

Theory and Practice of Paradiplomacy: Subnational Governments in International Politics,
Alexander S. Kuznetsov, New York, Routledge, 2015, ISBN 978-0-415-73888-0

This book is based upon the research and findings carried out by Alexander Kuznetsov concerning his PhD dissertation on paradiplomacy and the role of subnational governments in international affairs. As pointed out by the author, paradiplomacy is generally referred to in the academic literature as the involvement of the constituent units (regions) of (multi)national states in international affairs. Examples of these meso units are the states in the United States, the provinces in Canada, the Länder in Germany, the oblasts and the republics in Russia, and the autonomous communities in Spain. A focus on the phenomenon of paradiplomacy in its theoretical and practical aspect is meant to shed light on an area of study of increasing interest for academics and practitioners, as it plays a significant role in shaping the foreign and domestic policies of central governments.

Paradiplomacy, which is often primarily a function of stateless nationalism, suggests that the processes of nationalism (identity construction, interest definition/articulation and political–territorial mobilization) logically lead to regional governments seeking the development of an international personality. In this way, paradiplomacy serves as a means for identity- and nation-building and sustains and promotes specific interest definitions such as cultural preservation. The intergovernmental conflict it involves provides opportunities for political–territorial mobilization. Neither is stateless nationalism a necessary condition for paradiplomacy, nor is the intensity of a region’s international activity a straightforward function of the strength of a nationalist movement. Domestic and international structural contexts play an important role in conditioning the consequences of nationalism for regions operating internationally, but also in determining the likelihood of paradiplomatic activity in the absence of nationalism.

After a clarifying Introduction on the purposes of the book and its various fields of analysis, chapters 2, 3 and 4 set out to systematize the existing knowledge on paradiplomacy. This part of the volume is based more on a qualitative methodology due to a systematization of knowledge dealing less with numbers or data sets and more with ideas, many of which have already been discussed in secondary literature, and field observations carried out by Kuznetsov himself. The author is particularly interested in finding out what other researchers consider to be paradiplomacy and how they reflect upon this phenomenon in their contributions.

The construction of a general theoretical framework is sought by implementing the induction principle to the outputs of the fourth chapter, where the systematization of existing paradiplomacy discourses is conducted. Induction as a method of inference is applied so that a general integrative explanatory pattern of paradiplomacy is built following random theoretical sketches, which have been produced in different scholarly perspectives since the emergence of paradiplomacy scholarship in the 1970s.

Chapter 5 is considered by Kuznetsov to be the most crucial part of the entire research project he engaged with on paradiplomacy. He describes the general explanatory framework produced by induction after an evaluation of the 11 dimensions of paradiplomacy presented in the previous chapter. The explanatory pattern is inspired by the Multi Response Questionnaire (MRQ) technique, which is used as a tool for formalizing knowledge on constituent diplomacy derived from the examination carried out in previous chapters. As MRQ has a ‘pre-coded’ structure, Kuznetsov offers the model to be used by other researchers as a possible methodological guide for conducting studies of chosen cases of paradiplomacy. In the case of Alberta, the model is applied to six questions dealing with: (1) the causes of the booming of

paradiplomatic activities in the Canadian province; (2) the legal grounds of the Albertan constituent diplomacy; (3) the predominant motive for the Alberta government to do paradiplomacy; (4) the channels and organizational formats institutionalized by Alberta; (5) the attitude of the Canadian federal government to Alberta's paradiplomacy; and (6) the consequences of Albertan paradiplomatic activities for the whole of Canada.

Chapter 6 applies the explanatory framework to the case of diplomacy deployed by the province of Alberta in Canada. The author reminds us that the research method of the case-study is most appropriate for enquiries with the 'how' and 'why' types of questions, and for studies of contemporary events when the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated. The case study of Alberta is used, according to Kuznetsov's own word, to demonstrate the efficiency of his proposed explanatory framework and to act as a methodological guide for further study of paradiplomacy in other cases.

The work done by Kuznetsov, and reflected in the pages of this book, provides a basis for further scholarly updates and improvements which can eventually be achieved in the field of paradiplomacy research. This book is most useful for all those interested in both comparative and in-depth studies on subnational (substate) governments in international affairs. In particular, it is to be welcomed by researchers and students of diplomacy, federalism, multi-level governance, foreign policy and international relations, as well as experts in diplomacy. Luis Moreno Spanish National Research Council, Institute of Public Goods and Policies, Madrid,