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Tatarstani Paradplomacy: Persistence Through Competitive Identity

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I have written this Master's thesis independently. All viewpoints of other authors, literary sources and data from elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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TATARSTANI PARADIPLMACY: PERSISTENCE THROUGH COMPETITIVE IDENTITY

Michael Thomas Renaldi

Abstract

The desire to attract foreign investment and tourism, solve transborder issues, or increase cultural ties is a crucial part of diplomacy. Solving such issues gradually filtered down to non-central governments. The term for the diplomacy of non-central governments is deemed paradiplomacy. The most widely discussed cases in paradiplomacy are often located in Western, federal democracies. However, local governments that lie outside of both categories remain active in international affairs. Thus, this single-case study focuses on paradiplomacy in a non-central government outside of Western, federal democracies. This thesis examines paradiplomacy in the Russian republic of Tatarstan.

Specifically, the thesis focuses on the persistence of Tatarstani paradiplomacy after the governments shift away from the parades of sovereignties rhetoric and decentralization after the mid-2000s. This provides a crucial case to understand how non-central governments can utilize paradiplomacy despite their position outside of the traditional archetype for paradiplomatic case studies and their means of entrenching their position. Thus, this thesis asks: how does paradiplomacy persist after recentralization? The research question is explored through a media analysis of Tatarstani paradiplomacy which examines two trends: global mega-events and relations with the Turkic world. The media analysis is conducted through examining the Russian news outlets *Business Online* and *Kommersant* to understand the major narratives which show how paradiplomacy persists in the case of Tatarstan. Through branding tactics and competitive identity, it is concluded that Tatarstani paradiplomacy converges and diverges with Russian federal government

policy. In the end, Tatarstani paradiplomacy is divided into three categories: culture as a resource, government tool, and promotion and protection of material interests. The categories help both the Russian government and Tatarstan, but due to less autonomy within Tatarstan, it is concluded that Tatarstan's paradiplomacy will increasingly converge with Russian federal government positions in the future.

Keywords: Tatarstan, paradiplomacy, Russian Federalism, media analysis, global mega-events.

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1. Introduction

The shift towards a more globalized world has enhanced the ability for non-central governments (NCGs) to play a role in diplomacy and political communication with foreign entities. This includes cities, regions, counties, oblasts, okrugs, etc. which possess different interests, and often, a better knowledge of how to attract foreign tourists, governments, and business investment to their territory. Within this strand of literature, known as paradiplomacy, NCGs increasingly act as an analog for their state government in the international sphere. Furthermore, the NCGs have long-standing relations with states and other international organizations. For this reason, this trend has important implications for actors below the state level and the nature of a states' foreign policy.

Paradiplomacy, or political communication between an NCG and a foreign counterpart, are widespread in federal democracies. Characterized by sound legal grounds, regions employ certain functions entitled to them within their constitutions. This characteristic has led to an almost universal focus on Western, federal democracies as case studies for paradiplomacy. Even though federal democracies provide support for well-developed paradiplomacy, the ability for an NCG to engage in political communication is not limited to this designated group. The desire to quell transborder disputes, improve economic standing, increase cultural ties among similar ethno-, religious, linguistic groups remains to NCGs around the world.

This thesis examines a crucial case of paradiplomacy in Russia after its recentralization in the mid-2000s. Looking at the case of Tatarstan provides an opportunity to learn how NCGs can continue to engage in foreign relations, even after the central government sought to centralize foreign affairs. Thus, Tatarstan provides a crucial case study which strengthens the way scholars understand diplomacy in the 21st century and asks the research question: how does paradiplomacy persist after recentralization?

Three primary hypotheses emerge in accordance with the research question: 1) Tatarstani paradiplomacy will converge with Russian federal government policy 2) Tatarstani paradiplomacy will diverge from Russian federal government policy 3) Tatarstani paradiplomacy will show a mix of both divergent and convergent policies with Russian federal government policy. This thesis hypothesizes that Tatarstani paradiplomacy evades the convergent or divergent dichotomy. Rather, I argue that Tatarstan pursues a mixed

assortment of policies in paradiplomacy, which converge and diverge from the Russian government's stance.

To do this analysis, a media analysis is conducted of two Russian news sources: *Business Online* and *Kommersant* to understand the major narratives surrounding the involvement of Tatarstani paradiplomacy in four events critical to Russian diplomacy. The use of media analysis allows for the larger narratives surrounding the persistence of paradiplomacy to be understood in greater depth.

In addition to the media analysis, the events involving Tatarstani paradiplomacy will be described through the framework on paradiplomacy created by Panayotis Soldatos, and the Tatarstan's role in paradiplomacy will be further explained through the concept of competitive identity discussed by Simon Anholt. Both are critical to describing the relationship between Tatarstan and the Russian central government and will be described further in the literature review.

Lastly, the complexity of relations between Russian regions and the federal center means that traditional methods of understanding fall short, and this thesis seeks to provide a deeper interpretation of how paradiplomacy persists within the complex relationship between Russian and Tatarstan. This thesis seeks, in addition, to provide greater knowledge of the undefined structure that surrounds the Russian central government with each Russian NCG.

2. Literature Review

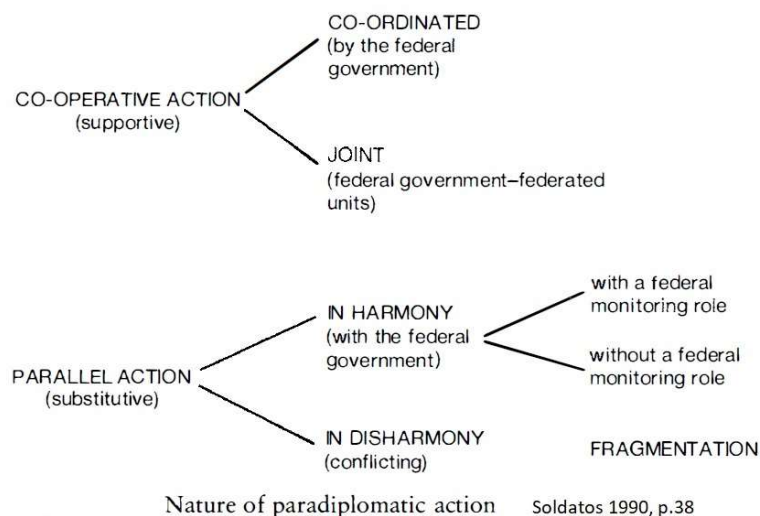
2.1 Paradiplomacy: History and Importance

Paradiplomacy was first used by the scholar Rohan Butler (1961) who described the process as “the highest level of personal and parallel diplomacy, complementing or competing with the regular foreign policy of the minister concerned (p.13).” Butler’s view imagined a more secretive or competitive relationship between NCGs and their foreign counterparts. Indeed, Butler described a situation that was increasingly noticed by the interdependence of the global economy.

The shift to a more globalized world led to a reformed definition of paradiplomacy in the 1980s. First, Ivo Duchacek (1984) considered two major trends in paradiplomacy: 1) Transborder Regional Regimes 2) Global Microdiplomacy (p. 5). Transborder regional regimes include both formal and informal networks which interact because of issues that flow across borders such as environmental, economic, and cultural issues. The problems resulting from transborder issues encourage subnational governments to cooperate. Secondly, the rise of global micro-diplomacy was noted as another offshoot of paradiplomacy. NCGs hold formal relations with cross-border and distant states and territories to create agreements for economic and political means.

Paradiplomacy expanded to describe much more than formal relations such as permanent representations and high-level meetings between state leaders. Cornago extended the meaning of the term in the 1990s: “[Paradiplomacy] can be defined as non-central governments' involvement in international relations through the establishment of permanent or ad hoc contacts with public or private entities, with the aim to promote socioeconomic or cultural issues, as well as any other foreign dimension of their constitutional competences (p.40).” Without creating too exhaustive of a list, paradiplomacy can be described as the diplomatic efforts of NCGs towards their foreign counterparts: 1) Other sub-national governments 2) States 3) Businesses 4) Cultural groups 5) Individuals 6) Academic institutions and representatives in the locality (Tavares, 2016, p. 228). The foreign relations of NCGs touch these six outlets. Thus, this expansion remains important to understanding the dynamic nature of paradiplomacy, as NCGs take non-traditional routes to associate with their counterparts abroad.

Paradiplomacy possesses different characteristics vis-à-vis the central government: it can align, compliment, extend, or conflict with the diplomatic relations of the federal government (Duchachek, 1990, p. 32). Following Duchachek, Soldatos introduced an important explanatory framework which is integral to this thesis. Soldatos defined four different types of paradiplomacy. The first two types can be challenging to distinguish: cooperative-coordinated and cooperative joint action models (Soldatos, 1990, p. 38). This cooperative-coordinated model indicates that the federal government brings paradiplomacy of sub-state entities in line with theirs through formal and informal alignment and harmonization that occurs through top-down mechanisms. The second-type of paradiplomacy, the cooperative-joint model, includes paradiplomacy under the federal government’s national foreign policy. In this case, a combined approach through joint missions and strategies targets a specific foreign policy issue. The biggest split between the two branches of paradiplomacy is between cooperation, which means that the origins of the approach came from the federal government, or parallel activity, which means that the sub-national entity takes an approach independent from the central government and spearheads its efforts (ibid). The parallel action approach divides into *in harmony* and *in disharmony* (with federal government policy). The *in harmony* sub-section indicates that the sub-state entity aligns its policies with the federal government. *The parallel-in-harmony model* can occur with or without monitoring of the federal government. Conversely, the *in disharmony* sub-section deviates from federal government foreign policy stances. The final approach, *parallel-in-disharmony* model, attracts the most attention for the potential for further escalation between the federal and



regional governments through continued defiance to their policies which sometimes leads to secession attempts. The distinctive features of Soldatos's explanatory framework are useful to analyze paradiplomacy.

Despite the usage of paradiplomacy to describe the actions of sub-state actors, the issue of neologisms is rife within the study of sub-state actors. Upon reflecting on the work of Panayotis Soldatos's work, Duchacek noted that while microdiplomacy was his original name for the term, paradiplomacy served as a more quality explanation (1984, p. 13). The term paradiplomacy utilizes the prefix *para* taken from parallel to describe a type of diplomacy that occurs beside the diplomatic efforts of the federal government. Scholars have pursued various other names to categorize relations between sub-state actors and federal governments: intermestic diplomacy, catalytic diplomacy, microdiplomacy, protodiplomacy, sub-state diplomacy, post-diplomacy, constituent diplomacy, regional diplomacy, and multilayered diplomacy (Kuznetsov, 2015, p. 25). Critics assert that each sub-national entity is unique in their relations with the central government and cannot always be considered parallel. For instance, the Belgian sub-national governments possess distinct authority over certain issues and conduct international oversight over other regions. However, critics highlight that diplomacy is a part of statecraft, which in Belgium, they contend is not the case (Tavares, 2016, p. 8). Thus, the idea of Flanders and Wallonia as conducting paradiplomacy remains disputed, and the usage of paradiplomacy has received criticism for its tendency to generalize. On the other hand, if following Soldatos's original framework, he leaves out statecraft as a part of sub-national governments' paradiplomatic agenda, though such processes occur in cases like Catalonia and Quebec. Parallel does not always mean in conflict with the federal government and remains a term that has come to describe the complex relations between various federal governments and sub-state government.

Complex relations arise from the increased difficulties federal governments face in the realm of international relations. The central government dispenses competences to local governments due to their inability to meet their needs, while simultaneously, entrusting them to pursue harmonious relations with central government policy. Sub-state entities rely heavily on the central government and each entity lies on a spectrum in its association with the national government. The sub-state entity may drift from harmonious to conflictual relations with the national government. Kuznetsov (2015) ultimately prefers

the umbrella term paradiplomacy and defines it as a “[a] form of political communication for reaching economic, cultural, political, or any other types of benefits, the core of which consists in self-sustained actions of regional governments with foreign governmental and non-governmental actors (p.31).” Noting the history of paradiplomacy, I intend to use Kuznetsov’s definition within this thesis.

2.2 What Constitutes Foreign Relations

This section discusses the different types of foreign relations that occur at the sub-state level and the different activities that make up paradiplomacy. First, the section outlines the meanings of public diplomacy, competitive identity, branding, and placing branding which serve as important concepts throughout the thesis. Second, the different paradiplomatic activities are outlined below the federal level. NCGs promote numerous initiatives in the international sphere, which lead to institutionalized forms of action by the NCG. Examples of the interaction are mainly through the seven listed indicators: 1) Regional Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2) Permanent Abroad Offices 3) Official Visits 4) Exhibitions and Forums 5) Global and Transborder Multilateral Regional Networks 6) Work within official central government delegations (Kuznetsov, 2015, pp. 111-112) 7) Global Mega-Events. In this study, I cite global mega-events as an example of paradiplomacy as they hold important significance to the location hosting the events, and the opportunity to separate the region from its surroundings (Yatsyk & Makarychev, 2015, p. 144). The four concepts (public diplomacy, competitive identity, branding, and placing branding) and paradiplomatic activities will receive further description when discussing the theoretical framework for the thesis.

One of the most notable types of paradiplomatic activities is the regional ministry of foreign affairs, which allows for the sub-state government to hold a separate office to conduct foreign affairs. Often the ministry is smaller and more specialized than their federal counterparts, as the cost of running a foreign ministry is difficult for sub-state governments. The issue of cost usually limits regional foreign ministries to locations with bigger economies, and thus more funds to spend on maintaining connections abroad. Regional ministries may sit in a separate office within the sub-state government or serve in a small group as part of the central government. The regional ministry of foreign affairs, or the group dedicated to issues in foreign affairs, fulfills the role of policymaking and

coordinating the missions abroad to carry out policy goals. (Berridge, *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, 2015, p. 10) Another important aspect of sub-state foreign ministries is that their powers may be dispersed through various other ministries rather than under the umbrella of one specific ministry (Kuznetsov, 2015, p. 112). Thus, each sub-state entity may utilize their foreign ministry in a different way, and, in doing so, possess a different relationship with the central government.

The permanent abroad offices represent an external reach for both state and sub-state governments. They go by multiple names, usually designed to define them by their purpose within the neighboring region, republic, or state. The regional ministries are designated in this way as well. The permanent abroad office can almost be considered as a sub-state consulate in its function. The office attempt to develop involvement with local communities to increase business, cultural, and other ties with the sub-state entity (Kuznetsov, 2015, p. 112). For sub-state governments, the permanent representation also possesses a symbolic influence of ties that extend across borders and tie groups with similar interests together.

Official visits of sub-state employees to other states, region, sub-state governments as well as the arrival of foreign actors to visit sub-state governments also hold importance. Kuznetsov (2015) emphasizes that scholars should focus on both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the visits: who are they visiting, and how often (p.112)? The skill sets of the delegations are also important to distinguish the reasons for the visits. As a result, the scholar gets a better idea of the competences of the sub-state entity.

The involvement of the sub-state government in exhibitions and forums is also an important aspect of paradiplomacy. The level of the actors involved also needs accounting for. Additionally, the number of meetings that occur and the sectors in which they occur are important to understanding the nature of the paradiplomatic efforts of the sub-state government.

The global and transborder multilateral regional networks are another important outlet for the NCG. They allow governments often across state borders to associate. This could include the joining of the sub-state government into a regional network of state or sub-state leaders dedicated to various issues. As mentioned earlier, the merging of the local government into this group can involve issues related to the environment, economy,

cultural issues, etc. The nature of the working groups differs from forums in that the sub-state entity is combining its knowledge with governments in the global and region to produce a result regarding a specific issue.

The final aspect of paradiplomacy noted by Kuznetsov (2015) is the work of the sub-state government in official delegations of the central government (p.112). The work within delegations of the central government deviates from the idea of a separate foreign policy since the sub-state government is depending on the national government in this aspect. However, paradiplomacy also complements national foreign policy. As a result, the work of sub-state governments as part of official state delegations is important to understanding the relationship they possess and how the sub-state entity positioned itself within the foreign policy of the national government.

Lastly, global mega-events have become an important aspect for states to demonstrate their importance in the international sphere. The events filter down to regional governments and institutions. This possesses profound opportunities for subnational governments to use the opportunity to promote their territorial brand and differentiate themselves from the national government (Yatsyk, 2016, p. 174). Global mega-events require substantial resources, and after the event, separates the entity from its surroundings.

The use of global mega-events to promote states became popular in the last decade within post-soviet Eurasia. Specifically, the use of global mega-events to shape NCG tendencies is important in Tatarstan. In recent years, Russia's involvement in global mega-events like the Sochi Olympics in 2014, FIFA World Cup in 2018, and Universiade in 2013 allowed regions throughout Russia to become more directly involved in global affairs. Russia relies heavily on NCGs to carry out events. Within the NCGs and regions, minority groups often use the events to promote their cause. Perhaps the greatest reason for this occurrence is that many venues for global events are chosen because of their multinational nature within the host country, which gives both a risk and opportunity to the host state (Casula, 2016, p. 47). Thus, the study uses global mega-events as a key component of how paradiplomacy is conducted in Tatarstan.

Global mega-events are a form of public diplomacy. Gregory (2011, p. 353) defines public diplomacy as "an instrument used [...] to understand cultures, attitudes, and

behavior; build and manage relationships; and influence thoughts and mobilize actions to advance their interests and values.” However, traditionalists in diplomatic studies equate public diplomacy and branding with white propaganda, where agents, admitting their source, engage in political advertising to foreign publics and to a lesser extent their domestic constituents (Berridge & Lloyd, 2012, p. 305) (Melissen, 2013, p. 3). Despite the traditionalist consideration that public diplomacy distracts scholars from focusing on more important diplomatic practices, foreign ministries and diplomatic practitioners use public diplomacy to advance their mission (Melissen, 2013, p.3). In this thesis, Tatarstani paradiplomacy documents certain aspects considered to be public diplomacy, and more specifically branding, on the practice of paradiplomacy.

Public diplomacy and nation-branding fall under the umbrella of a larger concept known as competitive identity (Anholt, 2007, p. 3). Before expounding on competitive identity, the topic of branding and tools for branding will be mentioned throughout the thesis and used to explain the persistence of Tatarstani paradiplomacy. According to Anholt (2007), “[...] branding is the process of designing, planning and communicating the name and the identity, in order to build or manage the reputation (p.4).” Branding is one of a few parts encompassing the concept of competitive identity which reflects the globalized world where many people see a nation, country, or any group through various media outlets and form their image almost entirely from information presented to them. Another aspect of branding is the concept of place-branding. While it is assumed to be simple like a logo or motto, the use of place-branding consists of strategy (reconciling the desires of different national actors and pushing them into a single direction that is both inspiring and realistic), substance (execution of the strategies expressed which can be e.g. innovations, legislation, investment), and symbolic action (actions that are emblematic of strategy and remarkable. For example, Kazan becoming the Russian sports capital) (Anholt, 2010, p. 13). In the case of governments and nations positioned in a global, competing marketplace, they have the task of shaping their image to position themselves, while in competition with other actors, for greater benefits in the globalized economic system.

Perhaps, the biggest voice of competitive identity and branding as a government tool is Simon Anholt (2007), who asserted, regarding why the issue of competitive identity has come to the forefront of diplomacy in the modern era: “[Competitive Identity is not] a

strategy for legitimizing state propaganda, just a growing acknowledgment of the influence of global public opinion and market forces on international affairs” (p. 19). Moreover, “Competitive Identity [...] describe[s] the synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy and with trade, investment, tourism and export promotion. [It] is a new model for enhanced national competitiveness in a global world (Anholt, 2007, p. 3). As a result, actors wish to control their image through branding for five reasons: 1) Image notes a country’s reputation 2) Image determines inflow of tourists 3) Image attracts foreign investment and influences external economic relations 4) Image concerns even miniscule interactions with a place of interest such as treatment at airports 5) A deceiving image can lead to a downfall in how the country is perceived (Rana, 2011, pp. 75-77). It is important to note that the image is how the audience perceives the entity. In response to the high stakes caused by image, brand management has become an important tool for actors in the global marketplace. Branding efforts remain a tool even in the realm of paradiplomacy. While greater resources remain for states than with sub-state actors, regional governments, especially those with a more substantial budget, utilize the opportunity to cultivate their image within the state and in the international sphere. In terms of institutions of paradiplomacy, it is important to note that image pervades every level and institution. Image and competitive identity cannot be cultivated separately but often must work within institutions and affect how they operate (Anholt, 2007, p. 73). Thus branding, image, and competitive identity remain important aspects affecting how institutions work.

The importance of competitive identity for culture and sporting events is particularly important for this thesis. The concept of competitive identity is discussed in conjunction with the analysis of mega-events. As Tatarstan and Russia invested heavily in Kazan’s development, it is important to note that both the World Cup and Universiade events possessed little in long-term reputation for the city or country. The most important mega-event for the long-term brand is the Olympics (Anholt, 2007, pp. 108-110). This plays an important role in the analysis as Tatarstan seeks to build its image around its consistent hosting of sporting events. Furthermore, the use of Tatar cultural events is included to build the national brand. In this thesis, branding is shown as a tool to harmonize federal and NCG motives, while simultaneously moving towards projecting a competitive identity through Tatarstan’s usage of global mega-events.

2.3 Prior to Recentralization: Spawn of Paradiplomacy in Tatarstan

The Russian republics remained part of a larger discourse that emphasized devolution of centralized state authority due to the fall of the Soviet Union. The parade of sovereignties marked the declarations of numerous former Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs) and influential regions within the former Soviet Union. Tatarstan served as an example within this narrative for increasing regional autonomy in the Russian Federation in the 1990s. Tatarstan officials issued a declaration of sovereignty from the Russian government, and subsequently signed a bilateral treaty with the Russian government that gave Tatarstan a privileged relationship in comparison to other Russian republics and regions. (Slocum, 1999, p. 51). After this process, Tatarstan served as an exemplar for relations with the Russian federal government. Despite dependence on central funding, even more economically dependent regions like Tyva followed the rhetoric of the era and attempted to cede more power from the federal center (Sharafutdinova, 2013, p. 366). As noted by Kahn (2000), the parade or cascade of sovereignties marked a larger pattern of policymakers ceasing increased power from the federal center (p.60). The nationalist movements and willingness of Boris Yeltsin's administration to cede power led to the decentralization that briefly characterized the Russian Federation.

Paradiplomacy partially rose from the constitutional ambiguity that prevailed during the 1990s. Tatarstan and Russia signed a treaty "On the Delimitation of Jurisdictional Authority of the Mutual Delegation of Powers between the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of Tatarstan" in 1994. The result was viewed as a loss for Tatarstani sovereignty since the treaty considered the Tatarstani state to be unified with Russia, but nevertheless, never distinctly identified whether the state held sovereignty under international law (Slocum, 1999, p. 56). The President of Tatarstan from 1991 until 2010, Mintimer Shaimiev, considered the treaty to be between two sovereign states. However, after the treaty, many Tatarstani nationalists believed that the republic forfeited its sovereignty under international law.

Throughout the 1990s, and even after the signing of the treaty, Tatarstan continued to build its identity as a sovereign actor through paradiplomacy. This development took place in a larger Euroislamic identity that clashed with the Russian Eurasianist view in a few ways that translated into Russia and Tatarstan's interactions with the surrounding

world. One example of differences was exemplified in the approach of integration of non-Russian ethnic minorities in the Russian Federation, while Tatarstan wanted region-specific approaches (Makarychev & Valuev, 2002). The federal center saw Tatarstan as having a treaty on the division of powers between Russia and Tatarstan, meanwhile, Tatarstan considered itself a state under international law (ibid). First, President Shaimiev created an Office of Foreign Economic Policy in 1995, and subsequently expanded the office further in 1997 with additional offices dedicated to Tatarstan's international relations (Sharafutdinova, 2005, pp. 392-393). Furthermore, in the 1990s Tatarstan opened 16 missions abroad, while only Turkey opened a permanent abroad mission in Tatarstan, along with other Russian regions: Chechnya, Dagestan, and the Ivanovo Oblast. By the mid-2000s, Tatarstan signed around 50 documents with 15 different states (Sharafutdinova, 2005, p. 394). Hence, Tatarstan became an important region in association with the federal center.

The Tatarstani government emphasized the sovereignty and uniqueness of Tatarstan through conflicting stances towards foreign actors in contrast to official stances of the Russian government. The most notable examples are the signing of friendship agreements with Russian regions like Abkhazia (a disputed territory between Georgia and Russia), Chechnya, and Ingushetia in the 1990s, which disregarded Russian treaties with foreign states (Sharafutdinova, 2005, pp. 395-396). In addition, Tatarstani leaders criticized the Russian stance on the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia and considered U.S actions and NATO actions during the Kosovo Crisis as justifiable (Sharafutdinova, 2005, pp. 396-397). The Tatarstani government led a campaign of paradiplomacy that emphasized the identity and sovereignty of the republic even when the political results provided little function. Thus, paradiplomacy can be described as largely parallel-in-disharmony in the 1990s and early 2000s.

The discourse attributed to the parades of sovereignties continued due to a weak federal center. Even when subnational entities were incapable of sovereignty, the tendency to take power from the federal center persisted. Tatarstan, among other Russian regions, used paradiplomacy to construct their identity. However, the discourse was largely curtailed as Putin tried to consolidate and recentralize the Russian Federation (Sharafutdinova, 2005, p. 404).

2.4 Recentralization Efforts

The election of President Vladimir Putin in 2000 led to a reverse of policies towards Russia's region under Boris Yeltsin's tenure. Most notably, a shift in rhetoric away from the parade of sovereignties eliminated the regional sense that power could be ceded from the center. President Shaimiev agreed with Putin's goals of strengthening federal institutions. In addition, strengthening state power along with the Second Chechen War, which was widely supported by the population, symbolized the shift away from sovereignty and decentralization. Thus, the 1990s ended with a call to recentralize and strengthen the Russian federal government. At the time, Tatarstani paradiplomacy appeared (Slocum, 1999, p. 51).

The goal of recentralization could not immediately interrupt the concessions and agreements provided by the Yeltsin government. One concession was the celebration of Millennium Kazan and the 1000-year history of the Tatarstan's capital, Kazan. This event was important in four different ways: 1) The celebration documented the reliance cities and regions had in the post-socialist era on the central government. 2) Tatarstan proved it could carry out large-scale events 3) Millennium Kazan showed the potential use of Tatarstan's diverse population 4) Tatarstan was forced to meet certain criteria that allowed the central government to harmonize policies federal policies with the Republic. Millennium Kazan was the event that began a new era of Tatarstani relations with the federal center.

Although Tatarstan is a wealthier region, officials considered Millennium Kazan vital to trigger inflows of central government funding (Kinossian, 2012, p. 346). The payout came during Putin's tenure in the form of 12 billion rubles from the federal budget in addition to financing from both regional, city, and private funds (Sharafutdinova, 2013, p. 526). As a result, the Tatarstani government received funding for a wide range of projects within Millennium Kazan. They included the development of infrastructure, common spaces, tourist attractions, business centers, theaters, and stadiums (Kinossian, 2012, pp. 348-349). The investment was viewed as an image-building strategy that would attract foreign and external investment (Kinossian, 2012, p. 344). However, limited connection to the city's infrastructure and the local economy meant various investments remained insolvent like the ice rink and the horse-racing track constructed in Kazan, which

struggled to attract visitors (Kinossian, 2012, p. 344). Though the initial goal was to grow external resources, the pattern after the Millennium Kazan was to seek funding from the center for large-scale projects.

Multiculturalism became a major selling point for holding events in Tatarstan. In this way, Tatarstan's relations between Muslims and Christians served as an illustration of Russia's tolerance among different ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups (Graney, 2007, pp. 22-23). Perhaps the most obvious use of multiculturalism was the meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in Kazan during the 1000-year celebration which convened various leaders from around Eurasia (Vorobeva, 2005). In addition, the meeting held much importance to the future of the CIS at the time. As Kobrinskaya noted (2007, p. 14) many called the 2005 Kazan Summit, the 'last CIS carnival.' Moreover, President Putin noted the historical nature of Tatarstan as a place that contributed greatly to establishing Russia as a "united, close-knit people (Gosudarstvo Tatarstana, 2005)." The event contributed to the image of Kazan as a place for multiculturalism and, in addition, served a larger purpose for Russia to show its tolerance and coexistence among varying groups.

Both Kazan and Tatarstan shifted their rhetoric to gain funds from the center. The shift required Tatarstan to become part of the Russian fiscal framework and harmonization of Tatarstan's tax laws with the federal government (Sharafutdinova, 2013, p. 525) (Corwin, 2005). Another offshoot of Tatarstan's alignment with the federal government was reconciling the image created in the 1990s as a sovereignty seeker. The new position emphasized Tatarstan's competitive advantage within Russia rather than a sovereign actor. For example, Tatarstan sought projects that emphasized global mega-events, branding, heritage preservation, and attraction of tourists. As a result, the government developed historical sites, Bolgar and Sviyazhsk, with the goal of developing the historical consciousness of the people living in Tatarstan and increasing tourism. Tatarstan managed to receive funding from emphasis on its competitive identity.

Despite embracing its competitive identity within Russian, Tatarstan has still seen its autonomy decline. While outsiders stopped calling Minnikhanov the President of Tatarstan, the designation is still in use within the Republic. But, the designation is speculated to end officially in 2020. In 2017, the special status for the Tatarstan Republic

with the Russian Federal government ended. The agreement signed under the tenure of former President Shaimiev gave Tatarstan special autonomy to handle its own taxes, laws, the provision of Tatarstani passports and citizenship, as well as, participation in international affairs. (The Moscow Times, 2017). Finally, the question of language usage became an issue with the federal government's stance that mandatory language instruction in minority languages like Tatar should be voluntary. With Tatarstan's privileges decreasing, the future of paradiplomacy is also at risk.

Though the setup looks completely controlled by the center, Sharafutdinova and Turovsky (2017) note, "Regional governors [...] have remained important players in the twenty-first century, despite federal centralization efforts, but the way their regional agency is exercised has changed" (p.162). The effort for regions and cities to create an identity continued after centralization. Important changes occurred in that the regional governors were replaced through rotating appointments by the center and candidates in sub-state legislatures needed to join a party list that existed in the State Duma. The ability for NCGs to separate their policies further from the center made more difficult as a result. (Sharafutdinova, 2005, p. 406).

3. Research Design and Method

3.1 Case Selection

Similar to Quebec and Catalonia, multiple authors cited Tatarstani paradiplomacy as one of the most influential and noteworthy cases in the world (Kuznetsov, 2015, p. 44) (Tavares, 2016, p. 38) (Cornago, 1999, p. 45). This is partially because of Tatarstan's history during the 1990s and continued relevance in paradiplomacy. In the 1990s and early 2000s, paradiplomacy in Tatarstan sought external recognition and adopted diplomatic institutions and state symbols to project and build their identity as a sovereign state. (Sharafutdinova, 2003). The sharp turn away in the early 2000s offered a new narrative towards centralization that led to legal ambiguity and the curtailing of sovereignty projection (Sharafutdinova, 2013, p. 361). Although recentralization changed Tatarstani – Russian relations, Russian regions view Tatarstan as an exemplar for center-periphery relations and paradiplomacy in the present period.

Another reason for the case selection is the breadth of Tatarstani paradiplomacy. Paradiplomatic institutions in NCGs around the world are small in character due to limited funds, limited scope of the institutions, and the role of the central government as the main diplomatic actor within the territory. Tatarstan maintains direct contacts with states and Russian regions through the hosting of consulates and embassies within the territory, opening consulates in neighboring states and Russian regions, and the signing of numerous agreements. In comparison to other regions engaging in paradiplomatic efforts, the difference is that Tatarstan maintains educational, cultural, political ties while other regions focus primarily on foreign economic development. The Republic of Tatarstan maintains international ties with fifteen states and eight subjects of the Russian Federation. Within the territory of Tatarstan, seven countries have consulates. Tatarstan also holds numerous representatives around the world, six of which are plenipotentiary representatives, while five remain permanent representatives, and another twelve are trade and economic representatives (Apparat Prezidenta Respubliki Tatarstan, 2017). The region presents a robust number of instances to chart the course of paradiplomacy.

Scholars warn against testing cases in states where paradiplomacy is presumed to flounder – undemocratic states and those with illiberal markets (Kuznetsov, 2015, p. 104) (Kincaid, 2010, p. 16). The case of Tatarstani paradiplomacy provides an experiment in

this realm. This thesis aligns with the idea that Russia's federalist structure remained in places where democratic institutions were at their weakest (Obydenkova & Swenden, 2013, p. 89). Thus power-sharing in Russia, while differing from a traditional federal system, continues in a weaker form in places like Tatarstan.

The case of Tatarstani paradiplomacy holds relevance to center – periphery relations in Russia. When considering regionalism in Russia after recentralization, Makarychev (2012) states: “the main impulses that foster institutional change are channeled through the activity of those elements of the structure that lack their fixed and properly defined place in it and, therefore, are likely to disturb its stability” (p.185). This unfixed structure remains within Tatarstan's external relations. For this reason, in instances when Tatarstani paradiplomacy occurs, it serves to disturb the stability within the Russian governmental system and provides an opportunity for how paradiplomacy impacts central governments.

3.2 Method

This research paper utilizes a single-case study on the paradiplomatic practices in Tatarstan and asks the following question: how does paradiplomacy persist after recentralization? The study uses within-case observations to document the continued manifestation of paradiplomacy in Tatarstan through narratives constructed during events. For the operationalization of this research, paradiplomacy is looked at through media analysis. In this way, the discussions in sub-state and national media recreate discussions happening within society and among political elites. Thus, media analysis provides a tool to understand how paradiplomacy continues after recentralization: the stances the Tatarstani government takes, the foreign actors involved, the Russian government's position, and other discourse arising from Tatarstan's involvement in foreign affairs.

Rather than focusing on path tracing of paradiplomacy after recentralization, the research will focus on critical junctures that resulted in significant media coverage. All four events received significant media attention on both the national and sub-national scale. In addition, the events held importance to the Russian central government with large amounts of federal investment, and historic low points in relations with Ukraine and Turkey. Thus, they provide an opportunity to understand the relationship between the federal government and NCG which is important to paradiplomacy. They are analyzed in

two separate sections: global mega-events and Turkic world relations. The specific instances selected are the following: 1) The Annexation of Crimea in 2014 2) The Sukhoi-24 Incident with Turkey in 2015 3) Universiade 2013 4) The FIFA World Cup 2018.

As the articles surrounding the events are gathered, they will be collected and coded to reflect the event different issues discussed within the article. The articles are collected through their relevance to the issue at hand: whether Tatarstan is mentioned within the article, around what subject Tatarstan is mentioned, positive/negative character of the article, who is interviewed, etc. Subsequently, the coded articles will be compiled to form the larger narratives surrounding Tatarstani paradiplomacy and how it persists after recentralization in Russia.

The focus is on interviews with academic experts, members of the federal or Tatarstani government, local stakeholders commenting on the event, and external actors. The articles will be selected within a set period of around one month. For the mega-events, the period will cover a few days prior to and after the event. This will allow for the preliminary and post-event discussion to be accessed and coded into the overall analysis. Regarding the period for the discussion of Tatarstan's relations with Crimea and Turkey, the period will allow for coding the time before, during, and after the resolution. In Crimea, this meant the March 16th referendum. In the SU-24 incident, this meant the implementation of Russian sanctions. Thus, the period will allow for capturing all aspects of the events in question.

The media sites chosen are *Business Online* and *Kommersant*. The choices were based on the locations of the sources (Within Russia, in Tatarstan, or outside of Russia). *Business Online* focuses primarily on the events in Tatarstan but has a larger focus on Russian national events. *Kommersant* has a regional affiliate in Kazan but focuses more on the Russian Federation and global news. The second reason was for the bias of the sources: *Business Online* offered a centrist view, interviewing people both for and against Russian and Tatarstani policies, as well as critical of all actors and events. *Kommersant* offered a semi-critical view of the events regarding Tatarstani involvement in international affairs. The analysis of both provides a different media frame or aspects of the event which are focused on during the event. The different ways both are framed provide a means with which to analyze Tatarstani paradiplomacy from sub-national and national news outlets.

Lastly, both provided an adequate method of researching and finding published materials on the topics, for the events, publishing them within a specific thread (Conflict with Turkey, for example). The choice of *Kommersant* and *Business Online* provided both practical and informational accessibility that other publications did not.

3.3 Limitations

Due to language constraints, the study focuses only on sources produced in Russian. The translations from the Russian-language digital sources are my own. The Tatar language, of course, holds important significance in Tatarstan as over half of the Republic of Tatarstan's population is ethnically Tatar. However, both Tatar and Russian hold equal significance both in the media and government of the Republic. Although the use of Tatar would provide an advantage, it does not appear as a disqualifier for completing accurate and timely research on paradiplomacy in Tatarstan. Almost all resources are accessible in Russian or English.

Lastly, the media sources remain one part of a much larger body of information available to research the topic of this thesis. The selected media sources provide an overlap of dominant narratives occurring at the sub-state and federal level which prove useful to understanding the major factors contributing to the persistence of paradiplomacy in Tatarstan. However, the hypothesis and conclusions of this thesis may benefit from further research and analysis on Tatarstani paradiplomacy and on the topic of paradiplomacy outside of western, federated democracies.

4. Analysis

4.1 Universiade 2013 – July 1st to July 23rd, 2013

This section will analyze and detail the main narratives during the 2013 Universiade, which occurred from July 6th to July 17th. It must be noted that most of the articles come from *Business Online*, and they are largely positive in their assessment of the 2013 Universiade. *Kommersant*, instead, focused more critically looking at the Universiade project in association with the large budget provided through federal funding. Since the articles span a larger amount of time, the events will be looked at in terms of the major topics discussed.

4.1.1 Transformation: Giving Substance to Strategy

After years of investment on the Universiade, the discussion of transformation was the result of finally putting substance to strategy. Substance is the “effective execution of strategy in the form of new economic, legal, political, social, cultural and educational activity: the real innovations, structures, legislation, reforms, investments, institutions and policies which will bring about the desired progress (Anholt, 2010, p. 13).” In this case, investment in Universiade served as a symbolic action as well through identifying Tatarstan and Kazan as a region of federal importance. A second symbolic action is provided through the label: third capital and sports capital for Kazan. The quoted articles are provided from *Business Online* which focused on the transformation which framed the event as transformational. However, the long-term impact and image of Kazan is not accepted by the interviewed audience.

Kazan’s Mayor Ilshur Metshin visited the Old Tatar Village, located in the center of Kazan, which was restored in preparation for the 2013 Universiade. The article title is “This is not festive tinsel, we are not carrying it away in a box after Universiade.”¹ This references the results of the various new buildings restored in the Old Tatar Village. Metshin focused primarily on the construction of the areas around the village and that it was a necessity for the people of Kazan, many of which are Tatar, to receive the new buildings. Metshin emphasizes that the changes will remain after the Universiade ends and that the city is benefiting from the investment. Within the article, however, a local prefect in Kazan

¹ Katargin, D. (2013, July 1). «*Ehto ne prazdnichnaya mishura, v korobku posle Universiady ne uberem*». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/82918>

stated his doubt about the local citizens knowing about the reconstruction of the Old Tatar Village. He expressed hope that the location would become a place for locals and not only a popular tourist spot.² The statement can be considered a method of calling for more investment from the federal government: the idea that the reconstructed area will become part of the city's infrastructure is vital to ensuring more investment.

The symbolic investment by the federal government in a stadium was also linked to Tatarstan's significance as a Republic and Russian region. President Minnikhanov discussed the Kazan Arena and its significance: "history will judge [the stadium] [...] for centuries as the most powerful object."³ Thus, the new stadium is linked distinctly to the power and influence of Tatarstan. Minnikhanov related the necessity of making the stadium a center for residents: "It is a center for young people, people should be brought from the region there – after all, sports are there, and entertainment, and joy for children."⁴ The stadium transforms Kazan into a center of entertainment and represents an achievement for Tatarstan's society. The challenges faced during Millennium Kazan appeared a focal point of the government: the new sports facilities must connect to the infrastructure and increase Tatarstan's ability to achieve financial independence. The failures of Millennium Kazan to connect its infrastructure to a viable strategy represented an example of a short-term economic stimulus rather than the development of a brand, which is reflected in the strategies pursued during Universiade.

The comments from Nikolay Valuev, a member of the State Duma, show the benefits of the investment: short-term economic gain and long-term positioning. *Business Online* framed Universiade similarly in the article's title: "Competitions, like Universiade, transform cities."⁵ Valuev stated, "All the costs are published together. And the general cost of holding the competition includes construction, reconstruction of [...] roads, and heating systems. It all stays in the Republic."⁶ Valuev's analysis meshes with the larger narrative that the mega-events are net positives: they transform cities and help the local

² Katargin, D. (2013, July 1). «*Ehto ne prazdnichnaya mishura, v korobku posle Universiady ne uberem*». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/82918>

³ Latypov, T. (2013, July 5). Rustam Minnikhanov: «Universiada proydet, i my perebrosim nashi sily na ZHKKH». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83235>

⁴ Latypov, T. (2013, July 5). Rustam Minnikhanov: «Universiada proydet, i my perebrosim nashi sily na ZHKKH». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83235>

⁵ Abdullin, J., & Bilalov, R. (2013, July 6). Nikolay Valuyev: «Takiye sorevnovaniya, kak Universiada, preobrazuyut goroda». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83331>

⁶ Ibid

population. Moreover, they maintain the transparency of expenditures and modernize the city – making it more attractive to outsiders. The short-term and long-term gain provide the ability for Kazan to pursue its strategy of becoming more visible globally while helping the local population.

Towards the end of Universiade, *Business Online* interviewed Anastasia Davydova, a member of the Russian Olympic Committee, who noted that “In Russia, there are now three capitals. The business capital in Moscow, Saint Petersburg has been the cultural capital since time immemorial, and the sports capital since not long ago became Kazan.”⁷ Thus, the status of sports capital is an attempt to elevate Kazan to a city of global prestige. During his visit, Vladimir Putin stated that “10-15 years ago Kazan was simply one of [many] unimportant, provincial Russian cities. Today it is a plush city with amazing infrastructure – both for transport and sports.”⁸ The use of the symbolic title allowed Kazan to separate itself from its surrounding and start to cultivate a new image.

The audience’s impression of Kazan’s global prestige was the main concern discussed in *Business Online*. As Universiade came to an end, the news outlet interviewed 23 respondents on a few questions, one of which concerned Kazan’s position as a city. In terms of image, there was a consensus that Kazan certainly could be considered a European city, but to call it a global city was almost universally denied.⁹ The Deputy of the Government Council of Tatarstan, Nikolay Rybushkin answered: “[...] it is forbidden to say that Kazan stands on the same level [as global cities] but it is approaching them.”¹⁰ This answer typifies responses regarding image stating that Kazan remains a city that is not global, but a city of merit in Europe. The goal of making Kazan a global city is intimately linked with federal investment. Without the federal response to Tatarstan’s strategy to host another mega-event, Kazan would be as Putin described, “[an

⁷ Zavalishina, T. (2013, July 18). Anastasiya Davydova: «YA dazhe ne predstavlyayu, chto budut delat' drugiye goroda, kotorym predstoit provodit' Universiadu». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/84246>

⁸ Kudrina, O. (2013, July 19). «Nakonets-to eto utro nastupilo!». Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2236633>

⁹ Maslenkova, E., Andreev, A., Semenova, J., Vagizov, M., & Kolebakina, E. (2013, July 20). Opros nedeli: Opravdala li Universiada vashi ozhidaniya i opaseniya? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/84397>

¹⁰ Ibid.

unimportant, provincial Russian city.”¹¹ For this reason, when considering paradiplomacy, it is important to look at Tatarstani – Russian relations, and Tatarstani paradiplomacy with a complete agreement between the two actors. The strategy of competitive identity in Tatarstan only works with synthesis between Russian investment and Tatarstani strategy. As a result, the paradiplomacy of is considered in Tatarstan is in a joint action role where Russia and Tatarstan support each other through in paradiplomacy.

4.1.2 Results of Substance: Budgetary Problems

The Russian government’s support for Tatarstan’s competitive identity is covered semi-critically by *Kommersant*. A large part of the discourse during Universiade 2013 was related to budgetary issues. *Kommersant* posted an interview (“Our economy cannot stand one more such event”)¹² expressing critical views of holding any more large-scale sporting events in Russia. The independent economic expert, Alexander Trifonov cites Universiade, the 2015 FINA Aquatic Championships, Sochi Olympics, and the 2018 FIFA World Cup, of which Tatarstan is hosting or co-hosting, as a drain on the Russian economy: “Russia cannot stand one more sport’s celebration, taking into account, that in recent time, the expenditures on the Olympics didn’t pay off.”¹³ The critical nature of the article contradicts both the goals of the federal and Tatarstani governments by questioning the transformation highlighted throughout Universiade and the economic successes thereafter.

In agreement, Alexey Skopin, interviewee and Head of the Department of Regional Economy and Economic Geography at the Higher School of Economics, noted that for the long-term image of Kazan to develop there is only one way out for the federal government: “write off the debts.”¹⁴ As a result, mega-events in the regions are portrayed as a product of the federal government since it is required to take authority over most of the debt burden.

¹¹ Kudrina, O. (2013, July 19). «Nakonets-to eto utro nastupilo!». Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2236633>

¹² *Kommersant*. (2013, July 4). "Nasha ekonomika yeshche odno takoye masshtabnoye meropriyatiye ne vyderzhit". Retrieved from <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2226164>

¹³ *Ibid*.

¹⁴ Shkurenko, O. (2013, July 8). Na universiadnom polozhenii. Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224013>

An interview by *Kommersant* with President Minnikhanov was positive but inquired about the future of mega-events in Tatarstan in addition to the drop in the credit rating faced by the Republic due to its debt increase. Minnikhanov mentioned both FINA 2015 and FIFA 2018 as the future events to utilize Kazan's sports facilities. In addition, the Tatarstani government must think more about how to utilize the sports infrastructure so that it continues to add to the Tatarstani economy.¹⁵ While Minnikhanov's views align with those expressed, it is important to note the inability to mention how else Kazan will attract large-scale mega-events.

Indeed, the focus within Tatarstan underscores social development and transformation over immediate profitability. *Kommersant* published an interview with the Director of ANO, the Autonomous Non-Commercial Organization, Vladimir Leonov.¹⁶ ANO is the executive directorate of Kazan 2013, and in the future, the executive directorate of Kazan 2015 and Kazan 2018. For example, to the correspondent that asks if 'there [is] hope that any part of the expenditures will be paid off,'¹⁷ Leonov noted, "nobody placed the goal in front of us to do a commercial event. Universiade is a social project for the development of the city."¹⁸ Thus, the goal is to develop Kazan, and with the next two events alluded to FINA 2015 and FIFA 2018, the immediate future presents a chance for applying the branding goal of becoming the sports capital of Russia. However, *Kommersant* continued to scrutinize the perks of the "image dividends" of Universiade versus the monetary gains from the investment in the mega-event.¹⁹ "In the preparation for Universiade 2013," it was said, "\$4.5 million rubles were spent, although the government quotes a 1.5 times bigger number by Rustam Minnikhanov from 2009 to 2013 in preparation for Universiade 2013."²⁰ Leaving Universiade behind, the battle between image versus good investment remained a concern.

Kommersant published most of the coverage on Universiade's budget with a critical focus on the high cost. The perception from the individuals managing Universiade is that it

¹⁵ Sitnina, V. (2013, July 8). "My zhe ne proyeli eti den'gi". Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224772>

¹⁶ Sitnina, V. (2013, July 8). "Nikto iz uchiteley krovlyu ne klal". Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224770>

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Kudrina, O. (2013, July 19). «Nakonets-to eto utro nastupilo!». Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2236633>

²⁰ Ibid.

develops Kazan but that it simultaneously created large debt that Tatarstan could not repay. In this way, the global mega-events show a coordinated joint effort of paradiplomacy. The Russian federal government dispersed the funds, and Tatarstan managed the event.

4.1.3 Event Management

Event management was one of the most visible narratives presented during the Universiade. Both *Business Online* and *Kommersant* discussed this aspect positively. The ability for Tatarstan to host an event of such magnitude is represented on multiple fronts: openness to investors, avoidance of corruption scandals, effective management of building structures, ensuring safety and consensus among residents, creating a professional environment for the regulation of sports facilities and athletes. All provide an environment beneficial to the central government. Consequently, a crucial aspect of the persistence of paradiplomacy in Tatarstan is due to Russia's ability to entrust Tatarstan with significant financial resources.

As discussed in *Kommersant*, the ability for Kazan to manage relies on their ability to provide volunteers, manage doping tests, provide security, achieve better social consensus than places like Sochi.²¹ Lastly, one interviewee believes that a reason for the improved event management within Tatarstan is the national character of the Republic.²² The article quotes the Advisor to the Director General of the Kazan 2013 Executive Directorate for Sports, Olga Pavlova, who says that the event is at a higher level because of the well-trained in comparison to the previous Universiade in China.²³

The articles' author, Olga Shkurenko claimed that Tatarstan's government achieved community consensus during Universiade through providing clean streets and removing traffic jams.²⁴ In support, Pavlova acknowledges that the only groups who protested the event were homosexuals who were not allowed to hold a parade during Universiade, and animal rights activists "demanding to cancel the Universiade in 'the city, where they are

²¹ Shkurenko, O. (2013, July 8). Na universiadnom polozhenii. Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224013>

²² Shkurenko, O. (2013, July 8). Na universiadnom polozhenii. Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224013>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

killing feral dogs.”²⁵ Ilсур Metshin noted that “Not everything was smooth” in trying to convince the local population to accept Universiade but still achieved less negative feedback than Sochi, for instance.²⁶ Thus, the Tatarstani government is portrayed as achieving consensus at a higher level than other regional governments. In the end, Universiade is, partially, lauded by *Kommersant*, in comparison to Vladivostok and Sochi.²⁷ For this reason, Tatarstan outcompetes many other NCGs interested in hosting large-scale events.

For maintaining order during the Universiade was employed a large police force with staff from all over Tatarstan and Russian. Shkurenko stated that it “defeat[ed] imagination.”²⁸ In total, 30,000 police and an additional 1500 armed-forces members were present in the city.²⁹ The cost to the Tatarstani budget was 10 million rubles but it was considered a necessity to avoid security risks. It was considered a necessity for Tatarstan to provide the feeling of a global mega-event that the event required by increasing the amount of security on the ground.

Tatarstani leadership is mentioned for its ability to avoid corruption scandals, which is another key component of event management. Skopin considers this skillset to be attributed to the regional government leaders’ role as “fathers of the nation.”³⁰ This position is portrayed as positive because they are not fighting only for themselves. As for the brand that Tatarstan promotes to the outside, the image from the federal government also differs. The main attribute being that multinationalism is not the reason for the Republic’s success in securing federal funding but only nationalism. In this way, the mega-events require an internal and external brand. An important aspect targeted in the Metshin interview is the subject of event management.³¹ The interviewer noted that, in contrast to Vladivostok and Sochi, “you [i.e. Metshin] had no corruption scandals. How

²⁵ Shkurenko, O. (2013, July 8). Na universiadnom polozhenii. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224013>

²⁶ Sitnina, V. (2013, July 8). "Skazat', chto vse bylo gladko, ya ne mogu". Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224771>

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Shkurenko, O. (2013, July 8). Na universiadnom polozhenii. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224013>

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Shkurenko, O. (2013, July 8). Na universiadnom polozhenii. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224013>

³¹ Sitnina, V. (2013, July 8). "Skazat', chto vse bylo gladko, ya ne mogu". Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224771>

did it turn out this way?”³² Metshin avoided answering the exact question, instead he described the transformation, focusing on the fact that it was important to utilize the federal funds, and that corruption is the result of a “few fallen tiles;” the question delves in the tenuous nature of federal subsidies and the reason why Tatarstan continues to attract federal inflows.³³

Both media outlets portray Tatarstan's ability to finish projects in a systemized and orderly manner. Prior to the opening of Universiade, the Tatarstani government alongside investors announced the opening of the Korston Hotel. Kuznetsov, Head of the Korston Group, noted the business-friendly nature of Tatarstan: “I went around three/fourths of the country, socialized with governors [...] nowhere are there such relations with an investor.”³⁴ The positive article sheds light on the atmosphere Tatarstan promotes to outsiders: modernity, transparency, and efficiency. A second example involves the coverage of the opening ceremony of Universiade. *Kommersant* noted that “the Olympic village was also prepared with the systemic character of Tatarstan.”³⁵ Thus, the attraction of Tatarstan remains its ability to attract investors and build projects on time.

Kommersant labelled Universiade as a “test” for the upcoming Sochi Olympics and a means for surpassing past mega-event.³⁶ Mayor Metshin repeated the comparison in a *Business Online* article: “if you don’t take into account the level of the participants, Kazan 2013 surpassed London 2012 on all key metrics.”³⁷ The narrative focused on the preparation for the Sochi Olympics. Safety remained a big concern during Universiade. *Business Online* published an article related to the use of drones, fighter jets, and military helicopters during Universiade. The response was slightly negative and skeptical of the usage of military aircraft to monitor the event. The article was titled, “Big Brother will

³² Sitnina, V. (2013, July 8). "Skazat', chto vse bylo gladko, ya ne mogu". Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2224771>

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Katargin, D. (2013, July 5). «Iz moyego kabineta net i poloviny togo vida, kak u vas...». Retrieved from *Business Online*: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83209#17>

³⁵ Kolesnikov, A. (2013, July 9). *Interesnoye nachinaniye*. Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2229470>

³⁶ Dospikhov, A. (2013, July 5). *S olimpiyskim privetom*. Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2226296>

³⁷ Katargin, D. (2013, July 8). «Tseremoniya otkrytiya – na 100 protsentov otechestvennyy produkt». Retrieved from *Business Online*: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83441>

observe Kazan with Drones.”³⁸ To answer the question “Is it necessary to have such military aircraft in Kazan?”³⁹ the journalist interviewed a military expert, who answered that, in his opinion, “this is too much firepower.”⁴⁰ While the article remains skeptical of reasons why the military would send warplanes, it concluded that Universiade served as a precursor to demonstrate the various government departments’ ability to cooperate during the Sochi Olympics but on a smaller scale.

In the end, both media outlets portrayed Universiade as an event that requires agreement both from the federal government and the NCG. On the side of the federal government, local event managers are needed to effectively oversee mega-events. This means avoiding corruption scandals, providing plans for mega-events to show potential solvency, an adequate amount of security, and achieving consensus among important local groups. If this idea is followed, Tatarstan found a niche in federal funding opportunities in Russia. But, the cultivation of an image is also necessary to receive federal funding for events. In providing funding, the Russian federal government achieves local compliance. The objective of sports capital cannot be achieved without responsible event management.

4.1.4 Tatar Cultural Events

One way for NCGs to engage in paradiplomacy is through their cultural events. In the realm of competitive identity, cultural events can cultivate a global audience (Anholt, 2007, pp. 109-110). Perhaps the only display of Tatar culture that escaped mere mentioning was during the celebration of Sabantuy, a holiday for various Volga nationalities like the Chuvash, Bashkir, and Tatars. To increase awareness of this event, the government moved Sabantuy to accommodate the presence of foreign tourists in Kazan. *Business Online* noted: “parallel from the export version of Sabantuy, behind fences and surrounded by thick cordons the city of Kazan’s Sabantuy gathered around ten-thousand city residents.”⁴¹ The author emphasized the delineation between the two groups and the public diplomacy occurring within one sphere. The export version of Sabantuy gathered the main political elites of Tatarstan. This included former President

³⁸ Latypov, T. (2013, July 5). «Bol'shoy brat» budet nablyudat' za Universiadoy s bespilotnikov. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83197>

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Katargin, D., & Rakhmatullin, B. (2013, July 13). Klod Lui Gal'yen: «Eto luchshaya Universiada za vsyu istoriyu FISU!». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83908>

Shaimiev, President Minnikhanov, Kazan Mayor Ilсур Metshin, the former Minister of Sport, Vitaly Mutko, who was also present along with former FISU President Claude-Louis Gallien. The Sabantuy celebration represented the largest, and seemingly, only distinctly Tatar cultural event that accommodated foreigners during the Universiade.

Business Online framed Sabantuy in a positive light and noted that the FISU President, Jean-Claude Gallien, declared that it was “the best Universiade in the history of FISU.”⁴² This became the headline for *Business Online*’s article about the event, and a repeatedly quoted statement moving forward as experts, government officials, and Russian citizens reflected on the 2013 Universiade.

Sabantuy was accepted by Russian officials and praised by the leaders of FISU in the coverage. In this way, the use of competitive identity is notable through utilizing public diplomacy and documenting the unique nature of Tatar culture. It is important to note that positivity is compulsory during the events, and with the necessity to responsibly manage Universiade to ensure future funding, Sabantuy represents the premier means of promoting Tatar culture.

4.1.5 Life after Universiade

The most important aspects regarding life after Kazan are related to the cultivated image from hosting the first mega-sporting event in the republic and the long-term feasibility of becoming embodying the brand: sports capital. The analysis of life after Kazan continued throughout the event. *Business Online* asked in an interview with the Kazan City Manager, Alexey Pesoshin, “is there life after Universiade?”⁴³ The article discussed that Kazan’s infrastructure will receive more investment after the Universiade ends and more than the prior year.⁴⁴ In addition, the solution to life after Universiade can be found in asking Kazan’s population what other mega-events should or can be held in the city.⁴⁵ Metshin believes that the investment in Universiade has transferred Tatarstan from the

⁴² Katargin, D., & Rakhmatullin, B. (2013, July 13). Klod Lui Gal'yen: «Eto luchshaya Universiada za vsyu istoriyu FISU!». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83908>

⁴³ Katargin, D. (2013, July 20). Aleksey Pesoshin otvetil na vopros, yest' li zhizn' posle Universiady. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/84497>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

periphery to a global hub for investment and entertainment. Thus, he answers positively that Tatarstan has hope, but still, that Tatarstan must find the answer to this question.

Perhaps, the most important expression of what Universiade gave to Tatarstan was provided by Marat Khairullin, the Deputy of the Government Council of the Republic of Tatarstan and the Economic Committee for Investment and Entrepreneurship.⁴⁶ He considered that experience was the greatest thing gained: in building and cooperating with the different federal departments and international organizations, with foreign tourists, with mass media outlets, etc. Khairullin mentions the difference in development since Millennium Kazan: “[then] a narrow circle of guests arrived at us: heads of the CIS countries and heads of the Russian regions. And, now, it is thousands of people from dozens of countries.”⁴⁷ His concluding thoughts were that Tatarstan has become an authority in this sphere and that it must make a bet on the development of Tatarstan in this area.

The role of the audience is vital to the successful implementation of Tatarstan’s competitive identity. *Business Online* released a poll on July 20th with interviews of leaders in Tatarstan in business, politics, and non-profit with the themes surrounding: “is Kazan a global city? Should or can Tatarstan or Kazan host the 2024 Olympics? How was security? Did you watch or attend the events? If you own a business, did it benefit?”⁴⁸ As it became apparent in their answers, the questions show the importance of image, Kazan’s future, event management, and personal interest in association with global mega-events. Moreover, the questions show that much of the importance of this paradiplomatic event is about ensuring the image of Tatarstan and Kazan. In achieving a quality reception, the NCG can then achieve a greater presence internationally.

Another discussion related to life after Universiade was the measure of optimism within Tatarstan about the future. *Business Online* examined results from a survey conducted by the Republic of Tatarstan and the Kazan Federal University around the “Evaluation of

⁴⁶ Katargin, D. (2013, July 20). Aleksey Pesoshin otvetil na vopros, yest' li zhizn' posle Universiady. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/84497>

⁴⁷ Maslenkova, E., Andreev, A., Semenova, J., Vagizov, M., & Kolebakina, E. (2013, July 20). Opros nedeli: Opravdala li Universiada vashi ozhidaniya i opaseniya? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/84397>

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Public Opinion about Problems with Public Safety and Activities of Law Enforcement in the Republic of Tatarstan.”⁴⁹ The general conclusion of the research is that the residents of Tatarstan are more optimistic about the future and that the public services and law enforcement have improved. *Business Online* relates this to Universiade and the flow of investment and alleviation of certain problems in Kazan: traffic, the building of sports facilities, and other social projects. Thus, the event achieved a short-term strategy of boosting the immediate benefits to the region.

The views of interviewees, representatives of businesses and research centers, are less optimistic. For example, business owner, Vladimir Pavlenko noted, “Tatarstan, besides oil, produces nothing special.”⁵⁰ All agree that there is a form of optimism; however, this optimism and satisfaction comes from the long-standing positive elements of Tatarstan’s economy. Director of Social Research and Citizens’ Initiatives, Lilia Sagitova underscored Pavlenko’s statement: “people go to work, the students study, there is an absence of conflict.”⁵¹ Moreover, Sagitova stated, “Tatarstan is well-developed in the oil, energy, and aviation sectors, but that the situation in the republic should not be idealized.”⁵² Satisfaction with the federal government’s investment in the Tatarstani economy is presented. Pavlenko states that “the investment of money has a result [the building of new facilities, improving roads, and trickle down from the builders who then spend the money within Tatarstan]. Because of this, there is optimism.”⁵³ The Universiade is not explicitly mentioned as a generator of income for Kazan but the investment of federal funding is. Rather, the increased focus from the federal government to Tatarstan outweighed any value provided from the strategy, substantiation, and symbolic titles placed in Kazan from the federal government. Thus, Kazan as an attractive place has increased but not enough to generate the large-scale trust of its imminent success.

⁴⁹ Mysko, V., Chernobrovkina, E., Maslenkova, E., & Akhkiyamova, L. (2013, July 11). Universiada-2013: uchenyye obespokoyeny «postrodovym sindromom». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83742>

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Mysko, V., Chernobrovkina, E., Maslenkova, E., & Akhkiyamova, L. (2013, July 11). Universiada-2013: uchenyye obespokoyeny «postrodovym sindromom». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83742>

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

Global visibility through global and cultural events require large-scale cultural events, which remain in the audience's mind for a long time. The only sports event left is the Summer Olympics. As noted by Anholt (2007): "The Summer Olympics is in a category of its own." This became an important narrative within *Business Online*. Regarding Kazan's application for the 2024 Summer Olympics, all respondents answered positively that they would support an application. The only skeptical response was given by a Deputy of the Government Council of Tatarstan, Marat Khairullin, who said that "Maybe it would be worth it to conduct some global exhibition, dedicated, for example, to progress in research and innovation."⁵⁴ Aside from Khairullin, the general view was that Kazan should apply for the Olympics after carrying out the World Aquatic Championships in 2015 and the FIFA World Cup in 2018. Davydova discussed the Olympics and FINA Aquatic Championships after the Universiade and stated that "Kazan is already prepared for the FINA Aquatic Championships."⁵⁵ FINA remained a key component of the continuation of Tatarstan's brand as hosting mega-events and Kazan's reputation as the sports capital of Russia. However, without the Summer Olympics Kazan must continue the pattern pursued with FINA and Universiade: convincing relatively peripheral sports events and international sports organizations to allow them to host their events.

Even though the future of mega-events is deemed certain with FINA 2015 and the FIFA World Cup 2018, Tatarstan has competition for holding mega-events thereafter. For example, the Russian Olympic Committee mentioned Saint Petersburg as the potential host of the 2024 Summer Olympics, which illustrates the problem of internal competition amongst Russian cities for global sporting events.⁵⁶ While Tatarstan is branded as the sports capital of the Russian Federation, it must still compete with other locations.

⁵⁴ Maslenkova, E., Andreev, A., Semenova, J., Vagizov, M., & Kolebakina, E. (2013, July 20). Opros nedeli: Opravdala li Universiada vashi ozhidaniya i opaseniya? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/84397>

⁵⁵ Abdullin, J. (2013, July 8). Anastasiya Davydova: «Na sportsmena nel'zya smotret' kak na mashinu po dobyvaniyu nagrad». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/83464>

⁵⁶ Kommersant. (2013, July 4). "Nasha ekonomika yeshche odno takoye masshtabnoye meropriyatiye ne vyderzhit". Retrieved from <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2226164>

4.2 FIFA World Cup – June 14th to July 15th, 2018

4.2.1 Official Diplomacy/Economic Diplomacy

Competitive Identity, as the combination of branding, export promotion, trade, investment, and public diplomacy, benefits in many ways from global mega-events. One of which is the chance for Tatarstan to conduct highly visible meetings with close heads of state. Within the published articles on the World Cup in Kazan, a few highlighted the arrival of foreign diplomats and former members of the government. The most important person to visit during the World Cup was Kazakhstani President, Nursultan Nazarbayev. It was his fourth visit to Tatarstan and his first since the Millennium Kazan. The discussion between President Minnikhanov and Nazarbayev mainly revolved around cultural affinities and the desire to increase economic ties between Kazakhstan and Tatarstan. Nazarbayev stated that “I came to the conclusion that our 700 million [dollars] in trade must increase to 1 billion.”⁵⁷ As seen through highly visible meetings with heads of state, the hosting of mega-events allows Tatarstan to increase economic ties and to emphasize the cultural importance of its foreign ties. During the event, President Minnikhanov gave Nazarbayev an honorary doctorate from Kazan Federal University.⁵⁸

As the World Cup continued in Kazan, the representative of the Kazan Kremlin, Lilia Galimova, discussed the topic of diplomacy and economic diplomacy as a benefit of hosting the World Cup. Galimova stated that they are examining the World Cup “not simply as an opportunity to show Kazan to tourists around the world, but as a platform for building business contacts.”⁵⁹ Though the results are hard to assess through the media analysis alone, the Tatarstani government met with Spanish ambassador and the Minister of Culture, as well as, a businessman, Mehdi Sanai, who is the leader of an Iranian bank. However, it appeared that Tatarstan suffered in some ways the effects of the political boycott that took place as ex-French President Nicholas Sarkozy, ex-German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder, and Princess Hisako Takamodo of Japan visited Tatarstan. There were

⁵⁷ Goloburdova, N., Sokolova, K., & Shafieva, R. (2018, June 15). «Nas ob"yedinyayet yedinoye tyurkskoye naslediye»: Nazarbayev pozhalel, chto 13 let ne yezdil v Kazan'. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/385612>

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Kirilov, M. (2018, June 21). Liliya Galimova o yazykovoy reforme: «Svidetel'stvuyem, chto nashe obrashcheniye bylo uslyshano!». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/386257>

no comments from the Tatarstani government on this issue and it was not directly mentioned in the publications surrounding the World Cup.

The strain from sanctions and economic stagnation on Russia damaged Tatarstan's image to foreign investors. In an interview with Shamil Ageev, the representative of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Tatarstan stated, "We [the Tatarstani government] understand that the problems have reached new heights, and we, at least, must show real life without embellishment. We have a high tax burden, low wages, and it's impossible to receive credit."⁶⁰ As it relates to the success of paradiplomacy, it was difficult to develop economic ties during the World Cup.

4.2.2 Tatar Cultural Events

The use of Tatar cultural events to appeal to outsiders took a more pronounced role during the FIFA World Cup. In comparison to Universiade, the discourse focused on more cultural events and how to develop a strategy that takes visitors to locations that resemble Tatar culture in a better light. *Business Online* profiled the Koresh World Championships. Koresh is a type of wrestling practiced across Central Asia with a specific Tatar-style. The article focused positively on the carrying out of the Koresh World Championships, and specifically, relating it to the World Cup. In this sense, Koresh was a way for Tatar culture to interact with the world and save the Tatar language and cultural traditions. As one interviewee noted, "As we are now applying effort to saving the Tatar language, such attention should also be devoted to fighting."⁶¹ The article attempts to compare Koresh with football by comparing the number of countries involved in the championships of both sports but acknowledges the vast differences between the two. Both Koresh and Sabantuy represent attempts to develop a space for Tatar culture during global mega-events. The discourse during the World Cup attempts to associate them with public diplomacy; however, both acknowledge the limitations of introducing Tatar culture to the outside world and the issues with language policy.

⁶⁰ Kirilov, M. (2018, June 21). Liliya Galimova o yazykovoy reforme: «Svidetel'stvuyem, chto nashe obrashcheniye bylo uslyshano!». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/386257>

⁶¹ Mukhametrakhimov, A. (2018, June 18). «Koresh – eto nashe iskusstvo, nasha kul'tura»: kak Minnakhmetovy ustroili svoj «mundial!». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/385765>

The government of Tatarstan planned Sabantuy during the FIFA World Cup in 2018. The article discussed the positives and negatives of hosting a cultural event during mega-events like the Confederations Cup, FINA Aquatics Championship, Universiade 2013, and FIFA 2018.⁶² One of the negatives is that the event was split into two groups: those who received official invites and the rest. The article highlights the dissatisfaction of residents at having to wait in lines and the division of the cultural celebration. Conversely, the article posts the satisfaction of visitors from various countries participating in Sabantuy, “Poles, Iranians, Portuguese, and a large delegation from Uruguay liked taking pictures with our women and dressing up in Russian and Tatar traditional costumes.”⁶³ Thus, *Business Online* noted that Sabantuy has become an important aspect of mega-events in Tatarstan but does have negative effects on the local populous. The ability to host large-scale Tatar cultural events is relatively limited, and with the growth of attendees, the concern is highlighted by local citizens about the size of the event impacting its quality. However, Sabantuy represented a distinctly Tatar option to expanding the mega-events hosted without external competition as exist in the realm of global mega-events.

A former member of the World Tatar Congress, Rinat Nasyrov, was interviewed by Business Online about his departure from the organization and on issues with the Tatar culture and language, and on issues with entrepreneurship in Russia. He noted that “There isn’t a problem with the Tatar language, [however], the deputies of the Tatarstani Government Council and deputies of the Government Duma from Tatarstan, almost one-hundred percent, voted against the [Tatar] language. I was completely disappointed.”⁶⁴ While Nasyrov believed that the Tatar language and culture remain alive, he considered that the Tatar people are not united and that the Tatarstani government possesses no role in helping them. Nasyrov continues, “Tatarstan is located inside of Russia and cannot change the politics, but it tries to unite people through positivity: Universiade passed, the World Cup is taking place, and the 100-year celebration of Tatarstan is being prepared. The Republic is changing through the positive. But the government is declaring that the

⁶² Platonov, O., & Mukhametrakhimov, A. (2018, June 23). «U vas kakaya-to smes' i tatarskogo, i russkogo – eto prikol'no». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/386495>

⁶³ Platonov, O., & Mukhametrakhimov, A. (2018, June 23). «U vas kakaya-to smes' i tatarskogo, i russkogo – eto prikol'no». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/386495>

⁶⁴ Badretin, G. (2018, July 7). Rinat Nasyrov: «Vsemirnyy kongress tatar, do svidaniya!». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/387954>

people should not work.”⁶⁵ Nasyrov’s response contributes to a wider discourse occurring about how Tatarstan treats issue within the republic: positivity is associated with the use of mega-events. However, Nasyrov believes they ignore many issues occurring among Tatars and in Tatarstan. The necessity of positivity in Tatarstan’s competitive identity is noteworthy, as the changes require consensus from the Russian federal government. Though the desire from a competitive identity might lead to an independent actor, Tatarstan remains dependent on the central government for implementing a branding strategy.

As the World Cup continued, issues relating to Tatar culture, language policy, and other problems grew increasingly related. In a *Business Online* article titled: “Vladimir Vladimirovich would arrive from Bogatye Saby inspired to say, ‘I would live there.’”⁶⁶ The Tatarstani Government Council discussed an ultimatum for the republic. They should create a Tatar Las Vegas, Tatarize their religion, and increase tourism to Bogatye Saby, a small town consisting of only Tatar language speakers.⁶⁷ While, Fatih Sibagatullin, a deputy in the Tatarstani Government Council, insisted to discuss the matter after the World Cup, the desire was to increase tourism to other places besides Sviyazhsk and Bulgar. Sibagatullin emphasized that tourism needs to promote Tatar culture and that the most popular tourist places caused great pain for Tatars, “[The island of Sviyazhsk] brought a lot of grief to the Tatar people – the war encampment of Ivan Grozny, his outpost for capturing Kazan, generally a deathly place. Then, there was a prison there where the intelligentsia was shot.”⁶⁸ Despite the view that indicates the tenuous history between Russians and Tatars, Sibagatullin insists that the Tatars inflicted the current damage upon themselves: “it is necessary for us to work with parents, not curse Volodin and Vladimir Putin and Dmitri Medvedev – it is necessary to work ourselves [...] we need to propagandize Tatar.”⁶⁹ While the World Cup is not mentioned as a source of the problems within Tatarstan, the desire to link global mega-events to parts of the republic

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Sibagatullin, F. (2018, June 23). «Vladimir Vladimirovich priyekhal iz Bogatykh Sabov voskhishchennym, govorit: «YA by tam zhil». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/386441>

⁶⁷ Sibagatullin, F. (2018, June 23). «Vladimir Vladimirovich priyekhal iz Bogatykh Sabov voskhishchennym, govorit: «YA by tam zhil». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/386441>

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

in its current form are a desire. The stance of Sibagatullin represents the major problem of an NCG with limited recognizability and attractiveness outside of Russia.

The coverage of Tatar culture came universally from *Business Online*. As for paradiplomacy, it highlights the joint structure of public diplomacy between Tatarstan and Russia. The way the image of Tatarstan is presented during the mega-events was of increasing importance, which called into question the benefits for the Tatar ethnic group as a part of the events. However, the Tatarstani officials remained unwilling to blame the central government for any issues.

4.2.3 Audience: Service Sector & Individual Tourists

After the World Cup in Kazan finished, the Government Committee on Tourism in the Republic of Tatarstan commented on the positive figures seen during the event. Tourists spent 11.2 billion rubles and 300,000 visited, and the committee projected about 18 billion rubles spent as the projections were mainly on the visitors who purchased tickets to the World Cup games.⁷⁰

However, *Business Online* noted the overall stimulus for the local economy critically. As the FIFA World Cup approached the final week in Kazan, *Business Online* interviewed 13 business owners, who mostly considered that the World Cup was successful.⁷¹ Zufar Gayazov mentioned, “In our shops located in the city center, the situation improved, because [football] fans mainly walk on Bauman.”⁷² If the location was not on Bauman Street, the main tourist area in central Kazan, the World Cup provided little increase in business. Regarding a traditional tourist location, Sviyazhsk, Artem Silkin, the general director of the “Island City Sviyazhsk,” stated that due to mega-events “there is a limit on the movement of transportation and an increase in prices on hotels, airplane and train tickets. This leads to a fall in domestic tourism...”⁷³ While certain sectors succeed, they succeed within small boundaries, and this is displayed in a negative light.

⁷⁰ Abdullin, J., Shamilov, A., Zainullin, D., & Zimagulov, V. (2018, July 16). Kruche uzhe ne budet: chemu nas nauchil CHM-2018? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388780>

⁷¹ Business Online. (2018, June 30). «Prikhodili frantsuzy, khoteli skidku v 50%, vidimo, dumali, chto priyekhali v bananovuyu stranu». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/387189>

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

In a negative article, Timur Dugin, a hostel owner in Kazan, was published saying “the World Cup is a show the government puts on for itself.” The hostel owner claimed that the police, the health board, as well as a recent law passed in 2017, limited his profits. According to Dugin, a law regulating accommodation prices during the World Cup and Confederation Cup set the minimum price for any hostel at “3400 rubles per room.”⁷⁴ This limits the profits for hostel and hotel owners during both sporting events. One of the most immediate payoffs in hosting a sporting event is to the local economy and the service sector. However, with mixed results, the ability for Tatarstan to rely on consensus is a challenge to the republic’s ability to attract more inflow of federal funds.

More emphasis was placed on noting the presence of tourists in Tatarstan and the account of their stay in Kazan. For example, *Business Online* profiled the tweets of an Englishman who said he wanted to work for Tatarstan’s tourism agency. Indeed, his views on the event were positive: “is there any chance I can stay in Kazan after the #WorldCup and get a job in the city’s tourism department? Please.”⁷⁵ The contribution of tourists to the overall discourse occurring around the World Cup was much larger in comparison with Universiade.

Groups of Tatars who never visited Kazan came to support Germany during the event. *Business Online* published a detailed article about this on July 15th. Perhaps, the most notable parts of the interview with the Tatars were their negative responses to the absence of Tatar culture in everyday life. “We wanted to hear the Tatar language, but on the streets of Kazan, the Tatar language cannot be heard, young people are not conversing – there’s no emotion when walking on the street...it gives a sense of passivity and depression.”⁷⁶ Furthermore the interviewee states, “as foreigners, we did not see the Tatar language here, this is offensive.”⁷⁷ Perhaps a positive note given from the article was about the Tatar cuisine: “in Kazan, we eat echnochmaks!”⁷⁸ In addition, the issue with language and lack of visible Tatar traditional outfits received negative feedback from the visiting Tatars.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Business Online. (2018, July 20). Angliyskiy bolezshchik khochet ostat'sya v Kazani i trudoustroit'sya v departament turizma. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/386139>

⁷⁶ Badretdin, G. (2018, July 15). «My, tatory, poyedem v Kazan' i podderzhim nashu, nemetskuyu, komandu». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388744>

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

The strategy appeared to have developed a strong image for certain tourists for sports; however, for those looking to engage in Tatar culture, the audience rejected certain aspects of Tatarstan as the center of Tatar culture.

4.2.4 Continued Implementation of Competitive Identity

There was a FIFA press briefing which invited the spiritual leader of Muslims in the Republic of Tatarstan, Kamil Samigullin. As expressed during Universiade, Samigullin noted regarding the multifaith nature of Kazan, “this is daily work that depends on all of us. We need to come to an understanding that Russia is our common home, and at the same time, each [religion] has its own apartment. We can live in one place: Christians, Muslims, Atheists...”⁷⁹ The coverage of *Business Online* taps into a narrative utilized during mega-events in Tatarstan and the form of public diplomacy engaging outsiders. It allows for Tatarstan and Russia to highlight their ability to peacefully coexist and to bring together tourists from different religious and ethnic backgrounds.

The brands are covered skeptically by *Kommersant*, which profiled each city hosting the World Cup. The profile of Kazan is represented in what separates the city and the region from the other 13 cities hosting football matches: Sabantuy and Bugulma, a Tatar version of the alcoholic drink, Jägermeister.⁸⁰ Sabantuy, a Tatar summer festival originally celebrated among rural farmers, was again moved to accommodate the arrival of both internal and external migrants. The brands established during Universiade endured in the five years between Universiade and the FIFA World Cup. As *Kommersant* noted, “Kazan loves to call itself ‘The Third Capital of Russia (This brand is registered),’ and ‘The Sports Capital of Russia.’” The idea of Kazan’s brand has remained a stable part of introducing Kazan to Russians and outsiders during mega-events. Though, *Kommersant* meets the brand with skepticism, which shows the relative lack of trust surrounding the title. In addition, the article shows the long-term place-holders of Tatarstan’s touristic brand: The Kul-Sharif Mosque, Bulgar, and Sviyazhsk are mentioned due to their addition as UNESCO Heritage Sites. The additions to this were the mentioning of Chistopol and Yelabuga, cities which were home to great writers during the Soviet era. As first noted

⁷⁹ Platonov, O. (2018, June 20). Muftiy RT o futbol'nykh fanakh iz Avstralii: «Ochen' chisto razgovarivayut na tatarskom!». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/386030>

⁸⁰ Antonov, K. (2018, June 13). Kazan!: Bugul'ma i Sabantuy. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3650015>

during Universiade, the Old Tatar Village also became an important part of Kazan for foreign tourists mentioned.

Business Online took the opposite stance regarding Kazan's brand. In understanding what was learned from the World Cup, *Business Online* noted that "it was interesting to observe how well the stereotypes [brands] about the city work that Kazan residents themselves perceive with irony. Fans in personal conversations and foreign press remember [Kazan as] the 'sports capital of Russia,' and the 'third capital.'⁸¹ On a more critical note on Tatar-Russian relations, "one group of tourists [said] 'Kazan is a Northern/Russian Istanbul.'⁸² *Business Online* then noted, "possibly a new meme will be used for the attraction of tourists, although Moscow will not like such comparisons."⁸³ Indeed, this comparison was made again by a Japanese sportscaster during the World Cup: "I feel the atmosphere of Turkey here. [Tatarstan] has the feeling of the East, but it is forbidden to say that it is quite Europe."⁸⁴ Although the association in cultural relations does not make the connection between Istanbul and Kazan, surprisingly neither references were mentioned in the official branding of Kazan and Tatarstan. Moreover, the messaging that "Moscow will not like [the] comparison" underscores the idea the requirements of Tatarstan's competitive identity.⁸⁵ In sum, the hosting of multiple mega-events led to a somewhat trusted image of Kazan from tourists and Russians themselves. However, the continued development of Tatarstan's image requires more investment and the hosting of more mega-events.

4.2.5 Ensuring the Future

The end of the FIFA World Cup in Kazan triggered, like after Universiade, the question: Is there life after the World Cup? In this instance, the answers came with increased uncertainty. *Business Online* published an article documenting Tatarstan's new position

⁸¹ Abdullin, J., Shamilov, A., Zainullin, D., & Zimagulov, V. (2018, July 16). Kruche uzhe ne budet: chemu nas nauchil CHM-2018? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388780>

⁸² Abdullin, J., Shamilov, A., Zainullin, D., & Zimagulov, V. (2018, July 16). Kruche uzhe ne budet: chemu nas nauchil CHM-2018? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388780>

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Valeev, A. (2018, July 4). Kazan' napomnila yaponsam Turtsiyu. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/387565>

⁸⁵ Abdullin, J., Shamilov, A., Zainullin, D., & Zimagulov, V. (2018, July 16). Kruche uzhe ne budet: chemu nas nauchil CHM-2018? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388780>

as a provider of education and training for future leaders and volunteers in mega-events.⁸⁶ The volunteers present at second annual FISU Leaders Academy 2018 would receive education on how to coordinate and direct volunteers and how to work for and with international sports organizations. Special emphasis was placed on the future Winter Universiade in Krasnoyarsk in 2019 and the WorldSkills 2019 event in Tatarstan during the event for training their volunteers. The leader of FISU, Oleg Metytsin, stated: “the organizational committee for the Krasnoyarsk Universiade is using this forum as an opportunity to receive additional experience, studying the groundwork of representing other countries.”⁸⁷ In the article, the view that Tatarstan has managed to accrue expertise in organizing mega-events is documented positively.

The WorldSkills competition is the next mega-event to take place in Kazan. It is a competition dedicated to allowing students in high school and college to show their vocational skills. It occurs every two years and Kazan successfully won the ability to host in 2019. As for the future after the FIFA World Cup, WorldSkills served as one answer to alleviating the absence of any major events after 2018. An article published by *Business Online* interviews the President of WorldSkills, Simon Bartley, along with a few experts in tourism and mega-events.⁸⁸ They all take a positive stance towards hosting the WorldSkills event. Bartley underscores to major points: the price of hosting and the competitive attendance with the World Cup. “It is cheaper than the 2018 World Cup,” he states. Bartley adds that, as for attendance, “this time we are talking about 250 thousand people.”⁸⁹ This is compared with the 254 thousand visitors in Kazan during their time hosting the World Cup.

In comparison with the World Cup, the President of Tour Operators of the Tatarstani Republic, Ramil Muftakhov noted that “this year, tourists at the 2018 World Cup were attracted to some specific events. If we talk about the additional attraction of guests, then

⁸⁶ Abdullin, J. (2018, July 18). Aleksey Pesoshin: «Na CHM – 2 tysyachi volonterov. Cherez god zhdem 2,5 tysyachi na WorldSkills». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/385766>

⁸⁷ Abdullin, J. (2018, July 18). Aleksey Pesoshin: «Na CHM – 2 tysyachi volonterov. Cherez god zhdem 2,5 tysyachi na WorldSkills». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/385766>

⁸⁸ Scriabin, I., & Vildanova, E. (2018, July 11). «Eto deshevle, chem CHM-2018»: WorldSkills 2019 khochet sobrat' bol'she zriteley, chem futbol. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388424>

⁸⁹ Ibid.

the only thing that will give impetus is the weekly holding of any kind of events.”⁹⁰ Thus, the alternative to holding only large mega-events is presented. Muftakov continues, “In this past few years, there has been a clear trend: people do not come to Kazan only for some event here. They come for musicals, art festivals, food festivals – all of this attracts people.”⁹¹ In this view, Kazan can attract more tourists by holding smaller events on a more frequent basis.

The other two interviewees commented on the ability for Kazan to attract still more tourists through this event. Vitaly Kolgin believes that the WorldSkills event will be comparable to Universiade 2013: “of course, the economic effect will be for hotels, restaurant owners, and the service sector – they all will receive a big, new flow of people, who will spend money.”⁹² The view here is comparable to Universiade but focuses on the traditional economic benefits of hosting mega-events. The amount of reconstruction to be done is a lot less, even the idea of building a new hotel for WorldSkills was rejected.⁹³

The Olympics remained an important aspect of the future of Kazan and hosting mega-events. *Business Online* published three articles about the Olympics, the first was with a journalist Nick Butler who stated that “[...] in the near future, clearly not. Nobody would vote for Kazan now...the anticipated host of the 2032 Olympics is determined in 2025. This is very soon, and at this time a lot can change.”⁹⁴ Butler continued on the current political situation between Russia and the West: “the problem is not with your city, or republic, the problem is with your country. Nobody wants to give out the Olympics to Russia and its current government.”⁹⁵ This relates to the doping scandal (2015) levied at the Russian government that also led to their temporary suspension of membership in the Olympics.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Scriabin, I., & Vildanova, E. (2018, July 11). «Eto deshevle, chem CHM-2018»: WorldSkills 2019 khochet sobrat' bol'she zriteley, chem futbol. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388424>

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Business Online. (2018, July 11). Zhurnal'nik Nik Batler: «U Kazani net shansov na Olimpiadu». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388324>

⁹⁵ Ibid.

The infrastructure necessary to host the Olympics is also a concern but judging by the history of Tatarstan's association with the federal government, it holds potential for further investment in large projects. Butler stated: "a multitude of stadiums remained after Universiade, but a few of them would need reconstructing, they do not fit the technical requirements of the International Olympic Committee."⁹⁶ He continued, "as a whole, the city has infrastructure on the European level, but the Olympics, nevertheless, demand serious preparation and investment."⁹⁷ While this is a negative when looking at Kazan in its current form, the Tatarstani government remains one of the only NCGs that can handle the demands of the Olympics while achieving consensus and a result that is without major budgetary pitfalls and corruption scandals. If Tatarstan's government proposed the 2032 Summer Olympics to the Russian government, they would present one of the best options in Russia.

On July 16th, the day after the World Cup ended in Russia, two articles released from *Business Online* covered the future of mega-events in Kazan and the obstacles moving forward. In the immediate future, Kazan has created partnerships with the Red Bull Air Race, World Skills 2019, and the one part of the World Swimming Championships in 2022. However, the events hardly compete with the World Cup's significance as a global sports event.

The only major sports event left to hold is the Olympics, but the article noted three big obstacles: 1) the Russian Doping Scandal 2) External Competition and Internal Competition 3) Indecision about development around event tourism.⁹⁸ The Russian doping (2015) scandal made international sports organizations more hesitant to give Russia another large sporting event. The issue with competition from outsiders is recognized as multifaceted with places like India's capital, New Delhi, vying to hold the 2032 Summer Olympics. More importantly, Saint Petersburg, Moscow, and Sochi appear to be other contenders for the 2032 Olympics. Lastly, Vladimir Leonov said that there is another aspect to consider: "should Kazan continue developing the sports avenue in mega-tourism? Or leave this strategy behind? Maybe, there is a point to move into

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Business Online. (2018, July 11). Zhurnalnik Nik Batler: «U Kazani net shansov na Olimpiadu». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388324>

⁹⁸ Abdullin, J., Shamilov, A., Zainullin, D., & Zimagulov, V. (2018, July 16). Kruche uzhe ne budet: chemu nas nauchil CHM-2018? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388780>

something else, after all, will there be anything else cooler than the World Cup?”⁹⁹ In addition, the Minister of Sports for Tatarstan, Vladimir Leonov, confirmed that the Olympics in 2032 would be a possibility for Kazan. Leonov noted, regarding the future of Kazan, that “the World Cup is over, but life will continue. We asked this question earlier, is there life after Universiade, remember?”¹⁰⁰ The conversation continues into the same obstacles for the future of holding the Olympics: the doping scandal in 2015 and the internal competition. In the immediate future, Leonov noted, “of course, we would like a big project. We are resting a little and rethinking all of this.”¹⁰¹ The end of the article quotes the President of the Olympic Committee of Russia, “in the capital of Tatarstan there is a well-developed sports infrastructure. Kazan unites Asia and Europe and is a special cosmopolitan center.”¹⁰² The strategy remains in the eyes of Tatarstani and Russian officials but faces numerous obstacles for hosting an event larger than Universiade or the World Cup.

The competitive identity strategy has led to strategy for cultivating Kazan’s long-term image through both hosting smaller, more frequent events and preparation for the Summer Olympics. Both are pursued by the Tatarstani government, but perhaps the most challenging aspect for the republic is the current position of the Russian government. The position of the Russian government with increasingly poor relations with the West and the doping scandal placed Kazan’s brand as sports capital under increased jeopardy.

4.3 The Annexation of Crimea – February 26th to March 26th, 2014.

The Tatarstani government communicated with the Crimean Tatars before and after Russia annexed Crimea. Tatarstan served a specific purpose in the process as Tatars share historical relations with the Crimean Tatar ethnic group: Islamic, Turkic language family, and a cultural connection with Turkic groups across Eurasia. The Tatarstani government served as a solution to a problem in Russian foreign policy. Specifically, the Crimean Tatars desired to boycott the referendum and wanted to remain unified with Ukraine. Tatarstan possessed a way to mediate the situation.

⁹⁹ Abdullin, J., Shamilov, A., Zainullin, D., & Zimagulov, V. (2018, July 16). Kruche uzhe ne budet: chemu nas nauchil CHM-2018? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388780>

¹⁰⁰ Zimagulov, V. (2018, July 16). «Olimpiada v Kazani? Vse vso ponimayut»: Leonov rasskazal, yest' li zhizn' posle CHM-2018. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388873>

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

The beginning of the analysis is on February 26th, 2014. *Business Online* published an article surrounding recent protests in Crimea against Euromaidan.¹⁰³ During this protest, encompassed of anti-Maidan supporters and Pro-Russian supporters, two-thousand Crimean Tatars arrived in support of the Ukrainian solidarity and Euromaidan. The article interviews multiple experts in Russia on the topic. Most of which consider that Crimean should still be Russian, Crimean Tatars will be served better as a Russian region, and finally, that the Crimean Tatars are divided between the prospects of a united Ukraine, separating from Ukraine, and separating and joining Russia.¹⁰⁴

Perhaps the problems that led to Tatarstan's involvement were shown immediately on February 26th. Igor Miroshnichenko, a member of the Political Council of the All-Ukrainian Association, said that "the Crimean Tatars are absolutely united in their wish to live in an independent, united Ukraine."¹⁰⁵ On the contrary, the General Director of Folk Arts and Crafts for the Republic of Tatarstan and a Crimean Tatar, Nuri Mustafayev, argued that "Russia should do everything possible to return Crimea to the bosom of our government."¹⁰⁶ He continues: "if Crimea separates from Ukraine, on the other hand, we will make the question of moving people softer."¹⁰⁷ Mustafayev's response suggests his misalignment with Crimean Tatars on the issues relating to historical movements of people, specifically, the Crimean Tatar history during the Soviet Union. The Crimean Tatar's history shrouded the visits from Tatarstani officials in a negative light. Lastly, Aleksandr Khramchikhin, a Director of the Institute for Political and War Analysis in Moscow stated that "[the idea that the] Crimean Tatars are for [remaining part of Ukraine]' is simply illegitimate. The Majilis, which has long ago stopped representing all of the interests of Crimean Tatars, is saying '[that they are] for [remaining part of Ukraine]'.¹⁰⁸ As the situation in Crimea worsened in the eyes of Russian media, the issue of dissent among the Crimean Tatars became increasingly important and soon led to the

¹⁰³ Gavrilenko, A., Akhkiyomova, L., & Kazantsev, V. (2014, February 26). «Yevromaydan yedet v Krym». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98269>

¹⁰⁴ Gavrilenko, A., Akhkiyomova, L., & Kazantsev, V. (2014, February 26). «Yevromaydan yedet v Krym». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98269>

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

involvement of the Tatarstani government in the negotiation and mediation process occurring in Kazan.

The next few days the Tatarstani government became more involved in the events in Crimea. As *Kommersant* noted on February 27th, “radicals on the side of the Crimean Tatars pushed away those who supported the division of Ukraine.”¹⁰⁹ The end of the article highlighted the Tatarstani parliament's statement: “Rustan Minnikhanov urged Crimean Tatars to make peace in agreement with the Russian population of Crimea.”¹¹⁰ In another set of interviews on the 28th, Crimean, Rafael Khakimov, a Deputy of the Tatarstani Parliament, commented negatively about interference in sovereign affairs of Ukraine. He stated that “Russia should not think about the division of Ukraine.” Similarly, the former president of Tatarstan and Deputy of the Tatarstani Parliament, Shaimiev, stated that “it is necessary to defend the interests of a large number of Russians,” but then he continues saying that “it is their domestic conflict. This is a sovereign government.”¹¹¹

On February 28th, the Tatarstani parliament decided to send a delegation to mediate the conflict in Crimea. However, many onlookers assessed the issue of Tatarstan's involvement differently. Sergei Sergeev, a political scientist at the Kazan National Research Technological University, said that “though the Crimean Tatars are not close, they are the relatives to Tatars. And Tatarstan wants to show itself in the international arena. It is not quite understood if it was done by their own initiative or by the initiative of the federal center.”¹¹² The representative of the Tatar Societal Center, Galishan Nuriahmet, stated that “[this decision was taken] only under the pressure of Moscow,” he continues, “in this way, the federal authorities are trying to ‘divide and conquer’ the Crimean and Volga Tatars.”¹¹³ Lastly, *Business Online* published an opinion piece that promoted the sovereignty of Ukraine as the best way to allow for the autonomy of Crimea: “Crimean Tatars are fighting for their national interests in the current case speaking as defenders of the Ukrainian government's integrity. The whole problem with this is the

¹⁰⁹ Lubnina, Y., & Roizman, A. (2014, February 27). "V etikh usloviyakh slova bespolezny, primimayutsya tol'ko deystviya". Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2417612>

¹¹⁰ Lubnina, Y., & Roizman, A. (2014, February 27). "V etikh usloviyakh slova bespolezny, primimayutsya tol'ko deystviya". Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2417612>

¹¹¹ Antonov, K. (2014, February 28). Tatarstan vyshel na Krymskiy poluostrov. Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2418436>

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

growth of the xenophobic mood in the Russian Federation, and pseudo-patriotic rhetoric in circles close to power [which] obviously pushes Crimean Tatars away from Russia.”¹¹⁴ Moreover, the Zulfanovich noted that Moscow is aware of the Volga and Crimean Tatar ties through the World Tatar Congress, but “without concrete proposals about the regulation of problems the effectiveness of the visits will be weak.”¹¹⁵ Tatarstan enters the meetings with little productive measures to suggest and comes from a government that has limited their sovereignty in the past. While the Tatarstani government became an important part of the interaction with Crimea diplomatically, it developed a few discussion points that lie deep within Tatarstan’s association with foreign governments and the federal center.

4.3.1 Russian & Tatarstani Stance: Selling Tatarstan

The first of multiple visits from political and cultural leaders from Tatarstan began in late February. After the Tatar delegation returned, the representatives held a press conference where *Business Online* posted the individual comments of the Government Council of the Republic of Tatarstan on March 2nd.¹¹⁶ According to the interviewees, the main mission of their visit was to talk with local leaders and gain first-hand knowledge about the situation unfolding in Crimea. The representatives spent time with members of the Crimean parliament and with various societal groups in Crimea. The association with the Crimean Tatars was positive according to the interviewees who claimed that the Crimean Tatars are prepared to work with the Russian government. Most importantly, the representatives learned that people, especially, the Crimean Tatars dealt with many problems since the fall of the Soviet Union.¹¹⁷

The Tatarstani delegation mentioned positive developments in their association with the Crimean Tatars. The representative from the World Tatar Congress, Rinat Zakirov, said that “by the request of the head of the Majilis, we attended their talks with Russian senators. It was confirmed, that the Crimean Tatars are ready to cooperate with Russia.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Zulfatovich, A. I. (2014, February 28). Krymskiy uzal. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/203344>

¹¹⁵ Zulfatovich, A. I. (2014, February 28). Krymskiy uzal. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/203344>

¹¹⁶ Andreev, A. (2014, March 2). Rinat Zakirov: «V marte predstaviteli Medzhliisa krymskikh tatar priyedet v Kazan'». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98561>

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

Later in the article, it was confirmed that the Majilis and World Congress of Tatars (headquartered in Kazan) expanded their current relations through signing a cooperation agreement. The Majilis also asked for financial support from Tatarstan, which the topic was discussed casually. Next, Razil Valeev noted that Crimean Tatars would like more “mutual relations and contacts with Tatarstan.”¹¹⁹ In addition, the results were that Crimean Tatars wanted more educational relations and for peace to be established in Crimea. Another representative answered: “Crimean Tatars were strongly for Maidan. But after communication with our representatives, I think, a change happened in the feelings of Chubarov [the leader of the Majilis] and his supporters. They will work with us.”¹²⁰ As the conversation shows, the projected stance of Tatarstani officials strongly aligns with the Russian central government’s position. Indeed, the officials are interested in their siding with the pro-Russian members of the Crimean government.

On March 5th, President Minnikhanov arrived in Crimea with another group of representatives from Tatarstan. He would meet with various representatives from the Crimean Tatar community, as well as officials in the Crimean government. Minnikhanov would start contributing to the discourse in trying to create more connections, and furthermore, attempting to remove the tension of Crimean Tatar – Russian relations. The history of the Crimean Tatars has left many of the leaders interested in returning to Russia. Minnikhanov noted that “they experienced a very big tragedy [...] We cannot be indifferent to their fate. I will meet with their representatives and mediate. If it is within my power, then we want to strengthen our contacts.”¹²¹ A Crimean Tatar and Businessmen, Damir Galiullin, interviewed in this article stated, “the Tatarstani delegation came with that goal to persuade Crimean Tatars to agree to the places [a set number of government seats in the Crimean government] which they offered them in exchange for their silence. Crimean Tatars did not agree with this, and they are against it. How the event will develop further, I do not know, but I think Russia will take Crimea.”¹²²

¹¹⁹ Andreev, A. (2014, March 2). Rinat Zakirov: «V marte predstaviteli Medzhliisa krymskikh tatar priyedet v Kazan'». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98561>

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Gavrilenko, A., Kazantsev, V., & Nigmatullin, I. (2014, March 5). Rustam Minnikhanov: «Krymskiye khany pravili Kazanskim khanstvom. Istoriya yest' istoriya, yeye my tozhe ne dolzhny zabyvat'...». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98841>

¹²² Ibid.

Minnikhanov shows sympathy towards the Crimean Tatars history; however, remains aligned with the Russian stance of joining them to the pro-Russia groups in Crimea.

On March 6th, the Supreme Council of Crimea notified the Russia government that it wished to have a referendum which allowed Crimea to become a subject of the Russian Federation. A representative of Crimea stated that Minnikhanov showed “broad diplomatic abilities [...]. I am convinced that Crimean Tatars will use their historical chance for the regeneration of their rights in the constitution of Crimea as a subject of the Russian Federation and receive worthy financing of all programs for returning of the deported to normal living conditions.”¹²³ During a meeting on the same day, Minnikhanov stated, “it is necessary, of course, to understand the Majilis, before giving an evaluation about why they are not pro-Russia. We can understand that these people went through such a tough journey: 45 percent of the population was killed during deportations. Even though [the deaths] are connected to the Soviet Union, Russia is the successive ruler.”¹²⁴ Minnikhanov continued: “it is not necessary to blame them [Crimean Tatars] for this [...] in this we are to blame [...] because we did not work with them earlier [...] I mean this is not my power [...] this is our federal government.”¹²⁵ Dealing with the issue of the Crimean Tatars brings into the discussion the issue of history, and how it is represented in the current era: Tatarstan’s relationship with the central government. Moreover, Minnikhanov shows the limitations of federal authorities through questions why the Russian central government avoided external involvement with Crimean Tatars in the past, or at least, delegated the responsibility to Tatarstan. In this way, Minnikhanov shows his dismay with the paradiplomacy in Russia: the necessity of complete alignment with the Russian government disallows ties between other groups to form. In other words, greater decentralization may have allowed this situation to be handled differently.

Whether the Russian federal government believed Tatarstan could resolve the conflict in Crimea remains unknown. The Russian government embraced the image of Tatarstan as a peacemaker and positive representation of center-periphery relations. However, the

¹²³ Gavrilenko, A., Nigmatullin, I., Kazantsev, V., & Sergeev, Y. (2014, March 6). Myatezhnyy Krym vzorval informatsionnyuyu bombu. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98924>

¹²⁴ Chernobrovkina, E. (2014, March 6). Rustam Minnikhanov: «Lyudi v Krymu nedootsenivayut svoi vozmozhnosti. YA im popytalsya eto ob"yasnit'». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98943>

¹²⁵ Ibid.

theme of positivity is translated from Tatarstan's hosting of mega-events to their mediation of the situation in Crimea. Tatarstan offered largely irrelevant solutions to Crimean Tatar concerns. Though Tatarstan acted again in coordination with the Russian federal government, the indication that Tatarstan wanted increased capacity was alluded to by Minnikhanov. Thus, the utilization of Tatarstan as a resource in international affairs requires concessions on the federal government's part.

4.3.2 The Crimean Tatar Response

The initial Crimean Tatar position on Russian and Tatarstani involvement in Crimea was negative. Moreover, the position of Crimean Tatars, which remained unchanged before and after the Tatarstani mediation. The leaders of the Crimean Tatar community spoke outwardly that they wished to remain part of Ukraine and rejected the legitimacy of the referendum. For example, the historical leaders Mustafa Cemilev, and the leader of the Majilis, another word for council, at the time, Refat Chubarov, met with officials but questioned the timing of the delegation's arrival during such a chaotic period. On March 4th, *Kommersant* interviewed Refat Chubarov, the representative of the Majilis in Crimea.¹²⁶ To the question, "are other governments giving out support to you? Recently the Turkish Ministry of International Affairs noted their readiness to help Crimea, the authorities in Tatarstan also expressed their position [to help];"¹²⁷ Chubarov answered, "the authorities in Tatarstan represent one subject of the Russian Federation and cannot embody any difference from the Russian government."¹²⁸ Furthermore, Chubarov stated, "we met with representatives of Tatarstan, societal representatives, writers, but during this, we told them, that development of our cultural and scientific connections is better to discuss in a more favorable situation."¹²⁹

The confusion about the arrival of Tatarstani officials, and further, the impressions left on the leaders of the Crimean Tatar community were expressed on March 7th as well. Maxim Shevchenko, a popular journalist and television host, expressed the reservations the Crimean Tatars had about their association with Tatarstan: "I called the Simferopol from Moscow, and talked with guys from the Majilis and other activists. They met with

¹²⁶ Ryabchun, J. (2014, March 4). "Vyvodit' lyudey na mitingi protiv vooruzhennykh soldat my ne budem". Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/24222>

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

Minnikhanov with great respect, noting, that they were thankful for his efforts...but a question hung over their heads, why no officials from the presidential administration or soldiers came to them.”¹³⁰ On March 7th, *Business Online* conducted an interview with Chubarov about the visit from Tatarstani officials: “the Tatarstani delegation signed an immediate agreement with the appointed government of Crimea. We were not previously familiar with the text and the terms of the agreement. We are still not acquainted with them today [...]. I don’t want to say that our Tatar guests offered us nothing specific – that’s not true. But, some members of the Majilis expressed bewilderment that the big, peaceful arrival of Tatarstan is corresponded with the arrival of the Russian army.”¹³¹ Another meeting occurred between Shaimiev and the former leader of the Majilis, Mustafa Cemilev on March 12th. Initially the meeting was supposed to occur between them in Tatarstan, however, the meeting was moved to Moscow, where Cemilev only agreed to meet with Putin after meeting with Shaimiev.¹³² The main idea expressed here summed up the discourse from the Crimean Tatars and impacted the conversations thereafter.

As seen through both the Russian and Tatarstani stance and the Crimean Tatar stance, the Tatarstani government possessed importance to the mediation from a cultural perspective. However, Tatarstan’s lack of prior relations with Crimean Tatars hindered any real diplomacy. Thus, Tatarstan’s arrival appeared largely symbolic even to the Crimean Tatars. In addition, Tatarstan’s image as one of the most influential NCGs in Russia and as a multinational, multifaith region triggered multiple discussions about the nature of Russian federalism.

4.3.3 Tatarstan’s Competitive Identity & Crimean Autonomy

The Annexation of Crimea led to the discourse around the meaning of Tatarstan’s relations with the federal government. One comparison, which is made twice by commentators in *Business Online*, was with Leopold the Cat, i.e. Tatarstan plays the role

¹³⁰ Kolebakina, E. (2014, March 7). Maksim Shevchenko: «Krymskiye tatory nikogda ne imeli dela s Moskvoy, a seychas im predlozhili imet' delo s Kazan'yu». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/99031>

¹³¹ Nigmatullin, I. (2014, March 7). Refat Chubarov: «V normal'nykh usloviyakh za prisoyedineniye Kryma k Rossii ne progolosovalo by i 35 protsentov». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98976>

¹³² Katargin, D., Kazantsev, V., Maslova, K., & Kashapov, R. (2014, March 12). Shaymiyev stroit most mezhdru Krymom i Moskvoy. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/99294>

of Leopold the Cat, a cartoon character from television that aired in Russia and the USSR who is responsible for keeping two mice under control. An additional connection is made to the history of the Kazan cat which is commemorated in a statue in central Kazan today. The Kazan cats were used by Catherine the Great to take care of the mice problem within Saint Petersburg. The association with Leopold the Cat and the Kazan cats is that Tatarstan serves as a tool for the central government to solve certain issues, while simultaneously being unable to act outside of Moscow's will: "the official structure of Tatarstan is completely regulated on the federal level, the Russian-Tatars cannot act independently from the Russian regime."¹³³ Thus, the question of Tatarstan's autonomy in foreign relations is noted negatively.

The question of language, education, and NCG autonomy came to the forefront as Crimean Tatars and other interviewees criticized the system of relations in Tatarstan with the federal government. Rafael Khakimov noted, "[Crimean Tatars] have their arguments [for not joining the Russian Federation] ...if Crimea joins Russia, they will have broadened powers, but Tatars in Russia...are not allowed [to adopt] the Latin alphabet. And, the name 'president' in Tatarstan and other regions is forbidden..."¹³⁴ Consequently, the Tatarstani officials are limited in their efforts due to their government's association with the center.

The weaknesses of Tatarstan's relations with the federal center were linked to the powers accessible to the unimportance of autonomy in the Russian Federation. In an interview with *Business Online*, Viktor Minin, a political analyst, and the Head of State Affairs in the Republic of Crimea stated that "[Tatarstan] converted its nationalism in 1991 into autonomy which Crimea dreamed about. They converted [their nationalism] into the maximum economic and financial independence. But now it has all ended. The whole world is falling apart, and the Tatars are falling apart with it. Tatarstan also does not know what more to do, after sovereignty, the Millennium Kazan, and the 2013 Universiade."

¹³³ Kurchakov, R. (2014, March 7). Krymskiy vopros i Kot Kazanskiy Leopold. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98962>

¹³⁴ Katargin, D., Kazantsev, V., Maslova, K., & Kashapov, R. (2014, March 12). Shaymiyev stroit most mezhdru Krymom i Moskvoy. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/99294>

¹³⁵ Thus, the negative view is taken that Tatarstan's autonomy to conduct paradiplomacy has hit a limit.

After Crimea voted to join the Russian Federation in the March 16th referendum, the questions about Tatarstan continued: "Crimea noted the wish to receive broad autonomy. On this concern, does this not raise conflicts with other subjects of the Russian Federation, with Tatarstan, for example, which in recent years successively entered a single economic, political, and legal jurisdiction?"¹³⁶ The response focused on the fact that Crimea voted to join Russia as a federal subject and that the Russian Federation can create special agreements with federal subjects about the division of powers: "such an agreement, for example, we have had with the Republic of Tatarstan since 2007."¹³⁷ Similarly, the agreement signed between Tatarstan and the Russian Federation was cited on the February 26th as a potential way for Crimea to receive autonomy. As *Kommersant* stated, "such agreements between regions and the center were abolished, and the legality of all of them without exclusion...were carried into an agreement with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws."¹³⁸ Thus, the unique position of Tatarstan as an NCG holding a power-sharing agreement became a question option for Crimea upon entry in the Russian Federation. Since Tatarstan possessed the agreement then, it appeared possible to Crimea. However, the ability to put another one in place seemed unlikely as the federal government sought to harmonize Tatarstan's policies with the Russian Federation's.

The final narrative raised because of Tatarstan's involvement was the improvement of federalism in Russia and more opportunities for Tatarstani power in foreign relations. In an opinion piece published in *Rimzil Valeev*, a journalist and member of multiple Tatar cultural organizations, said: "Tatars are acting in Crimea like a real historical force."¹³⁹ Valeev claimed, "Crimean Tatars are representatives of an indigenous group having such a status in international law. They need European guarantees of the rights of

¹³⁵ Chernobrovkina, E., Arslanov, M., & Kashapov, R. (2014, March 15). Viktor Minin: «Zhestkiye sanktsii pozvolili by Putinu otvyazat' rubl' ot dollara i vesti samostoyatel'nuyu ekonomicheskuyu politiku». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/99545>

¹³⁶ Gorodetskaya, N. (2014, March 18). "Shirota kompetentsii Kryma — vopros budushchikh peregovorov". Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2432271>

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Valeev, R. (2014, March 9). Tatory deystvuyut v Krymu kak real'naya istoricheskaya sila. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/203376>

people...these guarantees are now needed for all Russians and for Kazan Tatars firstly.”¹⁴⁰ As Prime Minister Medvedev visited on March 24th, *Business Online* published an article: “VIP-visit to Kazan: randomness or consistent pattern?”¹⁴¹ The political scientist Vladimir Belyaev stated, “I consider that the role of Tatarstan can grow because it is necessary to proceed to federalism, to which we have pushed Crimea.”¹⁴² The involvement of Tatarstan has led to a multifaceted discourse evolving from their involvement: Tatar strength which has now spread to Crimea in the form of ethnic, cultural connections, and the history of Volga Tatar autonomy that Crimea also sought to receive.

The utilization of cultural resources was a final aspect that began to be implemented towards the end of the analysis. The criticism of the cultural connection was highlighted: Crimean Tatars and Volga Tatars are separated in language and were divided on the decision to annex Crimea. Regarding the language separation, Chubarov stated, “Tatar and Crimean Tatar languages have a big separation from each other compared to Russian and Ukrainian. It is easier for us to understand Azerbaijanis, Gagauz, and Turks.”¹⁴³ The first steps were to create a Crimean Tatar language channel; however, the initial view by some is that both Tatar and Russian already would occupy enough space for Crimean Tatars to receive news.¹⁴⁴ Tatarstan planned to engage Crimea through tourism and the expansion of children’s summer camps in the region.¹⁴⁵

The involvement of Tatarstani paradiplomacy in the annexation of Crimea brought multiple things into focus. First, the limitations of Tatarstan as an international actor, in this case, became clear. The cultural connection used through the arrival of President Minnikhanov, a Tatarstani delegation, and cultural leaders was met with immediate

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Gavrilenko, A., Chernobrovkina, E., Mamaeva, T., Shagulin, A., & Koscheev, S. (2014, March 24). VIP-desant v Kazani: sluchaynost' ili zakonomernost'? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/100243>

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Nigmatullin, I. (2014, March 7). Refat Chubarov: «V normal'nykh usloviyakh za prisoyedineniye Kryma k Rossii ne progolosovalo by i 35 protsentov». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/98976>

¹⁴⁴ Vildanova, E. (2014, March 12). Il'shat Aminov prisoyedinil Krym. K setke veshchaniya. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/99243>

¹⁴⁵ Katargin, D., Gavrilenko, A., Vildanova, E., & Akhkiyamova, L. (2014, March 18). Tatarstan podklyuchayetsya k spaseniyu turindustrii Kryma. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/99743>

skepticism from the Crimean Tatars leaders. The conversations had no tangible result, as one Crimean Tatar noted: “[Tatarstani officials] came with empty hands and nothing but promises...”¹⁴⁶ The reasoning for their involvement: whether it occurred under their own volition or under the command of the Russian federal government remained unknown. It appeared that analysts were split on the subject. However, with the decline in Tatarstan’s autonomy, the initial response from many was skeptical that Tatarstan sought involvement without first checking if their goals aligned with the federal government’s objectives in the region. On a larger scale, the Tatarstan’s paradiplomacy brought out many critical discussions about the role of Russian federalism and the necessity to give more autonomy to the regions. Even though the results of Tatarstan’s involvement were weak, and seemingly, symbolic, the fact that they were involved at all displays the powerful significance of paradiplomacy in Russia and the underlying tensions in Russian federalism.

4.4 SU-24 Incident – November 25th to December 25th, 2015

Towards the end of 2015, relations between Russia and Turkey entered a critical juncture. Turkey shot down a Sukhoi 24 Russian military jet on the Turkish – Syrian border on November 24th, killing the pilot (TASS, 2015) The incident occurred surrounding the Syrian civil war where Turkey and Russia supported opposite sides. The downing of the military jet affected relations between Turkey and Russian regions as well. Tatarstan, Chechnya, Bashkortostan, Tyva, and others held cultural, economic, and educational contacts with Turkey. Tatarstan, specifically, held all three and received around 25 percent of foreign investment from Turkey during the period of the SU-24 incident.¹⁴⁷ Because of the fallout in relations, *Kommersant* and *Business Online* covered varying aspects of the conflict and marked the different narratives arising about Tatarstan and its place in the Russian Federation and in international relations.

The difference between the Annexation of Crimea and the SU-24 incident is noticeable as President Minnikhanov did not comment on the incident until December 21st, nearly a month after the Russian plane was shot down. The major themes surrounding Tatarstan

¹⁴⁶ Kommersant. (2014, March 17). Mechty o dokhodnom Kryme. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2422901>

¹⁴⁷ Devyatov, A. (2015, November 25). Kak izbezhat' eskalatsii konflikta RF s Turtsiyey. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/206356>

in the event were the geopolitical nature for Russia, economic relations, and cultural relations.

The first op-ed posted by *Business Online* focused mainly on the threat of a third world war.¹⁴⁸ The incident gives rise to a greater game taking place within the region: battle between Islam and Christianity, and the East and West, division of countries on the Atlantic, within Europe, relatives of China, and the heirs of Genghis Khan. The author emphasizes that dialogue should occur between the Erdogan and Putin. While none of the Turkic language and cultural groups is mentioned, the larger battle being discussed has implications for many ethnic groups within Russia. Similarly, on November 25th, *Kommersant* released an article titled: “What Russia and Turkey mean to each other.”¹⁴⁹ The article expresses relations in purely economic terms: Russian – Turkish trade amounted to 31.1 billion dollars.¹⁵⁰ Most notably, the issue is focused without acknowledging the substantial cultural presence Turkey has on Russia and vice versa. The Muslim and Turkic linguistic cultural presence in Russia is not mentioned.

4.4.1 A Threat to Competitive Identity: Economic Relations

From the four events discussed, the issue SU-24 incident represents the one where Tatarstan showed the most resistance to the foreign policy of Moscow. Perhaps the clearest aspect of this was the reticence of President Minnikhanov, who waited nearly a month until speaking on the issue. On December 21st, Minnikhanov stated regarding the Russian sanctions on Turkey: “This is a difficult, painful situation, and it is very painful for Tatarstan.” He repeats the statements from a recent address from Putin, “Turkey is a friend for Russia. And for Tatars they are brothers, we are in one language group, one religious sect. Of course, as the president said, for us, their support is very serious because we have large Turkish projects. They believe in our president. They believe in our republic. 1.5 billion dollars of investment, modern factories, where 95-98 percent of employees are Tatarstani or Russian citizens, and these enterprises are residents of the

¹⁴⁸ Devyatov, A. (2015, November 25). Kak izbezhat' eskalatsii konflikta RF s Turtsiyey. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/206356>

¹⁴⁹ Evgeny Kozichev. (2015, November 25). Chto Rossiya i Turtsiya znachat drug dlya druga. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2861811>

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

Russian Federation.”¹⁵¹ This statement differs starkly from the one delivered at the start of the incident by President Putin that the shot down flight was a “stab in the back” on the part of Turkey (TASS, 2015). The policy changes from the Russian central government which agreed with Tatarstan’s competitive identity to attract investment and conduct mega-events. The change on the part of Russia towards sanctioning Turkey led to a disagreement in policy.

Throughout the first week, after the incident occurred (November 24th – December 1st), the focus remained solely on economic relations. This is related to Russia’s threats of economic sanctions towards Turkey. The first of a special report from *Business Online* that covered the conflict between Turkey and Russia questioned the ending of twenty years of growing economic relations between Tatarstan and Turkey because of one incident.¹⁵² This was the beginning of a larger narrative from *Business Online*, which framed the economic sanctions and the negativity surrounding the sudden feud as threatening to Tatarstan’s economic ties. The article described the ways Tatarstan benefits from Turkish investment through building factories and creating jobs in the region. The article noted that “already many years Mintimer Shaimiev, and after him, Rustam Minnikhanov placed a bet on the development of Turkish – Tatarstani economic relations, taking care of Turkish investors, putting emphasis on ethnic and religious affinities.”¹⁵³ Secondly, the 250 thousand residents of Tatarstan visit Turkey annually for vacation.¹⁵⁴ The article noted that “Tatarstan has limited opportunities to somehow influence decisions taken on geopolitical questions in Moscow.”¹⁵⁵

On November 28th, *Business Online* interviewed a group of business people and political, of which three representatives were from Tatarstan’s government. They reflected a mutually shared opinion: the sanctions will hit Tatarstan especially hard, the conflict should be shortened and contained, and with a softer tone that the press and central

¹⁵¹ Business Online. (2015, December 21). Prezident Tatarstana v pervyye prokommentiroval otnosheniya s RF Turtsiyey posle intsidenta so sbitym Su-24. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/148456>

¹⁵² Andreev, A., Vildanova, E., Platonov, O., & Kazantsev, V. (2015, November 26). Tatarstan i Turtsiya: poydut li 20 let biznes-druzhby «Su» pod khvost? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/146371>

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

government is overreacting.¹⁵⁶ The representative of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Tatarstan, Shamil Ageev, stated: “I think very many want this conflict to go far [into the future]. And, we do not want it to go on. In any case, it needs to stop on time. And, now, hysteria is spreading in the press. This atmosphere of excessive patriotism. Everywhere mistakes are happening, but it is forbidden to turn little mistakes into big ones.”¹⁵⁷ Business leaders expressed similar concerns and hope that Tatarstan could serve as a mediator, “Tatarstan has always been positioned as a mediator between Turkey and Russia, therefore all of this will directly affect Tatarstan.”¹⁵⁸ The centrality of Tatarstan in the debate takes a role that is primarily economic. But the level of paradiplomacy that occurred between Tatarstan and Turkey prior to the incident provided entrenched relations that were difficult to end.

Rafael Khakimov, the Vice President of the Academy of Sciences for the Republic of Tatarstan, discussed the Republic’s role in Turkish – Russian relations and the general role of Tatarstan in international affairs, “For Tatarstan, Turkey is a serious partner... in what sense should we tear apart our relations? In no sense.”¹⁵⁹ Thus, the most important aspect for Tatarstan is to maintain the quality of life of the population. “For Tatarstan, it is more important not to allow economic stagnation which threatens all Russians.”¹⁶⁰ Tatarstan, in this case, serves as a mediator between Russian and Turkey, but also between aggressive and non-aggressive members of Russia’s foreign policy establishment. Khakimov ends his article, “Tatarstan always could find common ground in the most difficult political situations. It’s possible to say that our entire republic is diplomatic by nature...saving positive relations with Turkey, we can remain a convenient platform on which to conduct negotiations...”¹⁶¹ Even without direct involvement in the conflict, the promotion of trade with Turkey in Tatarstan demonstrates an alternative path to policies of the central government’s policy.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Gavrilenko, A., Samigullina, E., Kolebakina, E., Shisterova, V., Elvira Vildanova, Idiatullin, A., . . . Andreev, A. (2015, November 28). «U Putina kolossal'noye preimushchestvo, potomu chto Erdogan uzhe pochti neadekvaten». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/146541>

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Khakimov, R. (2015, November 28). Rafael' Khakimov: «Do nedavnego vremeni Tatarstan i Turtsiyu obvinyali v pantyurkizme». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/146558>

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

On December 1st, another article was released by *Business Online* profiling economic sanctions announced on the prior day by Dmitri Medvedev and discussed the economic damage done to Tatarstan because of the sanctions.¹⁶² The main problems relate to the cancellation of flight routes to Turkey and the inability for tour operators to send tourists there, which could lead to the loss of a thousand jobs.¹⁶³ On December 11th, *Business Online* interviewed an Azerbaijani businessman that does business between Turkey and Russia and is centered in Tatarstan, answers similarly to the past interviewees: “it is important not to allow this conflict to go too deep, it will not be worse for Turkey but for us.”¹⁶⁴ In searching for a mediator to the conflict, he suggested looking to Nazarbayev: “his influence is great in both territories, there is nobody better than him to make peace between Putin and Erdogan.”¹⁶⁵ Thus, his statement mimics the others but looks away from Tatarstan as a potential mediator.

On December 16th, a little over three weeks after the initial incident, the sanctions were confirmed. *Kommersant* published an article looking deeper into their effects and how they avoided the fears of investment projects abruptly ending and a large-scale curtailment of economic relations between Tatarstan and Turkey.¹⁶⁶ The article brings attention to the fact that “the limitation concerns only new contracts [that is those concluded until December 10th remain legal], and in the future, it will be possible for exclusions for workers of Turkish companies already in the Russian market having business in Russia.”¹⁶⁷ The article continues quoting a central government official, “we do not plan to cut off our own hands and feet – the sanctions firstly are oriented to do minimal harm to the Russian economy.”¹⁶⁸ Tatarstan is mentioned once as the construction of a new factory was under question because of pending sanctions.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶² Latypov, T., Luchnikov, A., Andreev, A., Shisterova, V., Mysko, V., Gavrilenko, A., . . . Sciabin, I. (2015, December 1). Turetskiy gambit: po komu v Tatarstane mogut udarit' sanktsii? Retrieved from *Business Online*: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/146737>

¹⁶³ Latypov, T., Luchnikov, A., Andreev, A., Shisterova, V., Mysko, V., Gavrilenko, A., . . . Sciabin, I. (2015, December 1). Turetskiy gambit: po komu v Tatarstane mogut udarit' sanktsii? Retrieved from *Business Online*: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/146737>

¹⁶⁴ Mysko, V. (2015, December 11). Elman Gasanov: «Politika stabiliziruyetsya, a bol' u naroda ostanetsya nadolgo». Retrieved from *Business Online*: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/147606>

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Dmitry Butrin, O. S. (2015, December 16). Turtsii vozdadut po uslugam. Retrieved from *Kommersant*: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2878166>

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

The opposition within the media frame shows the position Tatarstan has cultivated as an economic partner to Turkey. One of the most important aspects of competitive identity is the attraction of foreign investment. In the world limited investors, and especially through the downturn of Russian relations with the West, Tatarstani officials and *Business Online* highlight that the loss of investment is more of a loss for Russia than for Turkey. The placement of Tatarstan's competitive identity, specifically, their ability to attract foreign investment leads them to maintain their stance.

4.4.2 Ending Cultural Events & Link to Larger Regional Struggle

The cultural relations between Tatarstan and Turkey were increasingly covered as *Kommersant* and *Business Online* analyzed the incident, and the subsequent Russian response. As noted, the central government pursued economic sanctions first. However, the potential for a decline in cultural and educational relations became known as the Russian Minister of Culture, Vladimir Medinsky, sent a memo to all Russian republics demanding the termination of their membership in Turksoy. The UNESCO supported international organization, TurkSOY, is a Turkic language and cultural organization dedicated to enhancing bonds between groups across Eurasia. Tatarstan is a member of this group. In 2014, TurkSOY selected Kazan as the capital of the Turkic world, and Tatarstan intended to host the Turkvision singing contest in 2015.¹⁷⁰

Business Online examined the demand for Tatarstan to leave TurkSOY. Interviewees claimed that the termination of contact between the cultural organization had nothing to do with the SU-24 incident. Moreover, Razil Valeev, a representative from the Committee for Education, Culture, Science and National Questions in Tatarstan, said that “to end relations is easy, but nevertheless, it is necessary to look into the future. It is necessary to find common ground. Turkic people – they are our kindred nations.”¹⁷¹ Rimzil Valeev, a public figure, believing that the central government was taking advantage of the situation to weaken Turkic groups in Russia stated, “this will mean that Russia does not respect Turkic peoples and is striving in any situation to infringe upon

¹⁷⁰Nigmatullin, A., Samigullina, E., & Sharafiev, I. (2015, November 30). Razryv s TYURKSOY: Vladimir Medinskiy trebuyet ot Tatarstana otrech'sya ot tyurkskogo mira. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/146579>

¹⁷¹ Nigmatullin, A., Samigullina, E., & Sharafiev, I. (2015, November 30). Razryv s TYURKSOY: Vladimir Medinskiy trebuyet ot Tatarstana otrech'sya ot tyurkskogo mira. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/146579>

their cultural interests.”¹⁷² Thus, the reaction to sever the ties of Turkic linguistic and cultural groups documents the insecurity within Russia. The severing of ties outside of just economic connections shifted to educational exchanges. However, comments from Tatarstani officials surrounding this issue were not included in the publication. *Kommersant* only noted that the regions could have a stronger reaction to the decline in relations.¹⁷³ Tatarstan remained within TurkSOY following the memo while others like Bashkortostan left. (*Kommersant*, 2015).

The view from Tatarstan reflects a commitment to the competitive identity they pursued with mega-events and the stability gained with Moscow after recentralization. Tatarstan engaged in a mix of economic and cultural paradiplomacy. With their refusal to leave TurkSOY, it showed the limitations with which the central government can control Tatarstan’s foreign relations. If the central government restricts Tatarstan’s role in TurkSOY and with hosting mega-events, it blocks the investment in Tatarstan as a place that hosts mega-events. Secondly, the ability for Tatarstan to attract the involvement of outside actors like Turkey allows Russia an option for potential diplomatic gains.

As time passed after the incident, *Business Online* sent correspondents to Istanbul to provide analysis of the situation for Tatars and Russians in Turkey. The tone was positive as it noted the politeness of the people, the friendly interaction between Turkic language groups, and the quality location of the Tatarstani consulate. The correspondent noted that the location of the Tatarstani consulate is in “Asiatic part of Istanbul, which looks very European – new apartment buildings, a modern medical university, business centers, greenery, armed police are not necessary for such state.”¹⁷⁴ The correspondent interviewed a citizen who apologized: “please forgive us for the plane. Friends should not act that way.”¹⁷⁵ The correspondent discussed the Tatarstani consulate in his first article: that the Tatarstani officials are discussing the situation with Turkish firms and waiting for

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Nigmatullin, A., Samigullina, E., & Sharafiev, I. (2015, November 30). Razryv s TYURKSOY: Vladimir Medinskiy trebuyet ot Tatarstana otrech'sya ot tyurkskogo mira. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/146579>

¹⁷⁴ Magizov, M. (2015, December 5). «Izvinite, pozhaluysta, nas za etot samolet»: kak Stambul vstrechayet rossiyan. Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/147151>

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

the situation to be defined further.¹⁷⁶ The climate described in the article showed the calm in Turkey and emphasized the relationship Tatarstan's diplomatic mission has in Turkey.

In the second article, the ease of going to the Tatarstani consulate is noted in comparison to Russia's.¹⁷⁷ The article is still focusing on the positive aspects: Turkic people specifically Tatars and Bashkirs, congregate, comfortably in Istanbul.¹⁷⁸ Perhaps, the only hostile aspect of the trip is the response from a vendor, who stated: "Turkey is a strong country. We are children of the Ottoman Empire, we are afraid of nothing."¹⁷⁹ The quote is used in the article partially to show that the economic sanctions and an embargo on Turkish goods, apparently, have not spread fear among citizens. An important aspect highlighted by Simon Anholt regarding the appearance of competitive identity:

Another issue with cultural relations was raised by a Tatarstani resident during an interview with Vladimir Putin on December 17th and covered multiple times in *Kommersant* in the period to the end of the analysis.¹⁸⁰ A student from Tatarstan asked questions regarding the targeting of people of Turkish descent in Russian universities, close economic connections between Turkey and regions like Tatarstan, and the persecution of businessmen in Moscow that has displeased Tatarstan, and led to private business being pushed out of Moscow.¹⁸¹ "In some schools, the director is demanding the data of certain students concerning their parents which might be Turks – what is this for? This is horrible. It was necessary to give a tough response that this must not happen. Why was this not done?"¹⁸² An excerpt of Putin's response, perhaps defined the future of the situation regarding Tatarstan: "I agree with you that it would be necessary to say that relations with the Turkish people is one thing and the Turkish government is another [...] concerning relations with Tatarstan, of course, they were not created in a year. It is

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Magizov, M. (2015, December 10). «Postavki pomidorov ne znachat, chto vy mozhete letat' nad Turtsiyey na boyevykh samoletakh». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/147516>

¹⁷⁸ Magizov, M. (2015, December 10). «Postavki pomidorov ne znachat, chto vy mozhete letat' nad Turtsiyey na boyevykh samoletakh». Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/147516>

¹⁷⁹ Kommersant. (2015, December 17). «Prezident nedvsumyslenno zayavil, chto s etim rukovodstvom Turtsii otnosheniya vryad li budut nalazheny». Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2879236>

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

necessary to understand, that the mentality of the people is very similar, the connections are very close [...]it would be a drastic step to shut down those projects, which have gone on for years and decades. For a very long time, gradually, at least since the mid-90s, we built these relations step by step. Yes, we are not developing relations with the Turkish government, but that doesn't mean that it is necessary to destroy all projects. But, I am afraid that the situation is developing poorly, and it is necessary to prepare for the worst.”¹⁸³ The importance of Tatarstani – Turkish relations is highlighted. Most notably, Putin connected the economic and cultural relations as a precursor for the involvement between the two groups.

In another article, it was mentioned that the question regarding close relations between Turkey and Tatarstan was accompanied by a question about the continued existence of a Tatarstani president. In response, President Putin answered, “Chechyna said: no, in our country there must be one president [...] we relate to the choice of Tatarstan with respect. Because of this, you can decide for yourselves then, alright?”¹⁸⁴ In response to this, *Kommersant* published an article a week later, “Two-story Federalism.”¹⁸⁵ The article takes a negative view towards the increased preferential treatment towards certain regional leaders and their ability to sway the policy in their direction: “representatives of the first group argue with the center and feel that they are the sovereigns of their territory [...] like in a real federation. The second class does not possess special rights [...]”¹⁸⁶ The article refers to Tatarstan in its ability to keep the title of president and to openly criticize the ending of relations with Turkey. To this degree, the conclusion is that Tatarstan, among a few others, have cultivated relations with the center based on personal capacities rather than simply utilizing the tools of Russian federalism.

The final article during the analysis mentioned Tatarstan within a wider geopolitical context – one that involves many of Russia's own citizens.¹⁸⁷ In this context, Tatarstan is

¹⁸³ Kommersant. (2015, December 17). «Prezident nedvumyslenno zayavil, chto s etim rukovodstvom Turtsii otnosheniya vryad li budut nalazheny». Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2879236>

¹⁸⁴ Antonov, K., & Nagornyh, I. (2015, December 18). Tatarstan otpravili po doroge Chechni. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2879571>

¹⁸⁵ Pertsev, A. (2015, December 25). Dvukhetazhnyy federalizm. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2884717>

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Sukhov, I. (2015, December 25). Ravneniye so mnogimi neizvestnymi. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2884735>

mentioned as a republic unprepared and unwilling to face enemies most Russians see as threatening. As the article points out, 15 million Muslims live in Russia, and they will not all react the same to attacking a primarily Muslim county.¹⁸⁸ As it relates to Tatarstan, the republic cultivated close ties with the region that cannot simply be broken in one day. The article stated that “at a minimum, four regions with Turkic roots – Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Tyva, and Yakutia – all stood on the verge of separatism 20 years ago. If the conflict will deepen, old melodies can again become popular – and create dissonance within the war march, which enthralled us in this past year.”¹⁸⁹ Though small, the civilizational divide is used as a source of fear and concern to the Russian ethnic majority.

With the conclusion of the SU-24 event, the nature of their relations in paradiplomacy was parallel in harmony prior to the event began. Tatarstani policies were not in disagreement with any stipulations of Russian foreign policy, but after the SU-24 incident, the instability highlighted a disagreement in where the direction of Turkish – Tatarstani, Turkish – Russian relations should go into the future. In the end, the Russian central government implemented sanctions that would have the least effect on the Russian economy. Tatarstani connections and investment project from Turkey are highlighted as vital to their economy, and this led to significant framing in *Business Online* being a bad decision. The disagreement on policy put Tatarstan in a position of parallel disharmony. But, as reflected on throughout the analysis, Tatarstan has remained in the realm of joint action with the Russian central government.

4.5 Comparison: Three Trends

The analysis of Tatarstani paradiplomacy shows three different patterns. The use of culture as a resource is the first. The second is as a government tool. Lastly, paradiplomacy is used as a promoter and protector of material interests. In nearly all cases, both the Tatarstani and Russian government benefit from the interaction. Perhaps, the only example of Russian policy being limited is displayed in the final case where the legacy of Tatarstani economic and cultural relations with Turkey forced a reassessment of Russia’s economic and humanitarian sanctions.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Sukhov, I. (2015, December 25). Ravneniye so mnogimi neizvestnymi. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2884735>

4.5.1 Culture as Resource

Throughout the analysis on mega-events, Tatarstan is considered to possess a cultural advantage in how they manage their republic. As a result, the close bonds lead officials to manage events better and achieve a larger consensus among the population. From a Russian government perspective, the consensus and better management make the republic a better place to invest federal money, even if the image of a social consensus from the Tatar nation is contrived.

The various cultural differences apparent in Tatarstan provide strength in a few aspects. As for mega-events, it allows Tatarstan and the Russian government to market the region as a multinational, multifaith paradise. During the analysis, Tatar culture is described only briefly in the introduction to the region. This includes during the opening event of Universiade where certain elements of Tatar culture were presented. In the initial description of Kazan, the city is described as a place that is open to all religions and possesses a large part of the population that is ethnically Tatar. Thus, the use of Tatar culture serves as an introduction to the city and the region.

Tatar cultural events were conducted during both mega-events. Sabantuy and the Koresh World Championships serve to separate Tatarstan through displaying cultural events native to the region. This presented an option when not hosting mega-events to attract tourists to the region along with other small global mega-events. Despite the cultural uniqueness, the audience remains small for such events.

Both the Russian and Tatarstani governments utilized the role of Tatar culture as a member of the Turkic linguistic and cultural group. The role plays a positive and negative role. It both extends and simultaneously restricts Russian foreign policy. For example, Tatarstan served as a mediator and to show the multinational nature of Russia, but this multinational character is what limited Russia from easily sanctioning Russia after the SU-24 incident.

4.5.2 Government Tool – Tatarstan and Russia

During both the annexation of Crimea and SU-24 Incident, the analysis revealed that both the Russian federal government and Tatarstan itself utilize the position of the republic as an alternative diplomatic voice. Though the Tatarstani diplomatic mission in Crimea corresponded to the Russian one, the representation of Tatarstan in the media is as a

sympathetic ally to the Crimean Tatars. This allows the Russian government to pursue a role of strength while acknowledging points of criticism from the Crimean Tatars: the deportations conducted under Stalin.

The ability for Tatarstan to host global mega-events came with significant dependence on the central government to substantiate their strategy. The goal of making Kazan a global city which will host the Olympics required complete compliance with the interests of the central government. The issue with finding usage for the sports facilities, finding a way to increase federal investment, and the absence of strong Tatar cultural narratives shows the necessity for compliance during global mega-events. The conversion of this compliance into discourse was shown in the continued presence of the question: Is there life after Universiade? Is there life after the World Cup? The narrative reflects the fear of declining investment of the government and the image of Kazan which remains questionable as Russia's sports capital.

As for compliance during the annexation of Crimea and the SU-24 Incident, the involvement of Tatarstan in Crimea came without negative discourse regarding Russia's involvement. However, the discourse does connect Tatarstan's involvement to their power as a republic, which gives a benefit to their paradiplomacy and extending their image as a powerful NCG in Russia. The silence of Minnikhanov and the discussion in Tatarstan urging a diplomatic solution never distinctly parted with Russia's foreign policy but was interpreted as a stand against the central government within the media. Thus, compliance is necessary, but hesitation often serves as enough of a means to show that disagreement exists between Tatarstan and the federal government.

4.5.3 Promotion and Protection of Material Interests

Almost immediately after the downing of the SU-24 military jet, discourse revolved around the termination of economic relations and what the economic relations with Turkey meant to Russia. With broad paradiplomatic relations in Tatarstan, the region highlighted the immediate damage that Russian sanctions would do to citizens living in Tatarstan. The damage was reflected in *Business Online*'s articles with special reports covering numerous ways the conflict would affect Tatarstan.

Tatarstani paradiplomacy protects and promotes material interests largely through playing on the aspects of competitive identity gained through Tatarstan's harmonizing

relations the Russian central government. The procured investment for mega-events made the removal of cultural events for TurkSOY to be held in Tatarstan unrealistic as it would lead to the development and promotion of Kazan. Since the central government has promoted this aspect of Tatarstani paradiplomacy, it would be undoing the results of mega-events conducted in the past.

Secondly, governments utilizing a competitive identity seek to attract foreign investors. This happened without evident Russian disagreement prior to the SU-24 incident. The immediate termination of relations with Turkey and various investment projects put Tatarstan in a position where they had obvious concerns about Russian policy. As a result, the reticence of President Minnikhanov triggered the disagreement of numerous members of the government in *Business Online* showed that the material interests in Tatarstan were too strong to ignore.

5. Conclusion

Tatarstani paradiplomacy played a role in some of the most critical episodes of international relations in Russia in the twenty-first century thus far. In looking at the discussions displayed in *Business Online* and *Kommersant*, Tatarstani paradiplomacy converged and diverged with Russia's foreign policy stances. Secondly, the discussions taking place in the national and regional media highlight the ability for Tatarstan to engage in paradiplomacy. In the context of decreasing sovereignty from regional actors, Tatarstan can serve as an exemplar to engage external actors in a way that the central government will accept.

Both media outlets displayed divergent narratives about Tatarstani paradiplomacy. For example, *Kommersant* revealed somewhat negative views towards Tatarstan's involvement in paradiplomacy. During global mega-events, and Tatarstan's association with the Turkic world, the focus remained on Tatarstan's role as an outlier among NCGs in Russia, and that this existence, had a positive and negative side. *Business Online* discussed Tatarstan through a more positive lens. The media outlet offered critical views of the central government during the annexation of Crimea and the SU-24 incident, which emphasized the role of Tatarstan as largely positive in both instances. With mega-events, the events and regional government were focused on in a positive manner. However, between the Universiade and FIFA World Cup, greater emphasis and skepticism was placed on Tatarstan's future in large sporting mega-events and the absence of Tatar culture within them. The biggest separation between the two media sources is the amount of coverage spent on the issues discussed within the analysis. *Kommersant* published little on the FIFA World Cup specifically in Kazan.

Though Tatarstan paradiplomacy displays some divergence or lies within the parallel disharmony model. It is important to note that compliance is compulsory in the case of mega-events. And, secondly, that the divergence in the Tatarstani stance after the SU-24 incident reflected a rare disagreement between Tatarstan and Russia. The disagreement is shown in the competitive identity of Tatarstan and the branding efforts evident in the media analysis. For example, the goal to attract investment and be open to outsiders would not align with the region's image if Tatarstan sided with the actions of the Russian government to sanction Turkey and end ongoing investment projects within the Republic.

In addition, the goal of long-term financial stability in Tatarstan and the substantial investment from the center makes Russia obliged to cultivate the strategy pursued by Tatarstan. In this way, Tatarstan's branding efforts became a liability to Russia's foreign policy interests. In the end, the Russian central government must consider the effects of its foreign policy on NCGs.

The role of Tatarstan has continued largely because of the republic's willingness to comply and meet criteria for federal investment. Regarding global mega-events, the region acts as an event manager, with Kazan pursuing the brand of sports capital and third capital of Russia. Throughout the analysis, the idea of Kazan as sports and third capital of Russia was both accepted and denied. To outsiders, seeing Kazan for the first time, this audience accepted the image presented to them. However, *Kommersant* and *Business Online* note internal skeptics to the idea of Kazan's preeminent status as sports and third capital of Russia.¹⁹⁰¹⁹¹ In particular, the Universiade and FIFA World Cup did not provide enough acknowledgement to consider Kazan as the sports or third capital of Russia. Thus, Tatarstan needs more acknowledgement from the Russian central government of Kazan's preeminence in both areas through symbolic measures or substantiation. Most importantly, more substantiation is needed through federal investment. As the Summer Olympics is the only major event left, and the most notable for creating long-lasting brands for cities, Tatarstan hits numerous roadblocks in its path to creating a lasting sports image. The status of Russia in the world and Tatarstan's position within Russia document the difficulties of NCGs to successfully compete in the global arena. For this reason, the ability for Tatarstan to conduct sporting mega-events and even other mega-events is in jeopardy due to the competitive identity inside and outside of Russia.

During the annexation of Crimea, the Tatarstani government was promoted as a successful Russian republic and close relative to the Crimean Tatars. However, the Crimean Tatars roundly rejected the image of Tatarstan as providing an alternative to the Russian government's stance. As a result, this joint coordination with the Russian federal government failed.

¹⁹⁰ Abdullin, J., Shamilov, A., Zainullin, D., & Zimagulov, V. (2018, July 16). Kruche uzhe ne budet: chemu nas nauchil CHM-2018? Retrieved from Business Online: <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/article/388780>

¹⁹¹ Antonov, K. (2018, June 13). Kazan': Bugul'ma i Sabantuy. Retrieved from Kommersant: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3650015>

In the case of the SU-24 Incident, Tatarstani officials discussed the economic and cultural strain caused by the feud between Russia and Turkey in 2015. The narratives surrounding the event highlighted the cultural events Tatarstan takes part in with Turkey and the economic relations of Tatarstan as vital to the competitive identity of the region. As a result, the Russian government never responded to Tatarstan's refusal to leave TurkSOY and their hesitance to end economic relations with Turkey. This showed one aspect of strength that Tatarstan shows in response to the central government's desire to limit paradiplomacy.

Tatarstan remains an important actor within Russia and serves as a crucial case for paradiplomacy in states outside of entrenched democracies and federations. In addition, the use of competitive identity to highlight the ways Tatarstan seeks to fulfill a type of paradiplomacy in harmony with the central government while also pursuing closer ties abroad is one that can be applied to other crucial cases in the future.

In the future, a comparative analysis of Tatarstan and other NCGs in Russia could reveal more about how competitive identity, branding, and paradiplomacy come together to allow for the persistence of paradiplomacy in a recentralized state. This research has shown that paradiplomacy holds vital importance in NCGs that do not lie within the traditional cases of paradiplomacy. Moreover, the thesis highlights that recentralizing states cannot immediately eliminate NCGs' desire to communicate with foreign entities and that they, in certain cases, stand to benefit from paradiplomacy. Lastly, it is important to understand the effects of such outliers like Tatarstan as a means for regions to extract wealth from central governments and cultivate a global image. Such cases drastically expand the opportunity to examine NCGs outside of entrenched federal democracies. While limited to a critical juncture, the Tatarstani case shows the impact of paradiplomacy on domestic politics and international affairs.

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