case study of two or more regions and their respective regional parties would strongly increase the breadth of our paradiplomacy understanding.

These proposed research agendas have theoretical implications for three separate bodies of knowledge. As discussed in the literature review, existing studies have overlooked paradiplomacy as a policy issue in regional party competition. Paradiplomacy therefore represents a new issue to be analyzed within the framework of valence theory. Understanding the international motives and strategies of regional parties advances the small but growing body of research concerning regions as non-state actors. As the most internationally-active regions are minority nations, it is clear that the study of sub-state nationalism must be broadened to include its compelling international angle.

Appendix: Content Analysis Dictionary

1. internationale(s)
2. étranger(s)/étrangère(s)
3. rayonnement
4. épanouissement
5. mondialisation
6. commerce
7. Amérique
8. États-Unis
9. France
10. Francophonie
11. Europe

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