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**Tatar Nation, Reality or Rhetoric? : Nation Building in the Russian
Federation**

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**Tatar Nation, Reality or Rhetoric? : Nation Building in the Russian
Federation**

by

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Dedication

*In memory of my father, who called every day to find out, but who left this world
before I could answer: Yes. I made it.*

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I would like to thank my family and my friends, whose help and support in the completion of this work will not be forgotten. Although unnamed, you know who you are.

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Abstract

Tatar Nation, Reality or Rhetoric? : Nation Building in the Russian Federation

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Tatarstan's degree of political, economic and cultural sovereignty within the Russian Federation is the result of Soviet era ethno-national politics. The re-adoption of the ethnic federal state model in 1992 by Russia allowed ethnic regions such as Tatarstan to challenge the federal authorities for con-federal relations within the Federation. The Tatar leadership has attempted to work within the institutional and legal framework of the Russian Federation in an attempt to codify their state sovereignty within the Russian Federation. The political and economic concessions gained through tedious negotiation with the center have provided the Republic with the means to build a culturally distinct and semi sovereign state in the heart of the Russian Federation.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	viii
Introduction	1
Ethnic Federalism	5
Ethnicity and Nationalism	6
Elites.....	9
Russian Federalism	10
Education and Language Policy.....	11
Chapter Overview	13
Chapter 1: The Unity of the Union: Ethnic-Federalism and the Soviet Legacy	15
Formation of the Union.....	17
Education and National Elite Cadres	22
Decline of the Soviet System.....	25
Popular Fronts and the Tatar National Movement.....	28
Formation of the Tatar Public Center.....	29
Politics of the Tatar Public Center	31
Decline of the Tatar Public Center.....	33
Conclusion.....	37
Chapter 2: A Federation of Sovereignties: The Legal Relations of Tatarstan and Russia	39
The Economic Case.....	40
The Parade of Sovereignties and a New Union.....	43
The Federation Treaty and the Constitution of 1993	47
The Bilateral Treaties	51
Putin Era Reforms.....	53
Conclusion.....	57
Chapter 3: The Tatar Nation: Language and Cultural Policy in Tatarstan.....	59
Social Welfare in the Republic	60

Language, Education and Acculturation.....	62
Foreign Relations	67
Conclusion.....	69
Conclusion	71
Glossary	81
References	82
Vita	86

List of Tables

Table 2.1:	Most Populous Regions of the Russian Federation, 1991	42
Table 2.2:	Top Industrial Producers of the Russian Federation, 1991	42
Table 2.3:	Top Agricultural Producers of the Russian Federation, 1991	43
Table 2.4:	Top Regional Investors of the Russian Federation in Fixed Assets.....	43

Introduction

Federalism has occupied a central role in Russian domestic policy since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Very much like the Soviet Union, Russia experienced the devolution of state power along ethnic lines which severely threatened the formation of a stable federal government in the decade following the Soviet collapse. Unlike the other union republics, Russia lacked its own independent government apart from the union-wide apparatus of the CPSU while possessing a large concentration of semi-autonomous ethnic republics within its territory.

It is widely agreed that growing national self-awareness in the union republics was a key contributor to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The political liberalizations, introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1988, afforded nationalist movements within the Union's ethnic territories the opportunity to pressure their governments to rebuff the heavily centralized authority of the CPSU. In August of 1990, the newly elected Chair of the Russian Supreme Soviet, reformist Boris Yeltsin, went to Kazan and urged Russian regional leaders to "take as much sovereignty as you can swallow" in an effort to gain the support necessary to resist the authority of the CPSU. Later that month Tatarstan declared itself a sovereign republic within the Soviet Union. This made Tatarstan the first autonomous republic, a third-tier ethnic entity tied to the RSFSR, to emulate the other union republics' in the assertion of substantive national sovereignty within the USSR. This

stance put the Republic at odds with Russia because such a move effectively equalized the sovereign status of Tatarstan and Russia within the federal hierarchy of the Soviet Union.

The Tatar position was publically affirmed in 1992 in a Republic-wide referendum before it was subsequently codified in the Republic's constitution later that year. The Tatar constitution stating that Tatarstan "shall be a sovereign state subject to international law, associated with the Russian Federation," reflected the Republic's Soviet era stance and framed its stance toward a strong central state during the early 1990's. The results of the referendum and the Republic's constitution were cited as the key reasons why the Tatar leadership refused to sign the 1992 Federation Treaty which was supposed to establish the legal underpinning of the Russian Federation (RF). Along with Tatarstan, the Chechen Republic was the only other autonomous republic that refused to sign the Federation Treaty.

Whereas Chechnya entered a bloody war of succession with the central authorities, Tatarstan retained a cold stance toward Moscow until Russia acknowledged Tatarstan's associated relationship with the Federation by the conclusion of the Russian-Tatar Bilateral Treaty in 1994. The Bilateral Treaty granted Tatarstan significant autonomy in political, economic and cultural spheres which Tatar leaders have used since then to develop a distinctly non-Russian civil society in the heart of the Russian Federation.

If as Dmitry Gorenburg explains, “virtually every ethnic minority in the Soviet Union organized nationalist movements that were initially similar in form and goals...,” how then did Tatarstan avoid the same fate as Chechnya while attaining a negotiated relationship with the Russian Federation for continued development of their national identity (Gorenburg 2003, xi)? The answer to this lies in the level of sovereignty Tatar leaders ultimately pursued and the tactics they employed vis-à-vis the relatively weak Russian Federation. In short the persistent assertion of an associated relationship with the RF between 1991 and 1994 and a level of nominal cooperation afforded the Republic the opportunity to avoid armed conflict with the center while maximizing on Yeltsin’s promises of sovereignty.

It is commonly agreed that Tatarstan’s sovereignty drive ended with the conclusion of the Bilateral Treaty in 1994. The most important effect of the bilateral treaty in the context of Russian-Tatar relations is that it affirmed the associated relationship of Tatarstan with Russia on the basis of the Tatar people’s right to national self-determination. This was derived directly from the platform of the Tatar Public Center (TPC), the Republic’s nationalist movement, which demanded the right to pursue cultural, linguistic and political sovereignty. During the early 1990’s Tatarstan’s President, Mintimer Shaimiev, worked to moderate the influence of the more radical nationalistic demands while resisting full integration into the RF. This allowed Shaimiev to maintain political control of the Republic while taking full advantage of the weak central government to rebuild and strengthen the key

elements of Soviet era ethnic policies regarding both the legal relationship of the Republic to the RF and the development of nationalistic policies in the Republic.

There are two key factors that have contributed to the success and continued development of Tatarstan's national identity within the Russian Federation. The first is a result of the Soviet policy of limiting political mobilization through ethnic national institutions thereby politicizing ethnic nationalism, and the second factor is the decision of Russia's political leaders to adopt the soviet style ethno federal model used in the creation of the Russian Federation. These two factors are inextricably intertwined because Russia had both a disproportionately high number of autonomous ethnic regions and no national government of its own apart from the all-Union government in Moscow. Thus, when the Russian opposition attempted to build a government to counter the CPSU they were forced to seek the support of Russia's various regions.

Yeltsin Era politics are generally characterized by a weak or non-existent central government, especially in the Russian regions, and the proliferation of informal agreements between the center and Russia's regional leaders. In contrast Putin era politics are characterized by the attempt to re-centralized state power and limit regional influence on national politics. This specifically refers to the annulment of more than half of Russia's bilateral treaties with its subjects and the realignment of regional laws with the Russian Constitution. In spite of this, Tatarstan still retains a bilateral treaty and a significant degree of cultural autonomy. If in later years Tatar

political autonomy was rolled back, the Republic has been successful in maintaining and building on its national development in the cultural sphere. At present the Republic has policies regulating the teaching and usage of the Russian and Tatar languages, a significant degree of regional economic regulation, and the regulation of foreign relations outside Russian foreign policy. The majority of these current policies are directly linked to the concessions attained through the Republic's actions up to the signing of the Bilateral Treaty in 1994. In short Tatarstan's level of cultural sovereignty has added substantial national content to Russia's ethnic federal system.

Ethnic Federalism

The development of the Russian Federation and its relations with regions such as Tatarstan fit in the much broader realm of Soviet ethnic politics. Two of the major causes of early Russian instability was the lack of a an independent central government apart from the all-Union CPSU infrastructure in Moscow and Russia's own concentration of 21 autonomous regions. This left Russian leaders with very little choice but to directly negotiate with the ethnic regions for support in building a new federative government. This is largely responsible for the latitude taken by Tatarstan during the formation of the RF. In the case of Tatarstan, many of the key elements of Soviet ethnic federalism were reformed and codified in the basis of the Tatar state before becoming policy elements in the Republic.

The majority of explanations for the development of Russian federalism are found in structural arguments. These arguments focus on how the ethnic national structures organized by territory, ethnic elite cadres, and language, affected center-periphery relations in the USSR and later influenced the development of the RF. The Soviet Union, a unitary state, was organized and administered through ethnic-territorial divisions or *natsii*. When Russia separated from the Soviet Union central authorities adopted the ethnic-territorial structure of the USSR and attempted to form true federal relations between the center and periphery. Thus, Russian leaders imported a platform with a precedence of prior ethnic mobilization that enabled its ethnic regions to further build on Soviet era concessions.

Ethnicity and Nationalism

The ethnic-territorial component of Russia's federal system is an inherited legacy of the Soviet Union which is crucial to understanding the development of center-regional relations within the RF. Ethnic nationalism is generally accepted as one of the key causes of Soviet disintegration. The underlying assumption here is that the ethnic structure of the Soviet state created an incubator for nationalism.

The extent to which ethnic cleavages influence nationalism is dependent on how one interprets social identity and its formation. Primordialists believe that the commonalities of history, kinship and belief precede all other forms of identity. The idea of primordialism is largely based on the work of Clifford Geertz who maintained that, the congruities of blood, speech and custom form a system of

inherited conceptions that are symbolically expressed in the communication, perpetuation and development of a society's worldview. Primordialists argue that these commonalities produce such intense emotions that they are largely immutable in comparison to subsequent social ties (Cohen 1999, 4-5). Therefore the root cause of ethnic conflict is derived from the tendency of ethnic groups to "cleave and compare" themselves with others (Horowitz 1985, 3-94). As Robin Cohen points out, primordialism is mostly used by scholars today as a descriptor rather than the cause of societal conflict (Cohen 1999, 10).

Most scholars are reluctant to deny that primordial perceptions exist in society, but those of the constructivist camp deny that it is the cause of ethnic conflict. Constructivists believe identity, ethnic or otherwise, is a modern construct used by elites to garner power within plural societies. There are two variations of the constructivist belief which differ on how ethnic identity is shaped, neither of which is mutually exclusive. Instrumentalists believe that identity is created and manipulated by elites for political purposes, while institutionalists believe that political institutions shape the perceptions, opinions and identity of the broader populace (Sonntag 1995, 91-92). Both of these views are derived from the belief that nationalism is a relatively modern idea and that ethnicity is but one cleavage used in the creation of the nation as an idea. While ethnicity is a combination of so-called primordial attributes, the nation is a creation comprised of a named human population, a historic territory, a set of invented traditions, comprising of national

symbols, mythology and a suitably tailored history. Together these elements lend legitimacy and stability to the resulting state (Gellner 1999, 37-39).

Prior the revolution in 1917, the Russian populace was predominately rural and largely comprised of peasants. These people were largely unified by their place of birth, the common history of their locality and by the language they spoke. Both Francine Hirsch and Phillip Roeder aptly illustrate how the Soviets first shaped ethnicity and then institutionalized ethnic identities in the Soviet Union. In a 1997 article, *The Soviet Union as a Work in Progress: Ethnographers and the Category of Nationality in the 1926, 1937, and 1939 Censuses*, Francine Hirsch shows how Soviet leaders and ethnographers struggled to define nationality in the primordial terms of language, place of birth, and ethnic/national self identification. She points out that, Soviet ethnographers were thwarted by the inability of certain populations to give a coherent answer on the question of nationality as some respondents replied with the name of their village (Hirsch 1997, 259). In the words of Henry Hale, this proves that “these groups did not have a mass group consciousness prior to the creation of their administrative territories” (Hale 2003, 234).

In a 1991 article, *Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization*, Phillip Roeder explored the basis of Soviet Federalism and its effects on the state of national-center relations in the Soviet Union a year before its collapse. Roeder maintained that the nationalities policies of the Soviet Union were instrumentalist agendas developed to form and shape national identities that could then be manipulated by the central

authorities. He concluded that while this plan seemed plausible in the early years of the Soviet Union the plan was beginning to backfire as regional elites built up their own local support bases independent of the central authorities. It has been noted that the development of the nationalities polices were intended to be a transitory step toward the development of a Soviet national identity (Lynn and Novikov 1997, 192).

Elites

Prior to the implementation of the bilateral treaty process much attention was focused on the intentions of Russia's ethnic elites. Some scholars argued that the sovereignty movements were merely used to aid in the re-entrenchment of the elite in the Post Soviet Era. Kathryn Stoner-Weiss expands on Roeder's work by examining Russian institutions during Russian's transition from the planned Soviet economy in *Local Heroes*. Her findings indicate that the Soviet institutions and the methods employed by some elites operated in much the same fashion as they had during the Soviet era. In *Resisting the State*, Stoner-Weiss builds on her earlier work, illustrating how elite entrenchment over the control of resources brought the Soviet economy to halt. Her later work suggests that the continued ability of regional elites to usurp authority over economic assets in the post-Soviet period has allowed some regional government to meet societal demands better than federal institutions. In short, economically framed policies targeting titular populations allowed ethnic elites to gain the public support to stay in power during the transitional period.

Russian Federalism

Since the mid-1990's the scholarly focus has shifted toward the impact of regional autonomy on the future of Russian federalism and the center's ability to reassert control over Russia's subjects. In their 1997 article, *Refederalizing Russia: Debates on the Idea of Federalism in Russia*, Lynn and Novikov examined the basis of Russian federalism to assess the future shape of center-periphery relations in Russia. The obstacles they identified ranged from economic to social considerations, but they ultimately concluded that the crux of the issue rested in the legal interpretation of Russia's federalism in the coming decades.

The two documents used to establish Russian federalism were the 1992 Federation Treaty and the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation. The Federation Treaty was a contractual document that incorporated Russia's subjects, with the exception of Tatarstan and Chechnya, into the Federation. The Constitution, drafted and ratified after the Federation Treaty, established the basis of Russia's federal authority over the regions.

In the cases where regions opted out of the Federation Treaty or had major disputes with the central authorities, bilateral treaties were signed between the center and individual regions to cement federal relations. In his book *Shadow Separatism*, Matthew Crosston demonstrated that regional leaders managed to sculpt the ambiguities of the key documents establishing Russian federalism in the pursuit of con-federal relations with the center. To the chagrin of the central

authorities, the bilateral treaty process facilitated the negotiation of concessions that were ultimately in contradiction to the Russian Constitution (Article 5) by creating varying degrees of power among the subjects of the Russian Federation. Many scholars of Russian Federalism cite the failure of Russian leaders to clearly define and delineate federal and regional powers in the documents establishing the organization of the state as a key contributing factor in the devolution of federal authority (Crosston 2004, 23-48; Stoner-Weiss 2001, 111-122).

Education and Language Policy

Language has often been cited as a key element of the primordial identity because of its power to contain a society's world-view (Spolksy 2004, 7-11). Dmitri Gorenburg published several works that examined Soviet ethnic institutions and their role in shaping the sovereignty drives of the former Autonomous Republics (ASSR) currently encompassed within the Russian Federation. In his 2003 book *Ethnic Mobility in the Russian Federation* he focused on the role of ethnic institutions and the benefits they afforded regional elites in the mobilization of their populations in support for culture-building campaigns in Russia's regions. In two prior articles, Gorenburg argued that regional elites embarked on campaigns to quietly expand the cultural revival programs first initiated by the regional nationalist fronts that formed in the late 1980's while publicly touting the economic benefits of state sovereignty. Gorenburg cites what Elise Giuliani has called 'ethnic outbidding' where some regional leaders like Mintimer Shaimiev of Tatarstan, have been

successful in usurping the power of the nationalist movements in their endeavors to gain power through state building platforms (Gorenburg, 1999). However, Giuliano maintains that in the case of Tatarstan neither ethnic mobilization nor nationalist mobilization occurred (Giuliano 2000, 295). Gorenburg and Giuliano contradict other scholars such as Daniel Triesman who argue that regional leaders simply agitated the central government in an attempt to garner a greater share of subsidies in an effort to retain power (Triesman 1996).

Other scholars argue that the cultural elements of Tatarstan's regional policy indicate the assertion of cultural autonomy as an extension of the republic's somewhat limited political sovereignty (Crosston 2004; Graney 1999; Kondrashov 2000; Sharafutdinova 2003). The development of national symbols, such as flags, languages and architectural styles, as Gorenburg argues, is akin to filling the empty national forms of the Soviet era with real content. In her 2003 article, *Paradiplomacy in the Russian Regions: Tatarstan's Search for Statehood*, Gulnaz Sharafutdinova argues that the cultural concessions given to Tatarstan have allowed it to realize international relations beyond the realm of Russian foreign policy. These tie the RT into the broader Pan-Turkic world in the areas of education, religion, economic policy and foreign policy as a means to develop international support outside the RF. Crosston and Gorenburg both cite the development of Tatar linguistic and educational policy as two of the key platforms from which para-diplomatic relations have been developed. These arguments mesh well with those pertaining to the

Soviet disintegration in that they hint at the evolution of ethnic division in post Soviet Russia.

Chapter Overview

In Chapter 1, I will lay out what I believe to be the root cause of the center-periphery conflict in Russia today. The ethnic-territorial structure of the Soviet Union is a legacy that modern Russia has inherited. I will show that the establishment of the ethno-federal structure in the Soviet Union created the basis for the formation of separate national identities rather than serving as an instrument of assimilation. As time progressed these institutions created and reinforced the elite structures necessary to bring about national movements in the late 1980's. The rise of the Tatar national movement, which lies in stark contrast to the quick rise and fall of the Republic's democratic movement, illustrates the importance of political and academic institutional support in the development of politics in the Republic of Tatarstan.

Chapter 2 contains the legal framework of Tatarstan's bid for sovereignty vis-à-vis the Russian Federation. Many of the institutional structures, i.e. political and cultural, greatly influenced the documents establishing the Russian Federation. The similarities between the Soviet structural models and the Russian model laid down in the Federation Treaty and the Russian Constitution directly influenced Tatarstan's ability to codify their associated status in the documents establishing the

RT. This study examines how the Tatar Constitution and the bilateral treaty process contributed to the nation building policies of the Tatar government since the 1990's. The incongruities between the Tatar Constitution, the Federation Treaty and the Russian Constitution afforded Tatar leaders the opportunity to negotiate a contractual relationship and a significant degree of cultural autonomy that the RF has had difficulty in retracting.

Chapter 3 will explore what Tatar officials have done to not only maintain but also to build upon efforts to socially and culturally separate Tatarstan from Russian society. I will show that the Republican leadership has taken the cultural revival agenda of the Tatar national movement, the TPC, and has adopted it to maintain power while edging out political opposition. The protectionist policies of political and economic sovereignty have been publically touted as beneficial to both Russians and Tatars which has served to legitimize the ruling elite as a fair and equitable regime both within the Republic and within the Federation. On the other hand, the cultural policies of language revival and development in the Republic have been implemented in such a way that they establish significant barriers for non-Tatars to enter the Republic and participate in the cultural, economic and political spheres of civil society.

Chapter 1: The Unity of the Union: Ethnic-Federalism and the Soviet Legacy

Among the main competing arguments for the collapse of the Soviet Union are those that examine the organizational structure of the Soviet system and the institutions developed to control the system. The Soviet Union was modeled as a federal state comprised of national sub-units aimed at limiting the rise of nationalism. Control was exerted through a set of national institutions based on the markers of territory, identity and language, which were used to convey benefits to members of the proscribed national populations. Only members of the proscribed nationalities could be politically mobilized and even then, only those who were loyal to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its socialist agenda were permitted to retain power. Therefore the Soviet Union was intended to be the new nation under which an ideological identity would supersede its national elements over time (Bunce 2004, 428).

Many scholars argue is that the CPSU missed the opportunity to supplant the national forms with the stamp of a pan-Soviet identity (Hale 2003; Gorenburg 2003; Lynn and Novikov 1997; Roeder 1991). Broadly speaking this was caused by the entrenchment of the national elite groups and the stagnation of the Soviet economy. The ethnic elite cadres found themselves dependent on the economic success of their national units in order to maintain positions of power within the CPSU. In such a materialistic atmosphere ethnic cadres became more focused on the welfare of

their regions rather than that of the Soviet Union. The formal and informal ties of political patronage systems in the institutional structures of the national sub-units were employed to retain resources in the regions causing widespread economic gridlock in the Union.

It is generally agreed that the formation of the national popular fronts arose with elite support within the academic and political institutions of the state. Whereas many democratic movements failed without political support and access to the institutions of state, nationalist movements such as the Tatar Public Center relied on a mixture of political support from the political and academic spheres of Tatarstan's ethnic elite cadre. These Soviet Era underpinnings were vital for the continuance of regional opposition to the formation of strong central government in Russia during the early 1990's. Without direct control over the institutions of state at the regional level, Russian leaders were forced to deal with regional leaders, such as Mintimer Shaimiev, on a bilateral basis.

The RSFSR has often been likened to that of a miniature Soviet Union in that it contained its own system of national-sub units. The same processes of elite competition and entrenchment occurring in the Soviet Union also occurred in Russia. The lack of a central government in Russia combined with its high composition of ethnic territories presented Russian leaders with a dilemma very similar to that of the Bolsheviks in 1917; attempt to establish a strong central state

without broad popular support in the regions or; work out a compromise with the regions?

Formation of the Union

The difficulties inherent in the formation of the Soviet Union were very similar to those affecting the formation of the Russian Federation and to that extent the RF exhibits a federal structure very similar to its predecessor. At the time of the 1917 revolution, the former Tsarist state was a patchwork of disparate populations with a variety of cultural legacies, some of which had enjoyed statehood before their incorporation into the Russian realm. Nationalist challenges to the authority of the new state of the proletariat posed a real obstacle to its architects.

The solution to this dilemma was the adoption of an ethno-federal structure that would permit the reincorporation the Russian realm under a new government that would be sympathetic the multiplicity of its peoples. Thus the ethno-federal organization of the state was adopted by the Bolsheviks out of a desire to co-opt the political agendas of local leaders by offering an end to the oppressive tsarist policies aimed at the empires' non-Russian population (Gorenburg 2003, 77). This initially permitted local elites to maintain their positions of power so long as they pledged their support to the Bolshevik's socialist agenda. This strategy was so successful that 98% of former tsarist holdings were reincorporated under the flag of the Soviet state.

The creation of a state mapped along ethnic lines allowed the central authorities to focus on the rapid industrial and economic development of the state while avoiding complications inherent in cultural imperialism. The communist party was able to usurp nationalistic challenges to its authority by prohibiting all but party-sanctioned political entrepreneurs from mobilizing their communities, and limiting the role of these entrepreneurs to the pursuit of the party's agenda of social and economic transformation (Roeder 1991, 203). Centralized control of the economic welfare of the Union's sub-national units ensured that national claims did not arise to challenge the center as long as local leaders were in competition with each other for state sponsorship for resources. Since Russia served as the source of central authority, the economic and social sponsorship of all-Union development led to the prevalent substitution of 'Soviet' with Russian.

Soviet identity reflected the transcendence of the party's new socially-based values over those parochial values of ethnicity (Hirsch 1997, 276). This construction was effectively used to espouse both the primacy and inclusivity of the socialist agenda both domestically and abroad. The primacy of socialism meant that, language and other manifestations of nationality were merely forms devoid of meaningful content without the doctrine of socialism (Gorenburg 2003, 77). Where ethnic identity, culture and language came into play, the state afforded each national unit a set of rights that were meant to encourage mobility within the broader Soviet community. This platform was used to disseminate socialist policy to the largest

cultural blocks within the USSR to provide maximal control and assist in the dissemination of soviet policy in the Union's sub-national units.

The complexity of identifying those cultural blocks cannot be understated and the pursuit of dividing Soviet Union into viable cultural-economic states consumed the better part of the 1920's and 1930's. The actual division of the Soviet state into ethnic states was based on Joseph Stalin's primordialist definition of ethnicity as a "historically evolved, stable community based on a common language, territory, economic life and psychological makeup manifested in a community of culture" (Stalin 1950, 39). Stalin's view of ethnicity eventually formed the basis of later Soviet ideological and scholarly approaches to the formation of ethnic institutions. Nevertheless the difficulty of defining the plethora of peoples in the USSR forced the CPSU to encourage the use of clear and unambiguous definitions of nationality (Hirsch 1997, 274).

Identity was managed through the issuance of internal passports, which started in 1932, stamped with the ethnic identity (*natsional'nost'*) of the individual (Hirsch 1997, 269). Each citizen was given the choice to choose their nationality on the basis of their parents. Citizens born of two parents of the same titular group were obligated to claim the identity of that group, but individuals of mixed pedigree were free to choose the ethnic identity of either parent (Gorenburg 2003, 29 - 30). Once selected this affiliation could not be reversed.

Nationality (*natsional'nost*) was eventually the term that the Soviet of Nationalities settled on as a means to convey benefits to members of the Union's sub national units. After the completion of the 1939 all-union census, ethnic groups were consolidated into nationalities or *natsii*. This was done on the basis of defining nationalities along dense concentrations of ethnicities living in compact regions literate in their own language (Hirsch 1997, 274). As the Journal of Soviet Nationalities pointed out in 1934, "not every narodnost' (in light of small numbers, underdevelopment and so on) was a national'nost or natsiia" (Hirsch 1997, 267). This resulted in numerous groups being forced into sub-categories of the new national states.

The resulting union republics encompassed the ethnic homelands of the largest titular populations within the Soviet federation. This resulted in the creation of set of new states that generally comprised the largest and most developed economic blocks of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the majority of the union republics had legacies of former statehood prior to incorporation into the Russian Empire. It is also noteworthy to point out that union republics were only formed along the international boundaries of the Soviet Union. All other homelands of titular groups, regardless of cultural and economic merit, were designated as districts and provinces within the various union republics (Gorenburg 2003, 31).

The uppermost tier of the federal hierarchy was occupied by the administrative institution of the CPSU. In the case of Russia, these institutions also

served the administrative functions of the RSFSR, which would later become one of the key obstacles in the formation of a strong central government in Post Soviet Russia. The union republics comprised the second tier of the federal hierarchy. Each union republic was granted the right to national self-determination which included formal sovereignty within the USSR, the right to conduct foreign relations, and the theoretical right to secede from the Union. More tangible benefits included, representation in the legislative bodies of the USSR, the formation of a constitutional government in each union republic, a significant degree of autonomous rule by the local elite, linguistic autonomy, complete native language education systems including universities, and the creation of republic academies of science (Gorenburg 2003, 31). The status enjoyed by each republic translated into subsidies for social development not enjoyed by other undistinguished ethnic groups. Strict central control over local Party membership and distribution of economic resources ensured that national self-determination was confined within the scope of the Soviet Union until end of the 1980's.

Soviet autonomous republics formed the third tier of nationalities within the federal hierarchy of the Soviet Union. Autonomous republics had their own constitutions and local governments independent of the union republics. ASSR's could even initiate legislation within the supreme soviets of the union republics, but they could not conduct foreign relations and they were not considered sovereign (Gorenburg 2003, 31). The degree of cultural and educational benefits enjoyed by

ASSR's varied somewhat by region, but most ASSR's contained local branches of the national academy of sciences which were dedicated to the study and preservation of the local titular culture.

Education and National Elite Cadres

Education served as the primary institution used to maintain the integrity of the ethno-federal structure through culture building and for formation of ethnic cadres. The ethnic federal structure of the USSR created an institutional demand for elite cadres to serve as the local face of the CPSU. The Soviet strategy for maintaining interethnic stability was not one of removing the root causes of ethnic conflict but one of eliminating independent political mobilization (Roeder 1991, 199). Thus the primary purpose of the local elite was to control political mobility in the national republics. Socio-economic mobility came from dual sources; one from the ethnic quotas and institutions dictated by the center to each national unit; and two from the domestic policies of each national unit. The incentives granted through the nationalities policies of the CPSU and the education systems they afforded each nationality served as the primary institutional means for mobility within the Soviet community. Protectionist policies at the local level afforded the expansion of local elite cadres and their support bases while quotas at the Union level allowed mobility within the Union for members of each national unit. The expansion of ethnic preference through quotas and subsidies at the local level tied ethnic identity and

territory inextricably together over the span of Soviet rule which contributed to inter-territorial competition rather than cooperation.

The USSR provided each national unit with its own set of national universities, Soviet academy of sciences, and funding of titular cultural education programs. The education of the citizenry in their native language and culture was incumbent upon, and the sole responsibility, of each national government (Gorenburg 2003, 37). In the broader Soviet community, mobilization of the titular population began with the hybridization of the ethnic *natsii* with the Soviet ideal via the education system. These institutions offered local elites the opportunity to expand their influence in the regions through the extension of political patronage.

Political patronage was the chief means of conveying mobility within Soviet society while education served as the formal institution of mobilization at the national level. Educational institutions were staffed by the ethnic intelligentsia, who constituted one part of the local elite cadre. The intellectual elite carried out the formulation of soviet curricula for their respective regions and were tasked with the articulation of local culture and traditions (Gorenburg 2003, 40-41). The political and professional elite relied on the intelligentsia as the shapers of the national legacy and the guarantors of national culture. The intelligentsia primarily originated from the urban populace and rose through the academic institutions of the local government (Gorenburg 2003, 37). They comprised the backbone of regional ethnological programs, as well as the core of the region's native language writers,

artists and musicians. The intelligentsia's professional status and job security was maintained through close contact with regional officials, membership in trade unions, or other party sanctioned organizations if not the CPSU itself.

The education mandates of the CPSU had a profound effect on the development of ethnic identity in the Soviet Union. Second only to territory, language became the key symbol of national identity among titular elites. Titular languages served the dual role of indicating pastoral sentiments and backwardness in soviet society while at the same time indicating the authenticity of one's ethnic background (Kondrashov 2000, 22-32; 46-49). The later perception was used by titular elites to convey their *narodnost'* as a source of legitimacy. Absent any substantive cultural symbols and powers other than the quota systems and language education, the territorial boundaries of the national administrative units became associated with the political reach of the ethnic group. All territory within the boundaries of a given republic was subject to titular culture building and education programs while all lands beyond the national border were perceived as the domain of other ethnic groups. In this way the nationalities policies of the Soviet Union effectively set local political agendas and diffused local ethnic tensions.

Political leaders were often drawn from rural regions, through the process of political patronage, where their native language and local background afforded them political advantage over urbanized natives. This is important because as Kondrashov points out, urban norms of education and politics were associated with

Russian ways, because Russians were the ones who first introduced these norms to rural regions (Kondrashov 2000, 30-31). Local systems of political patronage were developed over time between urban elites and rural officials to bridge the urban rural divide. The urbanized political elite therefore relied on the support of rural officials and their influence over the populace in exchange for political and economic benefits (Giuliano 2000, 304-307). The result of patronage was that urbanized members of the titular population faced significant barriers to entering the political structure despite the favorable quotas owing to the perception that they were too Russified to represent the larger titular populace.

Decline of the Soviet System

The collapse of the Soviet Union occurred from dysfunctions in the institutional design of the state administrative apparatus rather than political failures within the highest levels of the administrative apparatus (Bahry 2005; Hale 2003; Roeder 1991; Stoner-Weiss 2006). As Roeder argued in early 1991, the success of elite cadres within the institutions of state was defined by the fulfillment of production quotas and constant socioeconomic growth (Roeder 1991, 206). The economic subsidies supplied to the national units were used by local elites to expand their own political control at the regional level. This was achieved through the expansion of social mobility for titular groups through political patronage. The result was an ever increasing web of transfers through social networks which stimulated growing complexity in the regional economies (Stoner-Weiss 2006, 27).

As the ethnic elite cadres developed their own internal support systems they grew less dependent on the center for support. Thus the state institutions intended to appease diversity in the Union and fund the consolidation of central power through economic development later permitted elites to make the argument that cultural diversity necessitated political and economic deregulation.

By the early 1970's the last of the great industrialization initiatives were drawing to a close and economic growth slowed as the Soviet Union achieved one of its greatest feats: the industrialization of a state within a single generation. Economic performance measured by growth was still the measure by which the center evaluated success. Development was usually funded by the redistribution of resources from more developed regions to underdeveloped regions. Elites in more wealthy regions therefore, began to see continued growth as counterproductive to their regions because such growth would spur greater demands from the center. Elite cadres resorted to underreporting local production to stave off increased production demands from the center. Over time, political elites grew ever more protective of the resource subsidies their regions enjoyed and center-periphery relations were increasingly dominated by rivaling petitions from the national territories for funding from above (Roeder 1991, 206-207).

The very success of Soviet industrialization and the ever more complex economies of the USSR created more resistance at the national level. The increasing difficulty of the center to extract resources to redistribute across the economy over

sustained periods of time resulted in increased deregulation pressures from local elites (Bunce 2004, 430). During the early years of Soviet rule the CPSU relied on the great successes of the Soviet regime and the judicious use of the KGB, the enforcement arm of CPSU ensured that regional elites were willing to pledge unwavering support for the its policies. Among Khrushchev's reforms of the 1950's was the removal of the KGB as the enforcement arm of the CPSU and the use of social and material benefits to placate political elites. This resulted in a decrease of turnover in elite cadres, which Valarie Bunce cites as one of the prime reasons elite cadres were able to consolidate power (Bunce 2004, 429). Over time placation was becoming more ineffective as the center had very little else to offer local elites. Thus politics and economics were intertwined in such a way that made the center appear weaker as time progressed.

Gorbachev's economic reforms in the late 1980's effectively separated local enterprises from the political apparatus of the CPSU. Both the 1987 'Law on State Enterprises' and the 1988 'Law on Cooperatives' were meant to stimulate economic growth at regional levels by allowing regional directors to retain a portion of revenues for reinvestment, either in commercial applications or to address social and workforce concerns. These two reforms essentially gave industry leaders increased autonomy over their respective industries, and more importantly in the Soviet context of enterprise leaders as political and social leaders of local workforces, it increased their political power. This resulted in increased social

demands levied on enterprise leaders, de facto owners of their enterprises as well as the siphoning of regional revenues into private hand (Stoner-Weiss 1997, 39). Together these activities created a second set of political stakeholders for regional elites to engage for support as well as increased social demands from local populations resulting in a political slide toward increased autonomy demands from both political and popular actors.

Popular Fronts and the Tatar National Movement

The Tatar nationalist movement developed out of what Kondrashov refers to as the non-formal movements of the Soviet liberalization process. These movements were there first appearance of an independent political and cultural society apart from the official political structures of the CPSU. These small movements convened to discuss a wide array of issues from environmentalism, historical and cultural preservation, religion, etc (Kondrashov 2000, 113). The agglomeration of these various movements under larger umbrella organizations created the basis of the early pro-democracy movements in the Soviet Union (Gorenburg 2003, 49-50)

In early 1988 the Baltic Popular Fronts, which were formed from agglomerations of various non-formal movements, were already well known throughout the Soviet Union for their political efficacy. The democratic movements of Russia, which were in communication with, and modeled after the Baltic Popular Fronts, were already present in the TASSR under the designation of the Popular Front of Tataria. Unlike the democratic movements, which faded rather quickly due

to the lack of institutional supports, the nationalist movements developed later within Soviet political and academic institutional structures. Thus the instability of the Soviet regime and Gorbachev's liberalization reforms allowed a variety of political groups to access to the formal supports of the political and academic institutions necessary to achieve long-term efficacy (Gorenburg 2003, 50-51). For groups such as the Tatar nationalist movement this meant that they could legally seek out and lobby for support among the ruling elite, legislative bodies and even attempt to run their own candidates in local elections.

Formation of the Tatar Public Center

After several failed attempts to create a Tatar nationalist front, the core of what was to become the face of the Tatar national movement convened, in June of 1998 at the Kazan branch of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, to develop discussion suggestions for the Nineteenth CPSU Party Congress. At the request of the CPSU, the group of about two-hundred academics and scholars from the Institute of Language, Literature and History, assembled to develop ideas on the state of interethnic relations (Gorenburg 2003, 54). Acting on the endorsement of the CPSU and mutual interest among the members of the Institute, the group agreed to organize the Tatar Public Center (TPC).

The formation of the TPC was originally perceived as cultural organization focused on the preservation the Tatar language, culture and traditions. This focus reflected the organization's intellectual core. The composition of the TPC's core

membership is best illustrated by the delegates to the first TPC congress in 1989. According to Gorenburg intellectuals comprised over 50% of the delegates, while another 25% consisted of academics. The creative intelligentsia, consisting of writers, artists and musicians concerned with the fate of Tatar culture in Russia, formed the third largest group of delegates at 18% (Gorenburg 2003, 57). The only major trade group to enter the TPC was the Republic's teachers union who comprised about 7% of the delegates to the first TPC congress.

Taking from the experiences of the pro-democracy movements in Russia and the TASSR, the TPC organized itself into a loose federation of autonomous social groups both inside and outside the TASSR with the task of staging protests and mobilizing populations for elections. The TPC initially coordinated with the Popular Front of Tataria, the local democratic movement, which kept in close contact with the democratic movements in Russia and the Baltic Republics. The collective of TPC affiliates had members and programs that extended well beyond the borders of the TASSR. The key members of the TPC were the Marjani Society, the Bulgar al-Jadid and several other Muslim organizations (Kondrashov 2000, 117). Ittifaq, the Tatar nationalist party chaired by Fauzia Bairamova, who was also a member of the Tatar Supreme Soviet, became a high profile affiliate member of the TPC and was also the most radical of the organizations in the movement.

In addition to its informal organizations, the TPC leadership cultivated its formal connections to the Communist Party. One of the first tasks of its organizers

was to develop ties with the local authorities and the CPSU. Rafael Khakimov, one of the organization's cofounders, joined the CPSU obkom's ideological department in order to prevent conflict between the Party and the TPC. Marat Muliukov, who later became president of the TPC was a professor of Communist Party history at the university and remained a party member until August of 1991 (Gorenburg 2003, 55). The party ties of the organization's founders and the political connections they later cultivated ensured the TPC the support necessary to transform into a viable political organization.

Politics of the Tatar Public Center

The TPC became identified as a political organization after it announced a platform during its first congress in February 1989. According to the TPC platform the Soviet Union and the RSFSR had violated the Communist principle of equality among nations by allowing ethnic homelands with differentiated rights to simultaneously exist within the federative structure of the USSR (Gorenburg 2003, 88). Thus the primary focus of the TPC was the elevation of TASSR status to that of a union republic.

The TPC approach to the elevation of Tataria was fairly traditional by Soviet norms in that it focused on cultural revival in terms of a language policy linked to ethnic identity. The key to their policy was the development of national language movement in the Republic, which called for increased education of the Tatar language in schools and higher education. The TPC wanted to increase the status of

the Tatar language by establishing an independent Academy of Science in the Republic along with increased use of Tatar in print publications, radio and television and film. In addition to this they proposed to make all public spaces bilingual by replacing street signs and place names with bilingual signs (Gorenburg 2003, 51). Furthermore they called for the funding necessary to renovate symbols of Tatar architecture and culture such as the Kul Sharif Mosque in the Kazan Kremlin. In the view of the TPC these measures would elevate the TASSR to a level of functional autonomy, at least culturally and scientifically, to the level enjoyed by other union republics. An example of the differences in status between union republics and autonomous republics can be seen by comparing the union republic of Kirghiziia with that of the TASSR. Both the TASSR and Kirghiziia had comparable populations of 3.5 million and 4 million, respectively, while Tatarstan's annual GDP amounted to 17 billion rubles versus Kirghiziia's 11.5 billion rubles. Nevertheless Kirghiziia had three economic research institutes with a total staff of about two hundred, while Tatarstan had one department of economics with a staff of three. Furthermore Kirghiziia was permitted to withhold five percent of its oil revenues for local use while the TASSR, a major producer of oil in the USSR, retained less than two percent of its oil revenues (Evangelista 2002, 98-99). Therefore sovereignty translated into increased social, cultural and educational funding within the Republic. The expansion of Tatar cultural endowments resonated with the Republican leadership

so much so that it eventually became part of the domestic policy of the Republic and the *raison d'être* for sovereignty.

During the Soviet period the TPC moderated purely ethnic appeals of the exclusive treatment of Tatar culture in the TASSR in an effort to lend a measure of support for the Tatar leadership's fight to elevate the status of the TASSR within the ethno-federal hierarchy. The political elite's adoption of the cultural policies of the TPC was founded in the TPC's concerted efforts to petition the local government on the status of cultural and social conditions in the TASSR. The adoption of the TPC platform by local leaders meant that TPC objectives were tied to the argument that political and economic sovereignty would benefit all citizens in the Republic. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, TPC objectives became much more radical before the organization fell out of favor after the signing of the bilateral treaty between Tatarstan and Russia in 1994 (Giuliano 2000, 295).

Decline of the Tatar Public Center

The focus on international self-determination of all Tatars initially led the TPC leadership to focus on the rights of Tatars residing outside the TASSR (Gorenburg 2003, 56-57; Kondrashov 2000, 118-121). At the time about three quarters of the ethnic Tatar population resided outside of the TASSR (Kondrashov 2000, 86). Within the Russia about 80% of the Tatar population resided within the Volga-Ural region, with a significant portion of Tatars residing in nearby in the Autonomous Republic of Bashkortostan. Initially the TPC attempted to mobilize the

entire Tatar diaspora with the goal of building an identity based national movement within Russia, rather than that of the territorial model used in the Soviet Union.

This nontraditional approach to ethnic mobilization dates to Joseph Stalin's plan to incorporate the Tatars and Bashkirs into a single Tatar-Bashkir Soviet Republic. Stalin had hoped to secure the support of the Tatars and Bashkirs through the support of Mulla Nur Vakhitov but when he died the Bashkirs switched their allegiance to the White Army (Evangelista 2002, 98; George 2009, 60-61). Tatar nationalists have cited Stalin's failure as a justification for sovereignty since the incorporation of both of the regions as autonomous republics in the 1930's.

The outward focus of the TPC led the organization into conflict with both the Republican and Federal authorities which ultimately gave Mintimer Shaimiev more political leverage when dealing with Russia. In January of 1989, the Republican authorities were rebuked by the CPSU in Moscow for allowing the TPC to interfere in the internal affairs of other ASSR's in the Volga region (specifically the Bashkir ASSR) (Kondrashov 2000, 118-119). The TPC's unorthodox approach to mobilizing the entire Tatar diaspora in the RSFSR contributed to serious rifts in the organization that ultimately prevented it from seriously challenging the Tatar political elite.

The radical wing of the Tatar national movement, Ittifaq had a more integrated cultural-economic platform aimed to exclusively elevate and accentuate a purely Tatar character in the republic both domestically and abroad. Unlike the

majority of the TPC members who labored to increase Soviet style quotas to further elevate the programs that benefitted Tatars in the USSR, Ittifaq organizers opposed a multi-ethnic state and wanted full sovereignty for the TASSR. Ittifaq plans called for the republicanization of the large enterprises in the republic, such as the oil and heavy manufacturing industries of the republic (Gorenburg 2003, 95). The proceeds of exports from these industries would be applied to the cultural and linguistic programs advocated by the TPC. Furthermore Ittifaq supported private ownership of land but only for ethnically Tatar citizens. The group's organizers called for a special relationship with the Arab and Turkic world which would reinforce the cultural revival in the republic by providing revenues from the expansion of markets abroad and the development of a tourism industry culturally tied to the south (Gorenburg 2003, 91; Sharafutdinova 2003, 618-619).

The signing of the conclusion of the bilateral treaty in 1994 effectively ended elite support for the local nationalist movement (Crosston 2004; Kondrashov2000; Gorenburg 2003; Giuliano 2000; Stoner-Weiss 2006). This is because TPC demands became more radical as Tatar and Russian officials concluded the negotiation of the bilateral treaty. Ittifaq and the TPC routinely engaged in protests to undermine Tatar-Russian relations. In August of 1991 after the failed coup attempt on the Yeltsin government the TPC attempted to declare full Tatar sovereignty by the creation of an independent Tatar National Guard forcing the Republican government to put down several protests and confiscate arms in the

Republic (Evangelista 2002, 101-103). In 1991 Fauziia Bairamova staged a two week hunger strike to persuade the Tatar authorities to withdraw sponsorship of the Russian presidential elections (Evangelista 2002, 99). The actions of the TPC and Ittifaq never gained much electoral support from the public. In the 1991 race for the Tatar presidency, the TPC and Ittifaq, combined, enjoyed support from only 14 percent of the voting public compared to the 19 percent support of the Communist Party (Evangelista 2002, 99). Furthermore the Tatar nationalist movement did not put forth their own candidate in the election. In the Russian press, Shaimiev was called “a... islet of stability” while his personal ties with Yeltsin and experience as a Soviet leader made Shaimiev and his group a much more preferable group to deal with than those of the Tatar nationalist movements (George 2009, 66-67). The strains between the Shaimiev government and the TPC resulted in a limitation of access to the government that they had previously enjoyed. In a 2002 article, Tomaila Lankina shows how Baskir authorities were able to stifle TPC mobilization in their republic by limiting TPC access to media outlets and the institutions of local government. Local authorities were able to smother TCP attempts to set up an independent radio station in the mostly Tatar town of Chakmagush (Lankina 2002, 1045). In other areas they successfully blocked the publication and dissemination of TCP propaganda in the Bashkir Republic (Lankina, 1045-1046). Without the support of the local government the TPC quickly faded from the political scene.

The demise of the TPC however does not mean that they were ineffective. The following chapters will illustrate how the governing elite of the Tatarstan co-opted and instituted large portions of the nationalist's platform in the quest to strengthen the sovereignty of the Tatar state. The development of the TPC illustrates how the intuition of the Soviet nationalities policy was applied by an emergent elite to combine a mixture of formal and informal organizations into a forceful political organization strong enough to affect regional politics in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia.

Conclusion

The Soviet ethno-federalist state was intended to limit political and civil mobility within the administrative structure of the state and across the territory of the USSR. However over the seventy year span of Soviet rule, local ethnic cadres expanded the institutions of ethnic mobility in their own territories to the point that they were able to build local coalitions strong enough to lobby the center for more deregulation. Wealth redistribution within the USSR contributed to elite sensitivities and compelled them to take ever more protective stances over local resources. Without the ability to enforce, or rather command, complete compliance with their directives the central planning committees of the USSR were unable to maintain the smooth flow of resources between different areas of the all-Union economy. The reforms of the late Soviet period rapidly expanded avenues into the political sphere for capitalization by emergent elites.

The Soviet-style demands for economic concessions for use in the development of the national units became the platforms by which regional elites resisted central control. In regions such as Tatarstan this resistance manifested itself in the form of status elevation and sovereignty within the Soviet Union. Greater economic sovereignty meant greater potential for the cultural development of the national and further entrenchment of the political elite.

The formation of democratic and national movements illustrates how elite control of and participation in the local institutions were able to control political mobilization. Those movements who were afforded access to the institutions of state were able to mobilize effective political forces that shaped local policy well beyond the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the following chapters I will show how the core of the Tatar nationalist movement was enshrined in the foundation of the Republic of Tatarstan to further the creation of a new national state within the Russian Federation.

Chapter 2: A Federation of Sovereignities: The Legal Relations of Tatarstan and Russia

The main thrust of Tatar political mobilization from the late 1980's up to the collapse of the Soviet Union was the elevation of the republic in the federal hierarchy. As noted in the previous chapter, the Tatar national movement based its claims on the principle of national self-determinism and the Soviet claim of equality among nations. During the period between 1989 and 1994 these claims were adapted several times by Tatar leaders to mount a campaign of legal separation from that of the Russian Federation.

An associated status with the RF meant the avoidance of civil war and economic disruptions during the formation of the Russian state. Contrary to arguments put forth by scholars such as Triesman, Tatarstan did not embark on a campaign to bluff the center into concessions for federal support of regional governments. This is apparent first of all because Tatarstan was a net revenue donor region that did not require subsidies to survive. Tatar officials did however desire to retrain those resources instead of paying them out to the central government.

Before the 1991 coup attempt on President Yeltsin's government which cemented the demise of the Soviet Union, the focus of Tatar national policy was firmly centered on a form of political sovereignty within the institutional framework of the Soviet Union. Full political sovereignty within the USSR would ostensibly give the Tatar leadership the economic control they desired to confront the social

development issues before them. Upon the dissolution of the USSR, the lack of a Russian central government strongly influenced the choice of Russian leaders to adopt the Soviet style ethnic federation of the USSR. The adoption of the ethnic federal system only exacerbated center periphery relations in later years by lending credence to political platforms in the regions that focused on state sovereignty such as that of the TPC and the Tatar political elite. The reconstitution of the ethnic federal system essentially enshrined the late Soviet era precedence of ethnic challenges to the center for more decentralized control based on the principals of national self determination. The continuance of decentralization pressures levied by the Tatar leadership on the Russian center can be clearly seen in the constitutions and treaties drafted to define the two states and their relations between each other. This tactic ensured that the Republic gained maximal political and economic sovereignty for state building while the Russian center was at its weakest. In the following years the attainment of political and economic concessions reinforced the power of the Tatar political elite and the cultural construction programs as a primary element in the maintenance of the Russian Federation.

The Economic Case

the Soviet era Tatarstan served as a major industrial center in Russia, so much so that the Republic controlled a leading position in the energy, military-industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy (Crosston 2004, 51). The Republic ranked eighth out of the 70 autonomous republics and regions in industrial

output and seventh in agricultural output (Kondrashov 2000, 94). During the nineties the Tatars often cited the fact that the level of economic development within the Republic exceeded that of both Central Asian Republics and the Baltic Republics (Crosston 2004, 51; Gorenburg 2003, 89). For example the output of Tatarstan's Kama Automobile Works exceeded that of the entire Estonian economy (Evangelista 2002, 98). Despite Tatarstan's formidable image of industrialization, the Republican government controlled less than two percent of the revenues derived from the Republic's industrial facilities (Kondrashov 2000, 96).

The Tatar leadership alleged that the TASSR was overly industrialized and socially underdeveloped. Marat Galeev, a member of the Tatar GosSoviet's Commission for Economic Development, argued that "Tatarstan was a developed country many years ago" (George 2009, 65). The pressure placed on the central authorities was framed to combat the disparity between the region's industrial development and the resources it received to address the social welfare and cultural needs of civil society in the Republic. Only one quarter of investments in the Republic were put into non-industrial areas as opposed to the union-wide average of 30 per cent and 32 per cent in regions such as Estonia, Latvia, Georgia and Belorussia. In terms of social investment, "[Tatarstan] ranked between 40th and 60th in Russia in the provision of housing, hospital beds, telephone communication and other services" (Kondrashov 2000, 96). Therefore the Tatar leadership believed the elevation in status would afford them a greater measure of control over

industrial and social development in the TASSR. Therefore Shaimiev concentrated on gaining enough autonomy to keep the wealth in Tatarstan by exerting control over the privatization of regional property and establishing taxation rights over the region (George 2009, 65).

	Region	Population, '000s	% of total
1	City of Moscow	9,003	6.06
2	Moscow oblast	6,718	4.52
3	City of St. Petersburg	5,035	3.39
4	Sverdlovsk oblast	4,785	3.22
5	Krasnodar krai	4,738	3.19
6	Rostov oblast	4,348	2.93
7	Republic of Bashkortostan	3,984	2.68
8	Nizhni Novgorod oblast	3,775	2.54
9	Chelyabinsk oblast	3,715	2.50
10	Republic of Tatarstan	3,679	2.48
	Russian Federation	148,543	100.00

Source: Goskomstat 1997, 378-380.

	Region	Industrial Output, Rb billion	% of total
1	City of Moscow	77.0	6.14
2	Moscow oblast	61.0	4.86
3	Sverdlovsk oblast	51.5	4.11
4	Tumen oblast	42.7	3.41
5	City of St. Petersburg	41.3	3.29
6	Chelyabinsk oblast	35.4	2.82
7	Nizhni Novgorod oblast	34.7	2.77
8	Republic of Tatarstan	31.7	2.53
9	Republic of Bashkortostan	31.0	2.47
10	Samara oblast	30.7	2.45
	Russian Federation	1,254.0	100.00

Source: Goskomstat 1997, 183-185.

	Region	Agricultural Output, Rb billion	% of total
1	Krasnodar krai	12.8	4.92
2	Rostov oblast	9.0	3.46
3	Moscow oblast	8.6	3.31
4	Republic of Bashkortostan	7.9	3.04
5	Stavropol krai	7.7	2.96
6	Altai krai	7.2	2.77
7	Republic of Tatarstan	7.0	2.69
8	Saratov oblast	6.3	2.42
9	Volgograd	6.2	2.38
10	Orenburg oblast	6.0	2.31
	Russian Federation	260.0	100.00

Source: Goskomstat 1997, 255-258.

	Region	Annual Investments in Fixed Assets, Rb billion	% of total
1	Tumen oblast	22.2	10.60
2	City of Moscow	8.6	4.08
3	Moscow oblast	6.6	3.12
4	Republic of Tatarstan	5.9	2.79
5	Sverdlovsk oblast	5.7	2.73
6	Krasnoyarsk krai	5.6	2.69
7	Republic of Bashkortostan	5.4	2.56
8	Krasnodar krai	5.0	2.36
9	Kemerovo oblast	5.0	2.34
10	Chelyabinsk oblast	4.7	2.22
	Russian Federation	210.1	100.00

Source: Goskomstat 1997, 378-380; 118-120.

The Parade of Sovereignties and a New Union

In the context of the Soviet Union, the elevation of an autonomous republic to that of union republic was viewed as a viable method to increase local control over regional development. The mobilization of the Tatar leadership against the central

authorities was a reflection of the battles going on between the CPSU and that of the union republics. Spearheading the struggle for autonomy were the Baltic republics which began directly challenging the authority of the Soviet Union when Estonia declared the supremacy of its republic law over that of the Soviet Union (Hale 2003, 237). The pressure Baltic leaders put on central authorities prompted the economic reforms Gorbachev pushed through the CPSU in 1988.

The apparent failure of Gorbachev's reforms to placate the republics prompted him to offer a renegotiation of the Union Treaty to fundamentally change the meaning of Soviet federalism. In an effort to defuse the grievances among the signators of the new treaty, the CPSU adopted the 'Law on Delineation of Powers between the USSR and the Subjects of the Federation' in April of 1989, which declared autonomous republics in the USSR *gosudarstva* joined to the USSR by free self-determination of their peoples. This law had the potential to effectively decentralize the USSR and Russia in respect to its ASSR's, which were to be tied to the Union rather than the RSFSR.

The *Law on the Delineation of State Powers* prompted the beginning of the 'parade of sovereignties' when Estonia declared full state sovereignty from the USSR in April of 1989. The law also afforded the RSFSR the opportunity to form its own republican institutions already enjoyed by other union republics. The lack of Russian institutions that mirrored all-Union political institutions had been a political consideration during the formation of the Soviet Union (Lynn and Novikov

1997, 190). The CPSU decided that separate Russian institutions and political apparatuses would have been a threat to the legitimacy and integrity of the Soviet Union. Boris Yeltsin's conflict with Gorbachev and the CPSU were defined by his attempts to carve out a Russian government separate from the central apparatus of the Soviet Union housed in the RSFSR. On June 12, 1990 RSFSR issued its own 'Declaration of State Sovereignty'.

While the establishment of a new union illustrates the direction of Tatar national development within the framework of the Soviet Union, the Russian declaration of sovereignty contextualizes the development of Tatar policy vis-à-vis the Russia after 1990. The Russian declaration of sovereignty proclaimed all territory within the borders of the RSFSR subjects of Russia. Therefore all autonomous republics were reduced in status to ordinary krais and oblasts (Kondrashov 2000, 101). Dissatisfied with their status under the Russian declaration, the leaders of the RSFSR's autonomous republics announced their intention to enter the union talks after declaring their own republics full union republics. In an effort to maintain the integrity of the RSFSR, Yeltsin went to Kazan and famously urged the republics to 'take as much sovereignty as you can swallow' so long as they remained within the RSFSR (Kondrashov 2000, 102). All of Russia's ASSR's consented to Yeltsin's plea except Tatarstan. Four weeks after Yeltsin's speech Tatarstan issued its own sovereignty declaration proclaiming itself a union republic and all the territory within, the exclusive property of the TSSR.

The Tatar declaration of sovereignty was an attempt by the political elite to free the republic from its position within the Russian federal hierarchy. Acting on the Soviet reforms, Article 1 redesignated the Tatar Republic the Tatar Soviet Socialist Republic thus attempting to undo the impact of the Russian declaration. Furthermore, Article 2 and 3 expressed the sentiment of the nationalist movement in the Republic by declaring the TSSR the home of all Tatars and the guaranteeing the rights of the Tatar nationality in the republic. Finally, Article 5 only acknowledged official collaboration with the USSR and the RSFSR in the creation of a new Union Treaty. The Tatar Declaration of Sovereignty firmly expressed the perception of the Republic's place in respect to the USSR and the Russian Federation. The construction of a loose alignment with the two state bodies of the USSR and the RSFSR would serve as the goal of Tatar national policy from 1990 to present.

In March of 1991 an all-Union referendum was held to determine whether the people would vote to preserve the USSR. The 1989 *Law on Delineation of State Powers* would take full effect under the new Union Treaty. In Russia, Yeltsin had an addendum attached to the referendum that allowed for the election of a Russian president (Crosston 2004, 52). In Tatarstan this addendum was excluded because of the pervading impression that Russia and the republics within its borders were going to be separate states under the new Union.

However, the failed Communist coup against Yeltsin ended the hope of renewing a new Union and therefore dashed the attempts of the Tatar leadership to elevate the status of their region. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union the political agenda of the TASSR was modified to take full advantage of Yeltsin's promises of sovereignty. The singular goal of the Tatar leadership to build a nation from the foundations of the ethno-federal institutions of the Soviet Union can be clearly seen in their struggle to define a contractual relationship with Russia during the formative years of the Russian Federation.

The Federation Treaty and the Constitution of 1993

Yeltsin's appeals to the regions of Russia indicated that the central authorities of the Russian Federation would adopt the ethno-federal structure of the Soviet Union. There was considerable debate over which federal model would be used in the reformation of the former RSFSR. The two models that won out were the territorial federal model and the national territorial model (Lynn and Novikov 1997, 192-195). The territorial model was a model based on the federal structures used in Germany and the United States where the federation is spatially divided and each unit is equal within the federation. The national territorial model reflected something like the Soviet federalism where each titular population would have their own state with limited sovereignty within the federation. The ongoing struggle between center and periphery has been fueled by the fact that both systems were

partially adopted in the two key documents establishing Russian federalism. Those documents are the Federation Treaty of 1992 and the Russian Constitution of 1993.

In November of 1991 President Yeltsin proposed the drafting of a Federation Treaty for Russia and its constituent members. The Treaty was based on the Union Treaty that was to have been signed in August of 1991. The proposed treaty was intended to settle all center-periphery issues in one document (Crosston 2004, 54). Several scholars point out that the central authorities favored the creation of a strong centralized federation whereas regional leaders and the leaders of the republics favored a more contractual union with the Federation (Stoner-Weiss 2004, 307; Lynn and Novikov 1997, 190-191).

The Federation Treaty was actually a series of treaties signed between the federal government and each level of the Federation: republics; oblasts; krajs; and the autonomies (Stoner-Weiss 2004, 311). The treaty defined the various responsibilities and jurisdictions of the Russian subjects which established an inherent asymmetry to the Federation which was used by more economically developed regions to exploit the weakness of the central government. The Republics remained *gosudarstva*, a status which they claimed in their declarations of sovereignty, and gained increased control over their own economic and cultural development while the other regions remained in the three-tier Soviet style administrative structure. According to Lynn and Novikov the Federation Treaty was

“largely and unpopular compromise” which marred the integrity of the Constitution of 1993 (Lynn and Novikov 1997, 191).

Tatarstan initially participated in the drafting process of the Federation Treaty but Republican leaders soon withdrew their support from the process for fear that the treaty was an attempt to equalize the status of the Russian subjects. Mintimer Shaimiev argued that the Federation Treaty did not treat the republics with the special status they had enjoyed under the Soviet Union (Crosston 2004, 54). In March of 1992 the Tatar leadership held a referendum to determine whether the Republic should remain in the Russian Federation. The ambiguous wording of, “Do you agree that Tatarstan is a sovereign state, a subject of international law, which develops its relations with Russia and other states on the basis of equal treaties?” was hotly debated by the Russian authorities (George 2009, 62). According to many scholars the opaque wording was intentionally selected to maximize support of Shaimiev within the RT and maximize his bargaining power with Russia while allowing the Russian authorities to save face, especially in light of the fact that Shaimiev insisted that the RT would not secede from the Federation (Crosston 2004; Gorenburg 2003 Lynn and Novikov 1997; Stoner-Weiss 2004). The Russian Constitutional Court was unable to ban the referendum, but warned that the “wording can be connected with an unilateral change of the national and state system of the Russian Federation and mean the Republic of Tatarstan is not within the Russian Federation” (George 2009, 62).

The result was a 61 percent in favor of becoming an independent territory (Stoner-Weiss 2004, 303). A week later, bolstered by his political victory, President Shaimiev publicly announced his refusal to sign the Federation Treaty. Tatarstan and Chechnya were the only Russian regions that did not sign the Federation Treaty. Bashkortostan and Sakha signed the treaty only with additional clauses granting them increased control over mineral resources and foreign commerce. The refusal of Tatarstan to sign the Federation Treaty expressed the resolve of its leadership to press the Russian center in pursuit of contractual relations with the Russian Federation.

The 1993 Russian Constitution was supposed to remedy all center-periphery conflict by claiming to equalize the subjects of the Federation. Under the 1993 Constitution republics lost their claims of sovereignty and their right to secede (Lynn and Novikov 1997, 192). However the provisions of the Federation Treaty were acknowledged in the 1993 Constitution causing fundamental discrepancies that muddied the legal landscape regarding the status of Russia's regions (Crosston 2004, 29-30). Overall the 1993 Constitution attempted to institute a territorial federal model, a model which contradicted the one outlined in the Federation Treaty. Articles 71 and 72 of the Russian Constitution specified areas of exclusive federal jurisdiction and areas of joint federal and regional jurisdiction, however no part of the document specified the exclusive jurisdiction of Russia's subjects

(Stoner-Weiss 2006, 55). Furthermore, nothing in the Russian Constitution prevented regions from usurping federal powers on their own territories.

The Bilateral Treaties

The ambiguity of the Russian position set forth in the Federation Treaty and the 1993 Constitution was major cause of Russian central weakness in the 1990's. This combined with the center's institutional inability to affect control in regional governments, forced the central authorities to capitulate and deal with the regions on individual bilateral basis, thus further undermining the authority of the federal government. During the 1994 to 1997 period numerous regions assumed federal powers on their own territories with the backing of the Russian Federation through the signing of bilateral agreements. For example federal rights to protect and defend the territories of North Ossetiya (point 3, article 4), Kabardino-Balkariia (point g, article 4), Tatarstan (point 2, article 3) and Bashkortostan (point 2, article 4) were usurped by each of the regional governments. Both Sverdlovsk and Udmurtiia gained the control of defense complex enterprises (Stoner-Weiss 2006, 55).

Bilateral Treaties were negotiated between the center and Russia's regions between 1994 and 1996 during a time in which the Russian government struggled to avoid direct conflict between itself and its regions. The bilateral treaties were primarily intended to further define center periphery relations with the federation's ethnic republics. Many Russian regions also took advantage of the Russia's vulnerable situation to negotiate their own power-sharing treaties with Moscow.

The bilateral treaties were drafted to address specific issues that were over generalized and vaguely outlined in the Federation Treaty and the Russian Constitution. They addressed issues of security, legality, fiscal policy and culture, education and social welfare.

Tatarstan set the precedence for the era of Russia's bilateral treaties by concluding the first bilateral treaty with Moscow on the 15th of February, 1994. "The Treaty" as it is commonly referred to in Tatarstan preserved the Republic's confederal approach to association with the Russian Federation. Like many of the treaties that were signed with other regions, the Tatar bilateral treaty enshrined the supremacy of the Tatar Constitution over its Russian counterpart, thereby allowing for the substitution of federal laws with regional laws. Furthermore there was no mention of any mechanism for reconciling differences between federal and regional legislation which effectively placed a barrier between federal authority and the regional government (Crosston 2004, 24-28).

Tatarstan's bilateral treaty with Russia legitimized constitutional contradiction between the two treaty signators. For example, the preamble of the treaty defined Tatarstan as a "sovereign state associated with the Russian Federation by constitution and treaty." This effectively created a situation that implied a confederal relationship between the Tatar Republic and the Russian Federation, thus reinforcing the equal status between the two states espoused in the Tatar Constitution. Russian authorities and Tatar authorities used the vague

wording in the document to talk past each other when discussing center – periphery relations. To this extent Russian authorities insisted that the treaty was an intra-governmental document while Republican authorities lauded the intergovernmental character of the document (Crosston 2004, 57-58).

Article 2 of Tatarstan’s bilateral treaty listed the full powers of the Tatar state. Among these, Tatarstan derived full power from its own constitution and not from the Russian Constitution. Point 6 gave the Republic full power over all land issues effectively seizing all land in the region from the federal government unless it was already appropriated by law at the time of the treaty. Point 13 gave Tatarstan the right to establish its own national bank while point 14 vested the Republican leadership all power to oversee issues of privatization, thus sheltering the region from reforms in the rest of the Federation. Point 8 gave the government full control over citizenship and Point 9 assumed full control of conscription within the Republic. Relations with foreign entities and governments were granted in Point 11. Article 3 ensured that federal oversight and cooperation did not interfere with the Republic’s ability to govern itself while article 6 elevated the legal status of Tatarstan’s bilateral treaty to that of the Constitution of both Russia and Tatarstan.

Putin Era Reforms

When President Vladimir Putin came to power in March of 2000, he came on a platform of building a unified legal and economic space in the Russian Federation aimed at reversing the decline of the central government that had occurred during

the 1990's. Yeltsin's approach to maintaining power and the stability of the Federation during the transition from communist rule was to devolve numerous powers to the Russian subjects in areas where the center did not have the ability to enforce the law. The powers being concentrated in the hands of various local leaders had come under increasing criticism from Russian nationalists who argued that the national agenda was increasingly being set by the minority and that the trend was undermining the authority of the federal state. Putin stated that his aim was to reverse this trend and restore the integrity of the federal government (Putin 2000). Putin's primary goals were to limit the influence of regional leaders at the national level, try to enforce a more spatially organized federal system, and reverse those concessions that conflicted with the Russian Constitution.

Putin's first act was to issue a presidential decree on May 13, 2000 which replaced the more than eighty presidential representatives of Russia's eighty-nine regions with seven presidential envoys (PEs) who were placed in charge of seven new federal super-districts. The seven federal super-districts were intended to create a spatially organized federal layer on top of the current ethnic federal systems to serve as an institutional barrier between regional governments and the federal government. The purpose of the PEs was to ensure the realization of the president's constitutional powers, increase the effectiveness of federal agencies, and improve the system of monitoring the implementation of their decisions (Reddaway and Orttung 2004, 21-22). The PEs however did not have clearly defined powers

and were not legitimized by the Russian Constitution. In fact the PEs were a vaguely defined extension of the federal executive branch whose informal powers outnumbered any real formal power. According to Stoner-Weiss the envoys were reported to have had strong influence in the activities of federal agents in only 13 of the respondents. Paired with small staffs and weak funding Putin's PEs "provided no significant influence" over regional governors or federal officials in the regions (2006, 84-85).

Putin's second action was to reform the upper house of the national parliament, the Federation Council. His objective was to reduce the power of regional governors to influence national policies. The heads of regional executive branches were excluded from the Federation Council which was made fully effective on January 1, 2002. This was perceived as being a crucial key to subordinating regional power to that of the national government. Putin was successful in knocking regional governors out of the national political elite. According to its 2002 monthly survey of Russia's elite, *Nezavisimaya gazeta* noted that the governors were no longer listed among Russia's most influential people (Reddaway and Orttung 2004, 28).

Putin's third major act gave the president the power to fire regional executives and dissolve local legislatures if they were found guilty of violating federal law. Many regional governments had adopted laws that ran in contradiction to the Russian Constitution and federal law and this was seen as a key step in

reasserting the supremacy of federal law across the land. On April 4, 2002 the Russian Constitutional Court confirmed the power federal authorities to fire regional governors and disband local legislatures, but it made the procedures so cumbersome that it seemed it would be a power likely to never be used (Reddaway and Orttung 2004, 30).

Since 2002 the Russian Constitutional Court has gained a degree of legitimacy in the resolution of issues pertaining to unconstitutional regional laws (Reddaway and Orttung 2004, 91). In the case of Tatarstan the sovereignty clauses in the Constitution of the RT have been amended and those pertaining to sovereignty in Tatarstan's bilateral treaty were annulled. Unlike many other regions where the bilateral treaties were annulled altogether, Tatarstan still maintains its bilateral treaty with the RF.

Furthermore Tatarstan had been permitted to maintain control over its major national resources companies providing the Republic with a major source of revenues. According to Orttung, the failure of Putin's Volga Okrug envoy to successfully negotiate revisions of the Tatar Constitution indicates that Putin has had to resort to personal negotiations with Shaimiev to effect the changes in the Tatar bilateral treaty and constitution (Reddaway and Orttung 2004, 161). Julie George suggests that an implicit deal has been worked out between Tatarstan and the ruling elite in Moscow. Since 1994 elections in Tatarstan have tended to support the party in power in Moscow (2009, 67-68). In the case of regions like Tatarstan

Putin's relations with Shaimiev have not appeared to differ much from those of his predecessor. In 2000 Putin initiated legislation allowing Shaimiev to run for a third presidential term which was forbidden by the Russian Constitution (George 2009, 162). As Valeri Zorkin, the chairman of the Russian Constitutional Court, stated he "trust(ed) the leaders of Tatarstan that they are not willing to secede from Russia," but he worried that the referendum would give "[a]differently minded leadership [in Tatarstan]... all [the] legal grounds to secede from the Russian Federation" (George 2009, 67).

Conclusion

The status of the Tatars as a proto-nation under Soviet law replete with a 'protected' language and customs and yet with little sovereignty to exercise the growth and development on the nation has been the driving force behind the effort to elevate the status of the state since the Soviet period. The unfinished Union Treaty of 1991 may have given the Tatar leadership what it desired, but the abrupt collapse of the Soviet Union left the state tied inextricably to Russia as a province of importance. The negotiation of state power in ethno-federal terms, undertaken by the Tatar leadership in the post-Soviet period to present is testament to the strength and endurance of Soviet ethno-political structures in the Post Soviet Russia.

The inability of the Russian leadership to extricate Russia from Soviet law, specifically ethnic federal state structure, has been the primary cause of center periphery conflict to present. The Soviet legacy is clearly evident in the Federation's

ethno-federal structure as outlined in the Federation Treaty and the Constitution of 1993. Furthermore, the ambiguity of these documents afforded the Tatar leadership the means to challenge Russian authority in the Soviet ethno-federal context. The assimilation of the nationalist platform of the TPC provided both the legitimacy of the tactics employed by the Tatar leadership and the degree of cultural sovereignty attained in the negotiation processes with the RF.

Despite attempts to rescind the concessions granted to regions such as Tatarstan, Vladimir Putin has proven no more successful than his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, in avoiding personal bilateral negotiations with regional leaders. While many of the Republic's more overt claims of state sovereignty have been removed from its constitution and bilateral treaty with Russia the Republic still possesses a significant degree of economic and cultural sovereignty. At present the Republic of Tatarstan and Russia seem to have come to an agreement benefits the two states politically and economically.

Chapter 3: The Tatar Nation: Language and Cultural Policy in Tatarstan

The level of sovereignty achieved by Tatarstan in the form of cultural policy, language and education and foreign relations since the early 1990's, strongly resemble major elements of the TPC platform from the late 1980's. Language development and preservation became one of the central tenants of the Tatar sovereignty drive within the Soviet Union and later the Russian Federation. When used as a primordial descriptor, language becomes a crucial element in the foundation of a nation because of the central role it serves in the culture and traditions of the society in which it is used. It is not surprising then, that education was one of the three institutional supports of Soviet federalism. As Gorenburg explained, education was vital to the creation and maintenance of common collective identities based on strong intra-group ties (2001, 73-78). These intra-group ties formed the basis of the systems of political civil patronage used within the Soviet Union. Over the span of Soviet rule, titular elites used the institutions of education as a means to expand their political reach in the regions and further entrench their positions. In Tatarstan Mintimer Shaimiev played the threat of the radical elements of the TPC off against the Russian government while adapting large portions of the TPC cultural sovereignty platform into a unified policy aimed at

consolidating the Tatar people in a Tatar homeland that was symbolically sovereign if not completely independent of Russia.

The levels of political and economic sovereignty attained in the bilateral treaty process enabled the Tatar leadership to implement protectionist economic policies in the Republic in order to funnel revenues back into the social welfare sectors of the RT to broaden internal support amongst Russians and Tatars (Stoner-Weiss 2006, 102). Shaimiev used his informal personal ties to President Yeltsin who still trusted him more than the leadership of the TPC and Ittifaq (George 2009, 67). The Republican leadership was able to convince the central authorities that the Federation would benefit more from cooperation with the Republic even as the Republican authorities sought to retain a larger share of revenue from the RT's industrial sector. The cultural revival platform of the TPC was then used to expand and reinforce the symbolic sovereignty of the state while cementing Shaimiev's hold in the executive branch of the Republic

Social Welfare in the Republic

Current domestic policy in Tatarstan is centered on a language policy that strives to revive the use of the Tatar language in the social, economic, and political spheres within the Republic of Tatarstan to enhance the socio-economic position of the main titular group. According to the Republic's official website, the aim of the Republic's language policy from 2004 – 2013 is to guarantee the functional use of the Tatar language as an official national language within the Republic of Tatarstan

for full-fledged use in the mass media and the consolidation of the Tatar people (Tatarstan, 2010). Since the 1990's a cultural program aimed at the creation of a civic Tatar identity through development in the Republic's educational system was initiated with the goal of realizing the national rebirth of the Tatar nation (Gorenburg 1999, 262). The *State program for the Preservation, Study and Development of the Languages of the Peoples of the Tatarstan Republic* is a synthesis of Soviet-style entrenchment methods and the Tatar national platform to build the framework for a language based quota system and to encourage the migration and consolidation of Tatars in the Republic.

According to the TPC platform the government of Tatarstan had a responsibility to help Tatars living outside the Republic. This included proposals to adopt limits on the immigration of non-Tatar workers into the Republic (Gorenburg 2003, 90-91). The TPC's objective was to ultimately create conditions that would promote the consolidation of ethnic Tatars in the Republic. As of 1989, Tatars barely constituted a plurality in the Republic as 48.6 percent with Russians comprising 43 percent (Evangelista 2002, 96). Furthermore Tatarstan needed to import workers from outside of the Republic to maintain full employment levels in the Republic's industrial sector (Evangelista 2002, 180). During the early 1990's the TPC advocated for the annulment of agreements to bring Ukrainian workers into the Republic (Gorenburg 2003, 91). The development of Tatarstan's social welfare programs since the mid 1990's combined with the cultural development policies,

discussed later, suggests that the Republican authorities have taken the TPC position of trying to consolidate the Tatar population of Russia within the Republic of Tatarstan.

After the conclusion of the bilateral treaty with Russia in 1994, Shaimiev created a set of social welfare provisions aimed at protecting the citizens of the Republic from the deepening economic crisis in the Russian Federation. One of the Republic's first acts was to raise the Republic's minimum wage to more than two times the average wage in Russia (Graney 2009, 64). Furthermore food subsidies enacted at the same time have kept the price of foodstuffs less than ¼ the price of Russian foodstuffs from 1994 to 2004. This had the effect of increasing local support for Shaimiev's cultural and state building programs. As Shaimiev stated, "people live better here in Tatarstan, and this is mainly the result of Tatarstan's sovereignty" (Graney 2009, 65-66).

Language, Education and Acculturation

The idea of national revival through a concerted language policy was a key point in the platform of the Tatar nationalist movement. The TPC language policy was used by the Republican leadership to assert control over the means of the production and dissemination of public knowledge from the Russian Federation (Graney 2009, 67). The language policy of the Republic was codified in the 1992 *Law on the Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan* and the 1994 *State program for the Preservation, Study and Development of the Languages of the Peoples of the Tatarstan*

Republic. These laws were first proposed by the TPC in 1989 in the *Plan for the Development of Tatar Education* which were then approved by the Tatar Ministry of Education in 1991 (Giuliano 2000, 309-310; Kondrashov 2000, 121-129). The plan stated that the educational system must be based on the goal of Tatar national rebirth. To achieve this, the plan called for the creation of a state fund to provide for the development of Tatar language schools and for the mandatory instruction of Tatar for Russian schoolchildren (Gorenburg 1999, 262).

According to the Republic of Tatarstan, the 1992 law, “creates the conditions for the conservation... and development of the native language [where citizens] are free to use the language of their choice in communication, education, training and creativity” (Tatarstan 2004, Sec. 1. Art. 2). Although both provisions have been modified since their inception the basic effect on Tatar society has remained intact. Together the laws facilitated the expansion of the national school system resulting in a unified program of Tatar language instruction from pre-school to post-graduate professional training (Crosston 2004, 62).

The transformation of the Republican education system was expeditiously implemented during the 1990’s indicating that the national rebirth was a high priority in the RT. During this period, the former branches of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAN) were republicanized for the purpose of building an independent national education system. In 1990 the Tatar branch of the RAN was the only national school in Kazan and by 1997 there were over 124 elite secondary schools

alone in the city. In the same time period just under half of the Republic's schools were converted to the exclusive use of Tatar as the sole language of instruction (Crosston 2004, 62). To put this in perspective, prior to 1993 no non-Tatar schoolchildren studied in the Tatar language and less than one percent of Russian people residing in the Republic claimed to know the Tatar language (Gorenburg 1999, 262; Crosston 2004, 61). Between 1991 and 1994 the number of Tatar students who studied all subjects in their native language rose from 28 to 43 percent. In urban areas over the time period these numbers increased from 4 to 28 percent (Gorenburg 1999, 262). According to the Official Website of the Republic of Tatarstan as of 2007, Tatar language and literature was taught in almost all the schools in the Republic and of those schools 51.9 percent of the population is educated in Tatar only.

In 1996 the Institute of History of the Academy of Science of the Republic of Tatarstan (ANRT) was created with the goal of transferring the production of textbooks from Moscow (Graney 2009, 67). The purpose of this move, endorsed by the 1994 program for the preservation and development of that state languages, was to produce textbooks with a uniquely Tatar interpretation of the world (Sharafutdinova 2003, 624). According the Katherine Graney, the intent of this move was to push Tatarstan intellectually beyond the confines of the Russian Federation (Graney 1999, 616). This sentiment is born out in a statement made by a member of the Institute that,

Peoples' pivotal consciousness should be civic, oriented towards Tatarstan on the basis of its cultural-historical unity, and their self-identity should be based as a resident of Tatarstan. They may have a higher consciousness of Eurasia and a lower consciousness of their village, but Tatarstan should be the foundation (Graney 1999, 621).

Such a statement leaves no place for a civic identity based on citizenship in the Russian Federation. Tatar educational reforms can be interpreted as a plan to execute the functional marginalization of the Russian populace in the region.

The language laws along with the Tatar Constitution have undergone judicial scrutiny since 2000 and many of the provisions have been modified or suspended however their effect on Tatar society has already been felt. In July 2004 the law on languages was updated to bring it more in line with the Russian Constitution. Originally Article 91 of the Tatar Constitution required that the President be knowledgeable of both Russian and Tatar. That provision has been suspended by the Russian Constitutional Court since 1998, but Article 93.3 symbolically implies the importance of Tatar for the post of the Presidency (Yagudin, 2006). The current version of the Tatar Constitution still maintains Russian and Tatar as the official state languages and stipulates their simultaneous use in state governance and the publication of laws and official documents (Tatarstan 2007, Sec. 5, Ch. 1, Art. 80). The effects of the cultural policies on the elite structure of the republic were clear as

early as 1995 as the parity between Tatars and Russians shifted from being roughly equal to an 80:20 dominance by Tatars (Gorenburg 1999, 263).

The reforms in the education system were implemented to expand the dominance of Tatar language in the civil society of the Republic. The expansion of Tatar language publications and television and radio broadcasting was designed to encourage the use of the Tatar language in public spaces. To this end transit signs throughout the Republic also became bilingual (Gorenburg 2003, 212; 218-219). Incentives for professional use of Tatar were included in the *State Program for the Preservation, Study and Development of the Languages of the Peoples of the Tatarstan Republic* which included provisions for a fifteen percent salary bonus for workers, in a number of professions, fluent in both Russian and Tatar. By making the language so ubiquitous in the public realm the language policies effectively situated the citizens of the Republic in a national community distinct from that of the Russian Federation (Graney 2009, 57).

The cultural element of the Tatar revival policies are similar to the proposals put forth by the radical wing of Ittifaq to make Tatar language and culture the centerpiece of a program geared toward the encouragement of tourism and foreign investment. A simple Internet search on 'Tatar culture' will reveal the importance the government has placed on this idea. A Center for Tatar Culture, tasked with the collection and dissemination of Tatar folklore, and the organization of ethnic festivals, celebrations and other cultural events was opened in 1995. Preceding the

establishment of this organization over “1,645 Tatar clubs, 100 folklore ensembles, and 1,063 Tatar libraries had already been established throughout the Republic” (Gorenburg 2003, 219). Many of these programs emphasized the Tatar connection to pan-Turkic culture (Crosston 2004, 62-63; Gorenburg 2003, 218-19; Sharafutdinova 2003, 616-19).

Foreign Relations

Since 1995 the Republic has developed international relations that reinforce and support the cultural development of the Republic. In 1993 Tatarstan created a Ministry of Foreign Affairs with goal of realizing state sovereignty through the cultivation of international relations. In 1997, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was abolished and reformed as the Department of State Protocol of Foreign Affairs of the President of Tatarstan (Sharafutdinova 2003, 616). This institution’s mission would be the development of foreign policy outside the scope of Russian foreign policy.

The expansion of the post of the Presidency to include a representation role in the Republic’s relations abroad required an expansion of the state’s foreign policy personnel. In 1995 a Department of international relations was established in Kazan State University to train Tatarstani diplomats and international relations specialists (Sharafutdinova 2003, 616). The specialists and the state they represented had a distinct cultural identity separate from that of Russia.

During the 1990’s Tatarstan established seventeen missions abroad in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania, France, Turkey,

Australia, the United States, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Cyprus and Austria (Crosston 2004, 63). President Shaimiev signed many agreements pledging to increase “economic, scientific-technical and cultural” trade cooperation between the RT and various other countries. By 2001 the RT had established twenty-seven bilateral agreements with other countries (Graney 2009, 75). Most notably the Consulate General of Turkey opened in Kazan in 1996. Tatarstan has been most notable in its development of foreign relations with Islamic countries.

In addition to the countries listed above, the Tatar leadership has cultivated special relations with the governments of Turkey, Egypt, the UAE and Jordan. These relations indicate a desire on the part of the Tatar leadership to develop relations in parts of the world where their state sovereignty would be better legitimized and more respected (Graney 2009, 76-78; Sharafutdinova 2003, 616-619). The republic’s relationship with Turkey on the cultural and economic front has developed substantially in the past decade to include special trade relationships and partnerships in cultural exchanges (Tatarstan, 2009).

In 2003 Mintimer Shaimiev, was nominated by Vladimir Putin to be the RF’s Special Envoy to the Islamic World. According to Gulnaz Sharafutdinova, attempts have been made by the Republican leadership to capitalize on the cultural ties to countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iraq, Iran, the UAE and Egypt in the development for markets for the republic’s industrial products (mainly machinery and defense related items, e.g. cars, trucks, helicopters) (Sharafutdinova 2003, 619).

While such ties are not abnormal in mature federal states, some scholars note that these ties are peculiar considering the fact that the Russian Federation is not a mature federal state (Crosston 2004, 63). During the 1990's the international activities of Tatar officials was frowned upon and openly opposed by Russian officials (Crosston 2004, 63). Nevertheless the actions of the Tatar government indicate that foreign relations are but one more realm where the Republic's leadership implemented policies extending political and economic ties into the international community in an effort to symbolically, if not practically, develop external sources of legitimacy.

Conclusion

The arc of Tatarstan's development of a nation was founded on the idea of cultural revival of the Tatar people. Cultural revival was adopted by the Tatar leadership as the founding principal of Tatar nationhood. During the latter years of the Soviet Union the cultural institutions of the USSR were used as a justification for the increased autonomy and sovereignty within the USSR. This justification was based on the Communist principle of the equality among nations and the right of self determination among those nations. As I have shown this argument was used both in the Soviet and post-Soviet eras as a means to maximize the political and cultural sovereignty of Tatarstan.

Chapter 2 illustrates how the institutionalization of Tatar sovereignty during the 1990's made it possible for the Republic to effectively rebuff the recentralization

efforts of the Russian government. In this chapter I have shown how the leaders of Tatarstan have used the concessions they gained during the 1990's to form a distinct national identity within the Russian Federation. Current domestic policy in the Republic is geared toward the revival of Tatar culture in an effort to build a distinct national identity within the Republic. The formation of a Tatar national identity is intended to marginalize Russia as a stakeholder in the RT while increasing Tatar control over the economic and social spheres of the Republic. The tactic of cultural revival is reminiscent of Soviet methods for forming systems of ethnic preference based on the markers of language use within the regions.

Outside Russia and the Republic of Tatarstan, language and culture is being used to attract foreign investment and support for a region that is portrayed as being distinctly different from the host nation. These actions indicate a degree of legitimacy seeking beyond the Russian Federation while developing external sources of investment in the Republic's cultural programs. Combined with the domestic policies of the Republic this threatens to affect the universality of Russian citizenship within the Republic.

Conclusion

The challenges of creating a stable and unified Russian state are nothing new in the context of the development of federalism, modern nations, and the ideals of democracy. These three concepts have highlighted the challenges faced by the leaders of any modern state, save perhaps the microstate. Even today, Russia is considered the largest contiguous state on Earth. The questions of identity, whether of national or ethnic focus, are endemic to all modern states. Democratic ideals only compound the cleavages extant in modern federal states where the leadership is beholden to a social contract with the public.

It is worth mentioning that even in the time of Rousseau, the ideal ground for the development of a modern republic was that of the city state. The state of Geneva had what larger states such as France did not possess: homogeneity. A homogenous society in terms of common history, tongue, and religious practices were commonly cited as necessary to the formation of a just and equitable representative state. Modern states and even nations lack the characteristics necessary to avoid the buildup of inequity in the general populace.

This study started out with the examination of theories regarding the development of federalism, ethnic and national awareness in the Soviet Union. It was the Soviets who were responsible for the creation of truly modern nations out

of what was once a vast feudal empire. The stated goal of the Soviets was to create a representative state that ultimately abolished ethnic and national conscience in favor of class conscience. However to maintain the territorial integrity of the successor state and strict adherence to the goals of a classist form of nationalism the architects of the Soviet State erred in favor of implementing an ethnic national structure that enfranchised the desperate populations of the former empire.

This study illustrated the difficulties the Soviet architects faced in the attempt to mobilize their populace for the task of creating a new national identity. In many places of the empire ethnic or national awareness was sparse save for those who came from preexisting states before incorporation into the Empire. The institutional structures developed to manage these varied groups had profound long term effects on the political development in Eurasia.

Among all the primordial attributes, language is perhaps the most significant, because language it is the medium by which social context is conveyed. In addition to conveying thought, language also receives and stores the context of the society in which it is used. As such language is the one primordial attribute that stands out in its ability to cleave populations. The Soviets recognized this and implemented an institutional structure that both enforced adherence along ethno-linguistic lines and consolidated populations to disseminate a purely Soviet agenda. Linguistic similarities were used as the basis of ethnic national sub units within the Soviet Union.

This study has shown the extent to which the institutional structures of education were vital to shaping and enforcing the cooperation of local elites to the purposes of the central authorities of the Soviet Union. The political and intellectual elite were reinforcing socio-political structures that served both to disseminate propaganda while simultaneously representing, if only formally, the ethno-linguistic subgroups of the Soviet Union.

There is however significant weight to the argument that these policies failed because they were more successful in promoting social, and moreover national, consciences where none or little existed before. The Soviet social conscience, as has been shown, was materialistic in nature. The idea of a working society based on material progress is counted among one of the greatest achievements of the Soviet Union. In approximately one generation the Soviet Union developed from a predominately peasant based society to a fully modern industrial society. As is common for industrially developing economies, the change in productivity and development was phenomenal, however as the initial development came to an end, economic growth rates began to level out. The myth of ever increasing development and change began to become detrimental to Soviet society in that it fostered unrealistic expectations among both the leadership and the populace.

There is general consensus among scholars that the Soviet economy succeeded in developing economically depressed regions with the revenues obtained from more prosperous regions. However there is also widespread

agreement that this artificial development process depressed the Soviet economy at large and contributed to a sense of inequity within the material-conscious society. A strong argument has been made that these cleavages were expressed through the institutional framework of the Soviet Union; that is to say along ethnic-national lines.

This study has demonstrated the extent to which national awareness contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union and contributed to the political and cultural development of post-Soviet Russia. While the leaders of the Soviet Union were members of the Communist Party they were also the products of their respective nationalities. The ethno-territorial structure of the Soviet Union served as an institutional framework for agenda setting within the Union's constituent subgroups. This system worked well in coordinating the industrial development of the country during the formative years of the USSR however as time progressed disparities in economic development arose and in response the central authorities redistributed resources from wealthier regions to poorer regions.

As time progressed regional elites were able to build up regional support bases within their respective sub-national units. Ethnic nationalism played an important role here because the regional elites enjoyed the most support from their own ethnic cadres. Sub-national loyalties extended into the CPSU apparatus in part due to the importance of political patronage used to recruit and advance political appointees from the various union republics. De facto protectionist policies

developed among the national subgroups as an effort to retain material surpluses for use in the home region, as opposed to being redistributed elsewhere in the USSR. This resulted in shortfalls and halts in the supply chains of the centrally planned economy. The economy grew more sluggish over time as regional ethnic cadres worked to further retain the wealth produced by their separate regions.

Simply put, the combination of a materially focused society combined with ethno-national politics gave rise to national claims that challenged the integrity of the Soviet Union. The leaders were Communist but their support bases inclined them toward nationalist politics. While the political reforms of the 1980's were intended to placate the populace and grant limited control within the regions, they only succeeded in further tying regional elites to the will of their ethnic populace. Thus the reforms only accelerated the devolutionary process that had been in motion for some time.

One can only speculate as to whether the Soviet Union would have survived if the Nationalities Policies had been abandoned after a generation in favor of cultivating a more universal national identity devoid of ethno-linguistic affiliation. The Soviet Nationalities Policies politicized ethnic politics making it a viable medium for mass mobilization in a time of stress. Nationalist movements arose first in the Baltic States during the mid 1980's and spread even to the third-tier autonomous republics of Russia.

The supports provided through the academic and political institutions were vital to the growth and dissemination of nationalist movements. This study has shown that the rise of the Tatar nationalist movement, under the Tatar Public Center, enjoyed the necessary support from the Tatar intellectual elite to grow into a group sizeable enough to influence Tatar politics. It is clear however that the extent to which the TPC influenced the political process was determined by the political elite's desire to accommodate the TPC during the waning years of the Soviet Union.

In the RSFSR, leaders of the autonomous republics were engaged in the same struggle to increase their control over their respective republics. This study has demonstrated that the institutions that shaped national politics within the USSR's national subunits were mirrored in the ethnic republics of the RSFSR. The inheritance of the Soviet legacy of ethno federalism was much more profound for the RSFSR because, as demonstrated in Chapter 1, Russia did not enjoy its own national administrative institutions apart from the all-Union institutions based in Moscow. The primary reason for this was to limit the establishment of an independent Russian elite cadre that would challenge the legitimacy and authority of the CPSU.

The lack of a separate Russian government was a key contributing factor to the rise in power of the Russian regions. Foremost among these was the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Tatarstan, whose leadership challenged the

classification of the Tatar Republic as a third-tier national republic within the RSFSR. As with the union republics, the debate was often framed in economic terms and a significant ethnic-cultural component. Leaders of the third tier ethnic republics, such as Tatarstan, argued that the cultural development of the primary ethnic group could not be guaranteed without a greater degree of reinvestment of local production revenues. In the case of Tatarstan, Republican leaders argued that the Republic was over industrialized and socially underdeveloped because too much of its production revenue was used to subsidize development in other parts of the Soviet Union.

Legally the debate over cultural status was set in the framework of Communist principles of equality among nations and the inability of the ethnic federal structure to treat all nationalities equally. This study has demonstrated how the Soviet legal perspective greatly impacted center-periphery relations between Tatarstan and Russia from 1991 to present. The same autonomy issues that led to the parade of sovereignties among the union republics manifested themselves in the legal documents establishing the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation Treaty, for example, was perceived necessary to preserve the integrity of the state while the Russian government reformed after its break from the Soviet Union. In essence the perception in Russia was that the new federation was very much similar to that of the USSR and its respective ethnic nationalities. This mindset afforded regional elites, such as the Shaimiev regime, the

opportunity to mold nationalist platforms to a policy that both capitalized the devolution of the Russian state during the transition, while maintaining a popular support base necessary to retain power through the promotion of protectionist economic policies in the Republic. In this way the Tatar elite was able to effectively dissolve the nationalist opposition while working to convince Russian leaders that economic and political concessions to the Republic were better than armed conflict.

The lack of authority within the nascent Russian government combined with the adoption of the Soviet federal structure replete with semi-sovereign states profoundly shaped center-periphery relations in post-Soviet Russia. Tatarstan would not have enjoyed such a strong position of power during the transition had Russia been able to enforce regional compliance with state policies. The fact that Tatarstan was able to effectively gain recognition as a sovereign state during the last months of the USSR set the precedence for the republic to challenge Russian sovereignty thereafter.

The inability of the Russian government to clearly define the legal separation between the federal government and the regions in both the Federation Treaty and the Russian Constitution of 1993 allowed asymmetries to develop in the federal structure during the 1990's. The failure of the Russian government to clearly define and evenly assert its authority in the regions afforded leaders, like Mintimer Shaimiev, the opportunity to usurp federal power at the regional level. This study has demonstrated that the wording in the Tatar Constitution and later Bilateral

Treaty was aimed at exploiting the weaknesses of the federal government to attain the necessary tools for the creation of a national platform of state sovereignty and a significant degree of cultural autonomy.

This platform was aimed at expanding traditional ethnic rights from the Soviet era into the basis of a distinct non-Russian national identity. In effect the educational and cultural policies of the Tatar government have attempted to fill the formal symbols of national sovereignty, i.e. territory language and ethnic identity, established in the Soviet Era, with real content for the basis of a new if not completely sovereign state. These policies indicate a systematic implementation of the Tatar nationalist platforms developed in the late 1980's and early 1990's to impose cultural barriers to the socioeconomic mobility of Russian citizens within Tatarstan. It has been argued that the implementation of these policies indicate the true nature of Tatarstan's resistance to federal authority in the ultimate goal to marginalize Russian influence so as to have sufficient cultural, political and legal legitimacy to demand full statehood in the future.

Some scholars have cited the Tatar-Russian relations and the bilateral treaty process as the emergence of a new type of asymmetrical federalism, specifically 'Russian Federalism'. Such a federal structure would allow states such as the Republic of Tatarstan and the Russian Federation to coordinate various activities, such as defense activities and international diplomacy, while enjoying an associated relationship within a federal structure. Such an argument however misses the fact

that at present, this relationship currently exists between Tatarstan and the Russian Federation. The current Russian Constitution, Tatar Constitution and Tatar Bilateral Treaty of 2007, confirm such a relationship. What is more difficult to prove is whether Tatarstan will eventually be capable of realistically declaring full state sovereignty from the Russian Federation. This paper has demonstrated that this has been the underlying goal of Tatar policy since the late 1980's to present.

The cleavages that exist between the two states were positively augmented by the Soviet Nationalities Policies and the institutions of the USSR. Those institutions that supported and maintained the artifacts of national conscience survived relatively intact during the Russian succession from the Soviet Union in 1991. The Tatar leadership has adeptly used the tenants of these institutions to continue the formation of a national identity formally promised but never realized during the Soviet era.

Glossary

ASSR	Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
PE	Presidential Envoy
RF	Russian Federation
RSFSR	Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
RT	Republic of Tatarstan
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
TASSR	Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
TPC	Tatar Public Center
TSSR	Tatarstan Soviet Socialist Republic
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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