

Why Kazan and Moscow Need Each Other:
Rafail Khakimov and the Tatar Center

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One of the major themes in Moscow's discourse about itself is its relationship to the regions, the republics and oblasts that constitute the Russian world outside the capital and Piter. Having reconstructed this discourse on Russian identity for 1999 from the perspective of Moscow, I took advantage of the opportunity afforded by this working group on Center-Region identity to investigate how the Center is understood from one of those regions: the Republic of Tatarstan. And having had the good fortune of holding our preliminary research seminar in Kazan, and having it hosted by the Institute of History, and co-chaired by Rafail Khakimov, the self-acknowledged ideologue of Tatarstan independence and adviser to Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaimiev, I have synthesized a Kazan discourse on Russian and Tatar identity based on conversations he had with the journalist and publicist, Lev Ovrutskii.¹

From my perspective there is nothing "scientific" about choosing this text over a sample of newspapers or an analysis of Kazan's electronic media.² But given the role of intellectuals in the construction of the nation, why not start with one of the founding fathers of the Tatarstan national idea?³

I have two broad conclusions to offer after comparing Khakimov's, often contentious, conversations with Ovrutskii and Moscow Center's discourse in the same time period. The first conclusion suggests a surprising level of consensus on what Russia and Tatarstan should become; it is Europe. In fact, there is a kind of identity competition to become European: economically and politically, in particular. Second, there is a fundamental contradiction between the Center's emphasis on a strong Center in Moscow, and Tatarstan's equally strong emphasis on the sovereignty of Tatarstan *within* the Russian Federation. Here many trajectories are imaginable beyond the obvious one of conflict. Perhaps the most attractive is the experimental quality of the relationship: a sovereign Tatarstan within a sovereign Russian Federation. The complexities and ambiguities are of course both alluring and alarming. Finally, there is an extraordinary level of agreement about what constitutes a nation: both discourses have an essentialized view of the nation, i.e., an understanding of the Tatar and Russian nations as uniquely endowed with cultural features that differentiate them from all other nations on earth. Simultaneously, both are liberal discourses of the nation, recognizing that essential difference need not, indeed must not, degenerate into hierarchy, conflict, or violence.

In the text that follows I elaborate on these three main themes, as well as develop topics that contribute to these overarching discussions.

First, let's take a look at how Tatarstan Discourse (TD) at least as of course reflected in Khakimov's conversations with Ovrutskii, compares to the three competing discourses in 1999 Moscow. In Table One you will find the three competing discourses of Russian identity in Moscow in 1999, as well as Khakimov's Tatarstan Discourse for comparison.

¹ *Razgovory s Khakimovym* (Kazan 2000) The edition was graciously presented to me by Khakimov during our seminar in Kazan in March 2002.

² For that, see Sagytova, ???. For analyses based on large-n survey research and interviews, see Ponarin, Drobyzheva....

³ See Kennedy and Suny volume, Suny vol on Bcomg National

Table One
Three Centers and a Region

	<i>Liberal</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Center</i>	<i>Tatarstan</i>
<u>Historical Other</u>				
<u>Soviet Past</u>				
Authoritarianism	----	----	----	---
Corruption	----	----	----	---
Individual Passivity	----	----	----	
Anti-Religious	----	----	----	---
Great Power	++++	++++	++++	
Democracy	++++	++++	++++	
Culture	++++	++++	++++	
Youth	++++	++++	++++	
Economy	-----	++++	-----	---/+++
Moscow Center	++++	-----	++++	---
Essentialist				
Nationalism	-----	++++	++++	+++
Religion	++++	++++	++++	+++
Orthodox Church	-----	++++	-----	---
Orthodoxy	-----	++++	++++	---
<u>External Others</u>				
<u>US</u>				
Economy	++++	-----	++/----	---/+++
Individualism	++++	-----	++/----	+++
Nationalities	++++	-----	++++	+++
Culture		-----	-----	
<u>Europe</u>				
Economy	++++		++++	+++
Culture	++++		++++	+++
Democracy	++++		++++	+++
Markets				
Abstract Western	++++	----/++	++/----	+++
Real Russian	-----	-----	-----	---
Democracy				
Western	++++	-----	++++	+++
Russian	-----	-----	-----	---
<u>Internal</u>				
<u>Other</u>				
Strengthen Center	++++	++++	++++	---
Center Responsible/ Regions Not	++++	++++	++++	---
Chechnia to Blame	++++	++++	++++	---/+++

A Historical Others: The USSR, Russia, and the Golden Horde

With respect to the Historical Other shared by both Moscow and Tatarstan, i.e, the Soviet Union, there is a consensus with regard to the negative features associated with that Past: authoritarianism and anti-religious repression of the state, the passivity of the Soviet individual, and the corruption that permeated both state and society.

Importantly, unlike the other discourses, TD had nothing to say, positive or negative, about high mass Soviet culture or the treatment of Soviet youth by the state.

Perhaps more important, given Khakimov's linkage of the undemocratic political culture that characterizes Russians and Rossiia is the fact that he doesn't credit any emergent democratic properties to the Thaw generation, the Shesitdesiatniki, although Gorbachev's perestroika and glasnost is so credited.

Still more important is the absence of any positive identification with the Soviet achievement of great power status. I will show below how critical this is to understand the fundamental difference between Center and Region in the case of Tatarstan.

On the other dimensions of the Soviet legacy, TD ends up with a seemingly incoherent collection of discursive allies.

With respect to Soviet economic practices, TD is situated between NSR wistful thinking and LE appreciation for a social market. NWR liberal capitalism is rejected.

Since the most significant hostile Other for TD is Moscow Center, Tatarstan discourse finds itself in accord with NSR antipathy toward the Center, though on significantly different grounds.

Crucially important is the fact that TD shares NSR/LE appreciation for an essentialist national identity. In the TD case, however, it is Tatar essentialism that is emphasized, although Russian national identity is understood as nearly immutable, as well.

Intimately related to this is TD identification of religion as an essential component of Tatar national identity, matching the discursive consensus in Moscow. But goes farther to the NSR/LE position of making a particular religion, in this case Islam, constitutive of Tatar national identity, much as Orthodoxy is constitutive of being Russian. This is critical for it embeds in TD discourse an anxiety that as Orthodoxy becomes stronger as part of Russian and, more pertinently, Rossisskii, identity, it spills over into the denial of Tatar Moslems status as part of Rossisskii identity. To the extent this Russian Orthodox identity predominates in the Rossisskii Center, Tatarstan has to fear that Center.

So far I have situated TD in relationship to the Historical Other it shares with the predominant discourses of the Center. But TD has an Historical Other uniquely its own: the Golden Horde, or the Mongols. Khakimov reads contemporary Tatar identity through its relationship to the Mongol Empire, Russia's subordination within it, and cotemporary Russian misrecognition of its historical relationship to it. To put it simply, the Mongol occupation makes Russians and Tatars more similar than the former acknowledge; Russians continue to treat the Golden Horde as the Moslem yoke, while Khakimov describes a far superior civilization to that which prevailed in Muscovy at the time. In fact, without the Golden Horde, Muscovy never would have become the Russian Empire. Meanwhile Tatars are as Russian as Russians, since there was so much intermingling of ethnicities over the last 700 years. While Tatars' origination myth is not that of the Golden Horde, but rather of the Turkic Bulgars, Khakimov is proud to associate the development of Tatars with the reign of the Mongols, and to point out the shared historical Other Russians and Tatars have, even if only the latter celebrate it.

B External Others: Eurostandards, Eurorenovation, EuroIslam,

It is impossible to exaggerate how closely TD identifies with Europe as its Closest Other. It goes so far as to identify elements of the Golden Horde with elements of European identity that Russia would not come to until Peter the Great, three centuries later. On the European Other, TD is LE squared, indeed insisting that this the ONLY road for Russia if it is to survive. Indeed TD associates Europe with global, universal values, welcoming globalization as an escape from the tried and traumatizing path of Russian uniqueness. In this way, TD is closer to NWR rejection of the Russian path, but with a European, not an American, fetishization of the universal future. The only value TD finds uniquely in the US is its federal system, the fact that Texas can have its own death penalty, for example. Finally, in discursive consensus with NWR, NSR, and LE, TD finds

real Russian democracy to be woefully beneath Eurostandards, but is more NSR/LE in its evaluation of the managed market.

C Internal Other: Chechnia

While not part of my previous empirical research on 1999, it is useful to remember how Tatarstan was regarded in the Center with respect to the most dangerous Internal Other, Chechnia: with relief and hope. Here was an example of an Islamic national identity without criminalization. It perhaps is a surprise that TD shares the Center's view of itself. Euroislam, as Khakimov himself named his modern, Western, liberal version of Islam, is understood as Tatarstan's contribution to the development of contemporary Islam, in the tradition of the Golden Horde, nineteenth century Jadidism, and Turkey's Kemalism. The only twist here is that while the predominant discourses of Moscow Center excuse Russian actions in Chechnia as a consequence of Chechen betrayal of "true" Islam, TD understands Russia's actions there as illustrative of Russia's failure to adhere to Eurostandards of conduct there. It bears pointing out, however, that TD offers no alternative to the endless violence Moscow has meted out in Chechnia since 1999.

In the balance of the text, I would like to illustrate how the discourse on Tatar identity, as exemplified in Khakimov's conversations, relates to the discourses of Russian national identity that predominate in Moscow Center.

I Europe: Tatarstan's Most Desirable Other

From the perspective of the predominant LE discourse in Moscow, Russia already is Europe, is equal to Europe, is a constitutive part of Europe. TD is more modest. It aspires to be Europe and openly recognizes that Tatarstan is not regarded as important, or even known, in Europe. (One possible reason for this, Tatarstan's lack of international subjectivity, I discuss in the context of the absent great power identity) In his conversations with Ovrutskii, Khakimov is relating the story of his trip to Austria, where he met Austria's Prime Minister, Frantz Vranitsky. Ovrutskii asks: "Did Vranitsky really know where Tatarstan is?" Khakimov replies, "Not very precisely. He asked how far we were from Nizhnii. (Not a bad guess. Nizhnii Novgorod is about 500 km west of Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan) This shows me how dangerous it is to incorrectly evaluate our place in the world. People aspire to exaggerate everything, to imagine that we are the navel of the universe....People might even begin to believe it." Ovrutskii continues, "So, where do they know us?" Khakimov answers "in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, in general in Arab countries. Yeah, we are like a little brother who has left for the North. A mosque in the snow! This is fantastic symbolism for them." (pp 27-8)⁴

Frank recognition of Tatarstan's subordinate position in the world and with respect to Europe and the West is ubiquitous in Khakimov's remarks, as is his open irritation and frustration with his Tatar colleagues who do not recognize this inferiority and its consequences for Tatarstan's dependent relationship with Europe. For instance, while "Eurostandards are a point of departure for the West, for us they are the highest medal." (p168) He complains that for years he has tried to convince his colleagues to adopt European legislation. "Why invent the bicycle?" he asks.⁵ (p202) Khakimov goes on: "This independence/samodeiatel'nost sickens me." ⁶ First, they

⁴ Page numbers in parentheses in the text all refer to *Razgovory*. Khakimov is using the phrase "little brother" with some irony, as this is how Russians regard/ed non-Russian Slavs, both at home, as in Ukraine and Belarus, and abroad, as in Yugoslavia. In Soviet times Russians in Moscow also termed non-Slavic peoples, such as those in Central Asia, as their little brothers whom of course they had to help build socialism.

⁵ It should be added that over the past two years, the Putin Administration has been following Khakimov's advice, openly sending presidential and parliamentary delegations to Strasbourg to vet legislation on such matters as intellectual property rights before consideration in the Duma. This is a very important area of convergence between Moscow and Kazan and, as we will soon see, accords precisely with Khakimov's overarching expectations. Khakimov explicitly singles out for praise Putin's reliance on European models for pushing land reform through a very resistant Duma. (p141)

⁶ Samodeiatel'nost is normally translated as independence, but the better Russian word for the concept of not depending on anyone is nezavisimost, literally the same as English.

boast that we have scientific potential, then they themselves believe these inflated ideas.....They write laws without considering world experience and then are surprised why life is bad....As far as I am concerned, European models of democracy suit me completely...." (p203)

Khakimov tells the story of the Ministry of Finance denying his pleas to continue financing the American consulting firm Monitor's efforts to develop a market transition reform package for the Shaimiev government. "This I call the provincial approach, when they economize on experts instead of on jeeps, offices, and furniture. Specialists will get them out of poverty, but jeeps will drive them into it." (p169-70)

The obstacle to adopting European models is one of the obstacles identified by Liberal/Center discourse in Moscow: Soviet vestiges, that undesirable Historical Other. As Khakimov puts it, practically speaking, "this is the past, but it is alive." The problem today is that the Communist Party of the Russian Federation "really exists," while "the (European) future is only in words." (p203) Khakimov further attributes this failure to adopt Eurostandards to the failure to realize that these forms of social, political, and economic life have already won in the global competition. There is no third path.⁷

The problem is that obkom, raw material, old monopoly thinking and culture still predominate in Tatarstan, all vestiges of the Soviet past, and all amenable to "a new generation, importing European knowledge." (p205)

Hopes for becoming Europe rest on pilgrimages, education of a new generation, development of a middle class.⁸

The issue of subordination to a most desirable European Other is connected as well to the concept of "pilgrimages" to that center.⁹ Khakimov is encouraged that Tatarstan is becoming increasingly European because of tourism to Europe, conversations with Western corporations, trips to exhibitions, and the experience of markets at work. (p173) Khakimov speaks most elegiacally about his 1995 trip with President Shaimiev to Harvard and Stanford, "a great honor." (p175)

Khakimov argues that democratization in Tatarstan, as in Russia in general, is unthinkable without the development of a middle class. "People must earn and become owners....only then will the theme of human rights begin to resonate."¹⁰ (p204)

II Russia and Tatarstan: Two Essentialisms

From Moscow's perspective, Tatarstan is Russia's Moslem Other, and Russia's Regional Other. For Tatarstan, Russia is part of Tatarstan's very Self, while Russia is its most Dangerous Other, especially when institutionalized in Moscow Center.

Tatarstan finds its Rossiskii Self in its Historical Other: the Golden Horde. Khakimov says that "Russia is our country. It is our history. It is the territory of the Golden Horde. It is our state. Russia originated from the Golden Horde, it is its offspring, its continuation." (p78) Ironically, while Moscow Center fears Tatar secession from the Federation, Khakimov declares "Tatarstan will never voluntarily leave Rossiia. They will have to push us out." Secession would mean trying to leave oneself, an impossibility. There's no Tatar diaspora, according to Khakimov, because "our historical homeland is not Kazan; it is Nizhnii, the Urals, Siberia, Astrakhan, Kasimov khanates, the Golden and Nogai Hordes. It is this history which holds us in Rossiia." (p78) Khakimov cites DNA research in Moscow to prove that "there are no differences" between Russians and Tatars; they are the same. And it is not only Russians who are surprised and disbelieving; "Tatars are also dumbfounded." (p160)

Samodeiatelnost has the literal, and no doubt more expressive in this context, meaning of "do-it-yourself-ness," and a pejorative coloration of amateurism.

⁷ This is precisely the language used in the Center's discourse on the need to become Europe.

⁸ These mechanisms of identification are present in Moscow's discourse as well.

⁹ I am borrowing Benedict Anderson's idea here of colonial peoples who aspire to study and work in the local, regional, and metropolitan centers of their imperial domain.

¹⁰ Khakimov's advocacy of governmental support for small business as a means of creating this propertied middle class parallels the Putin Administration's recent discovery of small business in Autumn 2001.

Khakimov contends that Tatarstan's history is a link to Europe, one that if Russians would stop misrecognizing their own ties to the common origins in the Golden Horde, would bring Russia also closer to Europe. Russians are mistakenly ashamed and ignorant of their own ethnonational roots. "In history textbooks much has been garbled. The Golden Horde created wonderful security and financial systems, an unsurpassed army, religious tolerance, the census the Tatar tribute of 10%, of which today we can only dream." (p78)

The threat from Russia comes from what Khakimov sees as the identification of Russia with Russian Orthodoxy. While he has no problem whatever with an essentialist Russia; indeed, as we will see, he believes in an essentialist Tatarstan, as well, Khakimov fears an illiberal essentialism, a Russia imbued with exclusivist Orthodox Russian identity. It is the latter that threatens to suppress Tatarstan's equally valid claims to Russian identity and citizenship. Khakimov's vision of Russia is multiple liberal essentialisms, the Center's LE discourse Tatar-style. "Can there really not be another truth?," asks Khakimov, other than the one promulgated from Moscow. (p80)

III Tatar Centers

I have pointed out that Tatarstan modestly subordinates itself to its European future. But that doesn't mean that Tatarstan is not at the Center of other identity relationships. At least three such positions are articulated in Khakimov's conversations: the center of all post-Soviet Tatars; the center of Russia's future; the center of a world of potentially dangerous center-region relationships, most gruesomely embodied in Chechnia.

Khakimov speaks of the Tatar desire to make a pilgrimage to Kazan: "Just as Russians and Jews dream of Moscow, Tatars aspire to be in Kazan. Many study here, then remain and make their careers. From Bashkortostan, Siberia, Central Asia, Ukraine....," they make their way to the Tatarstan Center. (p16)

Tatarstan's close identification with Europe makes it a possible, and desirable, future for Russia more generally. To Khakimov, Tatarstan is a "polyethnic, polyconfessional, polycultural community/soobshchestvo," and he sees the "future Russia as a normal, polyethnic country," and what is going on in Tatarstan today is the "working out of a model for a future Russia." Khakimov stresses that Moscow Center has it all wrong: in Tatarstan they are not "against Russia, but for a different Russia," the Russia whose foundations are already being built in European Tatarstan. (p227)

Tatarstan's third central position is created in opposition to Chechnia, and other regions around the globe that have not "successfully resolved conflict between regions and federal centers," eg, Abkhazia, Chechnia, Transdniestria, Crimea, Bosnia, and Kosovo. (pp 78, 91)

IV Sovereign Tatarstan with, but not in, a Sovereign Russia

Drawing on the experience of the US, Khakimov envisions a Russian Federation in which a sovereign Tatarstan has control over its economy, police force, and foreign economic relations. (p70) It is important that Tatarstan has an opportunity to develop its increasingly Europeanizing political culture without the dead hand of Moscow's more Sovietized political culture weighing on its development. Fortunately, the Treaty with Moscow has begun to have an effect; "more and more ministries have grown accustomed to making decisions without looking over their shoulders to Moscow." (p173) This is especially important now, with Putin's more effective presidential administration. If before, Tatarstan was saved by the Center's inability to enforce its laws in the regions, then now it is still more imperative that either Tatarstan develop real sovereign federal powers and/or Russia so democratizes that Tatarstan's interests are reflected in Central decisions, that "mechanical majorities" not remain the sum and substance of the Russian Center's notion of liberal pluralism. (pp 82, 184) Again, Tatarstan has an intense interest in Putin's Europeanization of the Russian Center program succeeding, as rapidly as possible, as then Tatarstan's own unique path, and its potential effects on the Center, will be secured.

Khakimov's conceptualization of Tatarstan's sovereignty is more fully developed in the last two sections of this paper. But it bears repeating here that a sovereign Tatarstan is greatly preferred to a secessionist one. As a 1998 Tatarstan poll showed, fully half of both Tatars and Russians are for a sovereign Tatarstan within the RF, although 20% of Tatars would prefer a Tatarstan independent of the RF. (p226)

The very word “sovereign” is rejected by the Center in application to Tatarstan. In negotiations with Yeltsin over the bilateral Treaty, Moscow succeeded in having the word deleted from the final text. Khakimov contends this was done because Moscow simply confuses sovereignty with secession, but I will relate it to the differing conceptions of great power identity the two sides have. (p121)

V Globalizing Europe: Transcending Center-Regional Relations

Tatarstan's sovereignty is secured in the short term by the legal obligations the Center and Kazan have assumed vis-a-vis each other. But, as Khakimov repeatedly points out, “in Russia they can re-examine even a ratified Treaty.” After all, they strafed the very Parliament that would have ratified the Treaty.¹¹ (p118) No, the ultimate guarantee of Tatar sovereignty is for globalization, understood as the universal values of Europeanization, to replace, or imbue, Rossiiskii political culture. (p201)

Khakimov's hopes for Tatarstan and Russia depend crucially on his belief that the processes of globalization are transcendent, i.e, contemporary Center concerns about relations with Tatarstan will ultimately be moot in the face of the common culture that is developing in the Eurocentric world, and that is suffusing the RF and Tatarstan.¹² Indeed, the very idea of sovereignty, in the traditional post-Westphalian sense of independence and inviolable borders is, according to Khakimov, nonsensical in these globalizing days. And the Center's realization of this, that both RF and TF are really subjects of the globe, will allow for Khakimov's conceptualization of a sovereign Tatarstan with, but not in, a sovereign Russia, will prevail. After all, as Khakimov contends, “today everyone depends on everyone else in the world. Complete sovereignty is possessed only by tribes in the jungle.”¹³ (p95)

Khakimov's formulation promises a more prosperous and modern RF and TR, but only if the Center realizes that its domain of action is the globe, not the parochial issues of center-region relations. Khakimov challenges Putin to think beyond the “single economic space of Russia,” and instead realize that there is already a “single world space. All these Sonys, Panasonics, Coca-Colas and McDonalds are already here....Our competitors have already entered our homes, their offices are on Bauman Street.”¹⁴ (p197)

VI Russia's Great Power Identity: Obstacle to Global Thinking

Khakimov believes that the greatest obstacle to Tatarstan's sovereignty is the preservation of Russia's Orthodox, obkom (neo-Soviet), imperial identity. These elements make it hard for Moscow to get beyond conventional conceptualizations of sovereignty and federalism. I would like to suggest, somewhat to the contrary, that what remains unremarked in Tatar discourse might be more important, viz., the consensual Center discourse on Russia's great power identity in world politics. My interpretation is implicit in Khakimov's remarks.

For example, he criticizes the UN for only representing states, and not peoples, for after all “they are also subjects of history.” They have rights, no less so than states. If “states defend their rights, then there is no problem, but sometimes states appeal to the principle of territorial integrity and make war on minorities....” (p92) Khakimov is calling for nothing less here than a transformation of world politics so that the relevant agents will become peoples (not individuals, given his essentialization of ethnonational identity, pp88-90), not states. States may be preserved

¹¹ Yeltsin never submitted the many bilateral treaties he negotiated with the regions to the Duma for ratification. Their legal standing is produced through daily practice.

¹² I want to stress here that both Center and Tatar discourse share a total rejection of the homogenizing effects of globalization, expecting the essentialist elements of Russian and Tatar identity to always survive and, indeed prosper, under the commitment to liberalism that accompanies Eurocentric versions of globalization: global subsidiarization, perhaps.

¹³ I cant help pointing out that this view of sovereignty is precisely what Gorbachev and his new-thinking foreign policy team were talking about from 1986-92, that “common human values” have rendered the old world of class divisions and great power politics atavistic. Nuclear war, poverty, and ecological devastation demanded that states rethink their subjectivity in the world. I must say that this particular strain of liberalism died in Russia by the early Yeltsin years. I dont know, but am curious to find out, where else other than in Tatarstan, does it thrive in the RF today.

¹⁴ The latter is the pedestrian shopping street in downtown Kazan.

as institutional forms among which the business of peoples is conducted, but globalization implies subsidiarity on world scale, the Europeanization of world politics. Going back to the Treaty with Moscow, he allows that the reason the Yeltsin administration did not want the Duma to ratify the Treaty was that the document would then “be interpreted in the international sense,” i.e. grant international subjectivity to Tatarstan.

What he does not say, but which is the consensual position in Center discourse on Russian identity, Liberal, Center, and Conservative, is that Russia’s understanding of itself as a Great Power in world politics precludes any acknowledgement of such agency for Tatarstan. It is Russia’s position in international politics that necessarily entails Moscow’s misrecognition of Tatarstan’s claims to sovereignty. This great power identity explains how Moscow couldn’t permit even the word sovereign to appear in a Treaty with Kazan.

What is omitted in Tatarstan discourse is the international dimension of Russia’s identity. The latter is understood as the product of Historical and Internal Others, but the External Other is ignored. This absence is consequential, as the Europeanization of Russia may make Tatarstan and Russia increasingly similar, but it will not remove, and instead may even strengthen, Russia’s great power identity internationally.

VII A Discursive Balance Sheet

The predominant discourse of the Center in Moscow in 1999 shares many features with Khakimov’s discourse on Tatarstan. Perhaps far more than either Moscow or Kazan would expect. There’s a common understanding of Russia as a modern liberal market member of European civilization. But danger lurks between the two discourses, too. Any move away from Europeanization in the Center, especially if accompanied by a reassertion of Great Power identity over other competitors, will inexorably narrow the space in Russia within which a Tatarstan identity of sovereignty with Russia is possible. An ideal compromise offers itself here: Russia’s alliance of identity with Europe, the sublimation of its Great Power identity into a European actor in global affairs. This would not be an alliance for or against any particular Others in world affairs, but rather a fusion of identity horizons within a common understanding of what it means to be a normal agent in an international politics of globalization.

In this way, Tatarstan, Russia, and Russia each have their identities acknowledged and respected, and essentialist differences preserved, within a vision of liberal European globalization.