

Green Sister City Cooperation of Surabaya and Kitakyushu: Beyond Ceremonial Paradiplomacy

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Abstract

Today, diplomacy is not only carried out by the state. Subnational entities such as cities are also becoming new global political actors, which is no longer an unusual occurrence in the early twenty-first century. In international relations, diplomacy conducted by subnational governments is referred to as parallel diplomacy or paradiplomacy. As a study, paradiplomacy emerged from case studies of federal states and established democracies in Western Europe and North America. Now, paradiplomacy has also begun to be normalised and has become a practice in many countries worldwide. However, the practice of paradiplomacy in developing Asian countries has been criticised for its lack of substance and consequence, and its tendency to be merely ceremonial in nature. This article provides a case study of "green sister city" paradiplomacy conducted between Surabaya and Kitakyushu to illustrate a well-institutionalised paradiplomatic activity built upon real needs. From there, this article attempts to demonstrate defining key factors in creating a functioning paradiplomatic activity: a well-defined motive, a regulating body, and inclusive programs reaching key stakeholders.

Keywords

Paradiplomacy, Sister City, Surabaya, Kitakyushu

Introduction

During the Cold War, Keohane and Nye (1971) predicted that in the future, international relations would be dominated by transnational activities which consist of non-state actors acting as political agents. In other words, international actors will be more varied when faced with the reality of globalisation. On the other hand, many international politics scholars have questioned the notion of Westphalian sovereignty as the primary norm of international politics. For instance, Ohmae (1992) likens the state-centric system to a dinosaur that will become extinct due to its inability to cope with increasingly complex global issues. Linklater (1996) and Osiander (2001) also add that today's global society is in a "post-Westphalian" era where the idea of the centrality of the state as a single political actor is obsolete. Giddens (2003) attributes this to globalisation, which can push downwards, resulting in issues that previously existed at the state level, now being absorbed into the lower level of government, and giving rise to new actors from the subnational level.

The rise of subnational actors in international relations has considerably challenged the traditional wisdom regarding the constancy of the state-centrism pattern in global politics proposed by realists. To explain this phenomenon, we can use Hameiri et al.'s (2019) explanation about state transformation. According to them, the internationalisation of regional actors in a globalised world is necessary. For them, this transformation emerged from the competition between the increasing relevance of multilateral institutions and the increasing awareness of local people on global issues. This aspect, in the end, makes it necessary for the state to delegate some of its power to local government to give them the flexibility to manage the global issues they face. From the perspective of political geography, this raises a need to look at alternatives to how political actors interact through diplomacy (Jackson 2018). We found that several countries have begun to give authority to their constituent regions to carry out diplomatic activities. The term used to refer to diplomatic activities by sub-national governments is then referred to as *paradiplomacy*.

Paradiplomacy is an abbreviation of "parallel diplomacy," first introduced in to academic debate by Rohan Butler (1961). But at that time, the definition of paradiplomacy was still far from the meaning that developed in the latter quarter of the twentieth century. Butler defines paradiplomacy as secret diplomatic activity undertaken outside the official diplomatic process (Butler, 196, p. 13). The modern definition of paradiplomacy was coined by Ivo Duchacek. In this new definition, paradiplomacy is understood as the involvement of local and regional sub-national governments in international relations (Duchacek, 1984, p. 9). Another contemporary definition of paradiplomacy is the capacity and participation of sub-state entities in the international arena to achieve specific interests (Wolff, 2007). Subnational actors are currently recognised as global actors because they can: (1) negotiate and sign international agreements with foreign countries and non-governmental actors; (2) establish

representatives abroad; (3) conduct trade missions; (4) seek foreign investment; (5) and build bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries (Lecours, 2002, p. 92). The involvement of these sub-national actors covers more non-traditional or low-political contexts of cooperation, such as economic, social, cultural, educational, environmental, and other forms that do not directly lead to national security or acquire diplomatic status. Traditionally, low-level political decision-making is concentrated in regional and local authorities, while high-level politics belongs to the central Government.

As a sub-study of International Relations, paradiplomacy is relatively new. It arose from an interest in seeing the activism carried out by constituent states in countries such as Australia, Belgium, Canada, the United States in the 1970s. In line with what was later said by Hameiri et al, Aldecoa and Keating (1999) also mention that the active role of these areas as pioneers of paradiplomacy case studies is due to globalisation driven by multilateral organisations such as NAFTA and the EU. From the 2010s, the study of paradiplomacy has started to move outside these mature 'federalised' areas and look at practices in other less-evident areas. Cornago (2010) states that paradiplomacy is now a normal approach to globalised international relations, considering its potential to be maximised, to complement traditional diplomacy undertaken by the central Government. Cornago emphasises that paradiplomacy is no longer exclusive to federal states or mature democracies.

Like globalisation, not every country experiences paradiplomacy equally. Therefore, we need a theoretical framework to explore the nuances of any paradiplomatic activity in the world. Kusnetsov (2014) made a significant contribution to the study of paradiplomacy by providing a ground-breaking analytical framework for paradiplomatic activities. The framework gives a more nuanced analysis for regions from developing and non-federal countries. Within this framework, Kuznetsov outlines six identifications to analyse paradiplomatic activities, which are: (1) identification of the causes for the formation of paradiplomatic activities; (2) identification of the legal basis of paradiplomacy; (3) identification of the main motives of local governments to engage in international relations; (4) identification of the institutionalisation of paradiplomatic activities; (5) identification of the response or attitude of the central government towards paradiplomacy; and (6) identification of the consequences of paradiplomacy on the country's development (Kuznetsov, 2014, p. 116). His framework has enabled scholars to investigate a more diverse practice of paradiplomacy.

Using this framework, case studies of paradiplomatic activity in Asia are possible yield interesting results. Because the study of paradiplomacy developed through case studies from regions in the western world with a strong tradition in federalism and democracy, case studies from Asia potentially modify our understanding of paradiplomacy. Therefore, this gap can profitably be filled by exploring how paradiplomatic activities developed and are manifested in Asia. Tavares (2016) provided an interesting note on the characteristics of

Asian paradiplomacy. According to Tavares, paradiplomacy undertaken by regions in Asia has features that emphasise the symbolic aspects of cooperation rather than the substance of the collaboration itself. He labels this phenomenon as "ceremonial paradiplomacy."

"Asian paradiplomacy has a somehow ceremonial and ornamental dimension. Suppose you are mayor or governor of a city or state that signed a twinning agreement with an Asian local government. In that case, you have to be ready to receive frequent letters (in English) that celebrate 'traditional bonds' of friendship and close cooperation or inform you whether there is a change of staff in their governments." (Tavares, 2016, pp. 32-33)

Tavares does not provide any satisfactory detail as to what makes Asian paradiplomacy tend towards the ceremonial. However, he does identify two major characteristics of such paradiplomacy. Firstly, ceremonial paradiplomacy is neither strongly motivated nor driven by a 'know-how' aspect. Secondly, ceremonial paradiplomacy is more interested in building an image of amicable relations rather than creating a closely connected institution that binds both parties together in institutionalised cooperation. In addition to this second aspect, ceremonial paradiplomacy usually consists of regular visits that lack concrete results or follow-up programs (Tavares, 2016, pp. 32-33).

Case Selection and Literature Review

The purpose of this article is to prove that ceremonial paradiplomacy is not necessarily an inherent feature of Asian paradiplomacy. We are going to use a case study of paradiplomatic activities undertaken by Surabaya in East Java Province, Indonesia, and Kitakyushu in Fukuoka Prefecture, Kyushu, Japan. Both cities have been twinned since at least 1997 and as "green sister cities" since 2012. The pairing provides an example of paradiplomatic activities which has clearly gone beyond the typology of "ceremonial," making it a partnership activity that can be impactful for both cities.

Several previous articles have discussed the cooperation between Surabaya and Kitakyushu. Some have taken a technical angle, such as Kurniawan and de Oliveira (2014), Oktariani et al. (2022), and Fitriana et al. (2022), who have discussed the environmental impact of the Surabaya-Kitakyushu cooperation. On the other hand, Rudiany et al. (2021), has examined this cooperation within a more macro framework, namely as a form of energy diplomacy between Indonesia and Japan.

This paper takes a different perspective from those articles, namely by viewing the institutionalization of cooperation as the key to the functioning of this paradiplomacy. In doing so, the author will use Kuznetsov's (2014) framework, especially indicator (3) about the identification of main motives behind the paradiplomacy, and indicator (4), regarding the

institutionalisation of such paradiplomatic activities. We will use these two points to refute the point that the characteristics of Asian paradiplomacy are minimally motivated and institutionally weak. First, we will look at the motive aspect by looking at what social context underlies the collaborative activities between Surabaya and Kitakyushu. In this case, we will outline historical similarities between the two cities that became the motive for the emergence of this paradiplomacy cooperation. Next, using the second indicator, we can measure the extent to which green sister city activities are institutionalised between the Surabaya and Kitakyushu governments. We argue that the green sister city arrangement between Surabaya and Kitakyushu is proof that the paradiplomacy undertaken by Asian emerging democracies can also have a considerable degree of substantial motive and institutionalisation and should not be considered as mere ceremonial activity.

The Motive Behind Surabaya-Kitakyushu Green Sister City Twinning

Firstly, we need to determine the predominant motive behind the establishment of green sister city status between Surabaya and Kitakyushu. Tavares argues that ceremonial paradiplomacy results between sub-state-level entities when they, such as geographically unconnected cities, have no apparent or compelling reason to interact. Blatter et.al (2010) stated that knowing motives is crucial in evaluating international interactions, because different motives will produce different strategies. For example, the ways local actors correspond and allocate their resources to overcome problems they want to address through transnational collaboration.

Surabaya is the second-largest city in Indonesia after Jakarta. This city is a supporter of the Indonesian economic sector and a gateway to eastern Indonesia. As an industrial city, the supporting sector of the Surabaya economy contributes the most to the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) in trade, hotels, and restaurants with 38.96 percent. The manufacturing sector, contributed 27.21 percent of the city's revenue (Diskominfo Surabaya, 2020).

Due to Surabaya's high dependence on the industrial sector, environmental issues are some of the city's most pressing problems. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Surabaya experienced a significant waste problem. The lack of greenery caused almost 50 percent of the total area of Surabaya to be flooded during every rainy season. In addition, in 2002, Surabaya experienced a flood of garbage due to the inability of the city government to manage waste that had accumulated in the Keputih Final Disposal Site (FDS) and eventually created health problems in the area. The angry residents then blocked access to the FDS using wooden blocks. As a result, piles of garbage were scattered throughout the city because the garbage disposal trucks could not dispose of it to the FDS (Tempo, 2003). For many years, waste was a significant problem in Surabaya that had not been resolved.

Kitakyushu was once a city with a similar problem. It is the second-largest city on Kyushu Island after Fukuoka and is an industrial city, home to companies such as Toto and the Nippon Steel Corporation. Around the 1960s, the condition of the city of Kitakyushu was almost the same as Surabaya in the 1990s. Smoke and industrial waste turned the Kitakyushu sky grey and the river water was polluted to the point that it was inhabitable for aquatic organisms. However, by the 2010s, Kitakyushu had become one of Japan's 'smart' cities due to its citizens' awareness of and government support for a sustainable environment. One of its innovations was to utilise waste as a source of "smart energy", whereby factory waste was isolated and processed into new energy for use by households in the city. This Kitakyushu innovation was then used as a model by the Japanese Government, for example when it sought to overcome the energy crisis caused by the 2011 tsunami (Thapanachai, 2012).

The success of the "Kitakyushu model" gained international recognition. In 1993, the United Nations and the World Bank collaborated with the City of Kitakyushu in organising a conference on "Improvement of the Urban Environment in Asia." This conference served as a crucial platform for those parties to address urban environmental challenges emerging in Asia. For Kitakyushu in particular, this conference was a defining moment that positioned itself as an example for other Asian cities.

Building on this momentum, Kitakyushu hosted another conference in 1997, titled the "Environmental Cooperation Network of Asian Cities." This conference established a more formalised structure for collaboration, inviting six cities from four Southeast Asian countries that were interested in environmental improvement. Those cities were Patangas and Cebu from the Philippines, Semarang and Surabaya from Indonesia, Ho Chi Minh City from Vietnam, and Penang from Malaysia (IGES, 2018). The output of this conference was a non-binding agreement called the Joint Declaration of The Kitakyushu Conference on Environmental Cooperation. As a party to this network, Surabaya leveraged its connection with Kitakyushu by handing them a key role in capacity-building initiatives, such as providing training for Surabaya civil servants and facilitating exchanges of best practices. This Joint Declaration was the first stage of engagement between Surabaya and Kitakyushu and the two cities subsequently further intensified their cooperation in the environmental field (Wardhani and Dugis, 2020, p. 247).

During the 2000s, the interactions between these two cities were supported by national-scale programmes like the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Partnership Programme in 2000, which focused on waste management projects, as well as joint initiatives under the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in 2002. As a result, the partnership evolved from initial dialogues into a structured collaboration focused on sustainable urban development. In 2007, the relationship between the two intensified even

more with the revitalisation of the Kalimas River, one of the major rivers in Surabaya, particularly in enhancing the capacity of the local community capacity to improve their own river water quality (Octavia, 2017, p. 686).

Both cities subsequently decided to upgrade the collaboration to a more sophisticated level, effectively paradiplomatic cooperation, adopting the status of the "Green Sister City" label. This was marked by the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) by the Mayor of Surabaya, Tri Rismaharini, and the Mayor of Kitakyushu, Kenji Kitahashi, in Surabaya, in 2012. The MoU contained three main aspects: realising a green society, developing recycling facilities, and building capacities that focus on maintaining a sustainable environment. During 2012 to 2023, the Surabaya and Kitakyushu City Governments established a high-level and consistent working relationship by conducting different annual programs under different themes. Those programs were as follows:

Table 1 Programs under the green sister city agreement between Surabaya and Kitakyushu

Year	Programmes
2012	Workshop on low carbon initiatives and recycling procedures
2014	Workshop on tap water management
2015	Seminar on exploring city eco-potential
2016	Kitakyushu municipal grant for tap water management in Surabaya
2017	Workshop on energy source management
2018	Workshop on dengue fever mitigation and medical waste treatment
2019	Workshop on forest conservation and ecotourism development
2020	Research on mangrove conservation
2021	Workshop on tap water management
2022	Workshop on waste management technology
2023	Site visit to waste processing hubs

Note: Adapted from Fauzia, F. M. (2019); Suara Surabaya (2021); Antara News (2021); Pemerintah Kota Surabaya (2022, 2023).

Of all the cooperative programs, cooperation on waste management has probably been the most impactful one. The cooperation between Surabaya and Kitakyushu on this particular topic has yielded significant tangible results that has positioned Surabaya as a leader in waste management practices in Indonesia. One cornerstone of this success was the establishment of Pusat Daur Ulang (PDU) Jambangan, a recycling facility established in 2015 through the assistance of Dr. Koji Takakura, a Kitakyushu recycling expert. This facility has the capacity to process 5-6 tons of waste daily, with a maximum capacity of 20 tons per day. It generates an impressive daily income of IDR 6 million from the

waste it processes, illustrating the economic viability of effective waste management strategies.

Thanks to the green sister city collaboration with Kitakyushu, Surabaya is considered a leading example of Indonesian environmentally sustainable cities. In February 2014, Surabaya hosted the fifth Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific which was attended by 300 participants from 38 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, owing to Surabaya's exemplary success in hygienic city development (Riski, 2014). In 2019, Surabaya's achievements in managing waste also received global recognition when the UN Environment Programme's Asia and the Pacific Office made a special visit to examine the waste processing facilities built by Surabaya (Riswanto, 2019). Although this cooperation was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the partnership between the two cities continued, albeit with a shift to online communication, particularly during the period of 2020 to 2021.

Surabaya's cooperation with Kitakyushu on eco-potential (2015), eco-tourism development (2019), and mangrove conservation (2020) also yielded notable results. In 2022, Surabaya achieved further international recognition by becoming the first city in Indonesia to receive Wetland City Accreditation. This accolade highlights Surabaya's commitment to utilising wetland areas and conserving its mangrove forests, which are vital for both ecological balance and disaster risk reduction.

These examples of sub-state level transnational cooperation can be viewed from a theoretical perspective. Michael Keating (1999) divides the typology of paradiplomatic motives into three categories: economic, cultural, and political. Economic motives contain the self-interest of opening up investment, increasing the flow of mobility, and improving the quality of technology. On the other hand, cultural motives are filled with self-interest in promoting the region's cultural achievements and attraction through learning from other regions, and acquiring any additional means to promote culture, within the framework of cooperation. Finally, there is a political motive from regions with separatist or local-nationalistic sentiment and wanting autonomy from the central authority, or desiring a status above that of a province or dependent region (Keating, 1999, pp. 4-5). Based on the explanation above, and the nature of the 'green sister city' cooperation, the diplomacy between Surabaya and Kitakyushu is economically motivated and is manifested in the programs that led to technological improvements to support sustainable development and a green economy.

Furthermore, we can see a symbiotic mutualism in the paradiplomatic activities undertaken by the two cities. For Surabaya, the main motive of this partnership is to increase its environmental capacity. This motive is strong considering Surabaya's abysmal history regarding waste management. On the other hand, Kitakyushu's motive of self-interest in this sister city collaboration was to become the Asian center for a low-carbon society (Murakami, 2008). By engaging in city-to-city cooperation, Kitakyushu developed interactions that

focused on the relationship between cities. Using the framework of soft power coined by Nye (1990), this act helped the city gained a reputation from the international community as a model for future Asian green cities' development and potentially leverage over the direction of other Asian cities' future planning.

The Institutionalisation of the Sister City Program

The institutionalisation of paradiplomacy is one of the most significant novel developments of late-twentieth and early twenty-first century international relations. Institutionalisation in paradiplomacy explains how paradiplomacy is formalised and cemented through various actions and organisations that signify the mutual commitment of each party to formal agreement. Evaluating this aspect is essential for measuring the parties' seriousness in performing paradiplomatic activities. Without strong institutionalisation, the practice of paradiplomacy will only lead to symbolic actions with little to no effort at productive cooperation. According to Nganje's (2013) research on the paradiplomacy between three South African provinces, Gauteng, Western Cape, and North West, the lack of a strong institutional mechanism in implementing cooperation between the provinces has led to a state of effective paradiplomatic dormancy (Nganje, 2013, pp. 152-153).

There are six indications of institutionalisation that can be seen in paradiplomacy that can measure how intensely paradiplomacy is conducted: (1) the establishment of a separate particular ministry or department responsible for handling international affairs from the constituent units; (2) the establishment of permanent subnational offices abroad; (3) official visits of regional authorities to foreign territories and countries; (4) participation in various international events organised by foreign actors; (5) formation and participation in multilateral global and cross-border regional networks and working groups in specific fields such as agriculture, sustainable development, energy, and transportation; (6) participation in international events organised by foreign entities as the official delegation of the central government. This framework therefore measures the level of commitment of subnational governments to substantial and consequential international relations, and therefore also provides a tangible measurement and evaluation of the extent of paradiplomacy arrangements globally (Kuznetsov 2014, p. 113).

The first indicator, the establishment of a separate ministry or department responsible for handling international affairs from the constituent units is perhaps the strongest of indications that the subnational body is serious about conducting its own international relations. Like bilateral cooperation between countries, paradiplomacy cooperation also requires a special bureaucratic institution that handles all matters relating to cooperation. It is important to determine whether this agency has full control over regional international relations or belongs to another branch of subnational authority that has its divisions that undertake international projects. In paradiplomacy cooperation, establishing a

special regional ministry or department responsible for international affairs would be the most effective means for subnational authorities to produce a more organised cooperation process. The city of Surabaya has a special department in charge of cooperation affairs, namely the Cooperation Administration Division. The Division is organised into 3 Subdivisions, comprising (1) the Foreign Cooperation Administration Subdivision; (2) the Administration of Domestic Cooperation Subdivision; and (3) the Cooperation Reporting and Evaluation Subdivision. As the name implies, the Sub-Division of Administration for Foreign Cooperation specifically handles all matters relating to cooperation with foreign actors, including the para-diplomatic cooperation with Kitakyushu. The tasks of the Subdivision of Administration for Foreign Cooperation were regulated in the Surabaya Mayor Regulation No. 44 of 2016 about the Duties and Functions of the Municipal Regional Secretariat (The Mayor of Surabaya, 2016). On the Kitakyushu side, green sister city activity is institutionalised through a special agency called the Asian Center for Low Carbon Society. The Kitakyushu City Government set up this agency to oversee reducing CO₂ emissions by 50 percent in the city and 150 percent in the Asian region by 2050 (compared to 2005 levels), and the Asia Low Carbon Center plays a central role in decarbonising the Asian regions. The Asian Center for Low Carbon Society functions to establish international relations with cities outside Japan to promote carbon reduction programs, including what is being done in Surabaya (Kitakyushu Asian Center for Low Carbon Society, n.d.).

The second indicator of institutionalisation, the creation of permanent subnational offices abroad, are commonly referred to as "paraconsulates." The function of these paraconsulates is to provide support and consultation for the regional community in developing international contacts in business, culture, and other fields (Kuznetsov, 2014, p. 112). Just as the consulate-general represents a sovereign state, this consulate represents a subnational entity, either a city or province. In the case of Surabaya's paradiplomacy cooperation with Kitakyushu, the opening of a permanent subnational office abroad is not possible because the city's freedom to do so is restricted by the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 25 of 2020 concerning Procedures for Regional Cooperation with Regional Governments Abroad stating that "Regional Governments cannot open representative offices abroad". The regulation reflects Indonesia's historic resistance to federalism and that although Indonesian regions may autonomously cooperate with foreign actors, they cannot open their own representative offices abroad. The right to open a diplomatic office is an exclusive domain of the central government of Indonesia.

Kitakyushu's paradiplomacy operates under similar restrictions. The 1947 Japanese constitution recognises local government autonomy to pursue their local interests. However, as a unitary country, the central government of Japan maintains the right to "restrict and even curtail subnational government activities when the center sees subnational

governments as competing with it or pursuing initiatives and policies that intrude on the center's bureaucratic turf or that the center thinks may adversely affect national interests" (Jain, 2005: 8). The opening of a permanent international office, therefore, is not possible. Meanwhile, the overseas activities of Japanese local government are coordinated and represented through their own office, the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) which is under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The third indicator of paradiplomatic institutionalisation is the occurrence of official visits by senior representatives of regional authorities to their respective partners. Representatives of regional authorities in this case are officials assigned to make visits to cooperation partner areas, including regional leaders, regional ministries, and/or legislative representatives. This indicator suggests that the more local authority representatives make official visits abroad, the better the relationship between the two parties. This official visit also reveals the level of competence and commitment of the delegation and of their foreign host partners (Kuznetsov, 2014, p. 123). From 2013 to 2023, a ten-year period, both Surabaya and Kitakyushu made eight official visits, as follows:

Table 2 Official visits conducted under the green sister city agreement between Surabaya and Kitakyushu

No.	Date	Agenda
1.	22 April 2013	The Kitakyushu delegation visited Surabaya to explain the concept of a collaborative project called KS2 or Kitakyushu & Surabaya Smart Community.
2.	17-19 December 2013	The Kitakyushu delegation visited a number of FDS in Surabaya, including FDS Benowo, FDS Sutorejo, and FDS Tugu Pahlawan. During this visit, there were also 40 representatives of Japanese companies who wanted to monitor the Surabaya environmental management project.
3.	9-13 January 2017	The Surabaya delegation visited Kitakyushu to assist the Surabaya City Regional Assembly in monitoring and evaluating sister city collaboration activities.
4.	28-29 March 2017	Kitakyushu City Government visited Surabaya City as a follow-up to the green sister city collaboration in drinking water management and dengue fever prevention in Surabaya.
5.	6-7 February 2018	Kitakyushu City Government visited Surabaya again to review the continuation of the green sister city cooperation plan and identify the needs and priorities for future cooperation related to the use of mangrove forests for ecotourism in Surabaya.

Table 2 Official visits conducted under the green sister city agreement between Surabaya and Kitakyushu (continued)

No.	Date	Agenda
6.	3 August 2018	The Mayor of Surabaya, Tri Rismaharini, visited Kitakyushu to conduct a feasibility study on hospital waste treatment.
7.	20-21 December 2022	Obayashi Kazuhiro, Manager of the Kitakyushu Environmental Department, along with Hamamoto Ryuta as Assistant Manager, inspected waste processing sites in Surabaya.
8.	13-14 September 2023	The visit of the Kitakyushu City Government to discuss the extension of the MoU as well as the development of waste processing technology in Surabaya.

Note: Adapted from KBRI Tokyo (2017); Kerjasama Surabaya (2018); Kerjasama Surabaya (2018a); Pemerintah Kota Surabaya (2022); Pemerintah Kota Surabaya (2023); Wardhani (2018).

The fourth indicator of institutionalised paradiplomacy is involvement in international events created by partner cities. The international events could be exhibitions, forums, and other events organised by foreign actors (Kuznetsov, 2014, p. 123). Surabaya as a partner of Kitakyushu's paradiplomatic cooperation, has participated in several international events organised by the city of Kitakyushu. Firstly, Tri Rismaharini, the Mayor of Surabaya, was the invited speaker at the third International Forum on the Future City Initiative in Kitakyushu in 2013. The Japanese Government promoted the Future City Initiative to anticipate future urbanisation trends worldwide. The goal was to create cities and urban communities with sustainable social and economic systems that respond to aging and environmental issues (Government of Japan, n.d.). Secondly, a Surabaya delegation participated in the OECD Mayor's Forum: Urban Green Growth in Dynamic Asia in October 2013. The Urban Green Growth in Dynamic Asia project is a project that explores how to promote green growth in Asian cities, examining policies and governance practices that promote environmental sustainability and competitiveness in a rapidly growing economy (OECD, 2016). Kitakyushu and the OECD, and UNCRD organised this forum which is part of the international Future Cities conference (UNCRD, 2013).

The fifth indicator of the institutionalisation of paradiplomacy is the involvement of related cities in a regional network or working group on specific issues. Some examples of subnational networks that exist on the international scene are the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEG-ECP), the Assembly of European Regions (AER), the Lake Constance Conference, and others (Kuznetsov, 2014, p. 123). In this case, Surabaya and Kitakyushu are connected through a network called the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment. The network formed as a result of the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific in 2000 in Kitakyushu. It was formed

as a forum to realise the development of environmental standards through projects and information dissemination through training and seminars. This is done to increase the capacity of partner cities in building environmental awareness. According to the official website, the objectives of the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment are: (1) assisting the process of preparing and implementing sustainable development plans with quantitative indicators; (2) providing periodic monitoring of program implementation and progress; (3) promotion of the exchange of information and experiences; (4) providing a platform for technology transfer, tips, and examples of successful projects as models of sustainable development; (5) providing networks, catalysts, and facilities for internal and external funding; (6) facilitation of capacity building activities for administrative staff in the environmental field; (7) promotion of environmental education in intercity cooperation; and (8) encouraging the private sector to participate in infrastructure development and environmental capacity building (Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment, n.d.). Keating likens this kind of network to an "opportunity structure" whereby the two cities that work together can increase collaboration and consultation (Keating, 1999, p. 6).

Finally, Kuznetsov also outlines the participation of the city government as a representative of the central government in international events as another indicator of institutionalisation. It is inevitable that paradiplomacy cooperation undertaken by subnational actors will indirectly involve the central government because hierarchically, the highest authority lies with the state. The ways in which subnational entities are involved in international relations has two implications. Firstly, the ability of a regional authority to operate at the highest level of global politics will impact national foreign policy. While access to the higher levels of international relations is highly dependent on the wishes of the central government, the development of the institutionalisation of this paradiplomacy can lessen regional dependence on national political and economic conditions. However, the authors cannot find any records of activities undertaken by Surabaya and Kitakyushu that suggests this degree of institutionalisation and independence. The authors can only find records of activities undertaken by the delegations of the respective cities as representatives of their local governments, and not as representatives of their respective countries. This limitation means that the cooperation between the two cities does not reach the global political level of participation.

Based on the explanation above, we can see that institutionally, the green sister city cooperation between Surabaya and Kitakyushu is intensive, substantial, and consequential. Of the six indicators suggested by Kuznetsov, the Surabaya-Kitakyushu cooperation falls into four of them. Two are absent: the establishment of permanent subnational offices and the involvement of local governments in international events as representatives of the central government. Although this cooperation is lacking in these two

respects, the authors still believe that this does not mean that the cooperation between the two cities is not productive. Both aspects of institutionalisation are highly dependent on the delegation of power given by the central government. Although cooperation was hampered by the pandemic, both cities have shown a significant commitment to maintaining the relationship with programs and official visits that have continued well. Even though both Indonesia and Japan as parent countries are unitary governments—which are quite restrictive regarding the flexibility of activities that their constituent regions can carry out—the four aspects of institutionalisation that the collaboration between Surabaya and Kitakyushu has successfully developed are sufficient to prove that this paradiplomacy activity is more than just ceremonial activity.

In the case of Surabaya and Kitakyushu, the institutionalisation of their paradiplomacy extends beyond physical structures, as also postulated in Kuznetsov's theory. The partnership between Surabaya and Kitakyushu has reshaped approaches to engaging local communities in maintaining the city's environment. For example, Surabaya has adopted practices inspired by Kitakyushu's experience in waste management. This has encouraged active community involvement in waste separation and recycling processes, fostering a sense of collective responsibility towards maintaining a cleaner urban environment. Inspired by the community engagement model in Kitakyushu, Surabaya has involved around 23,000 environmental facilitators who play an active role in promoting sustainable practices across various societal levels. These facilitators are pivotal in supporting Surabaya's transformation into a cleaner, greener, and more environmentally friendly city (Liputan6, 2020).

Additionally, the waste processing methods introduced by Dr. Koji Takakura, including the use of compost bins, have been integrated into local schools in Surabaya as a practical and simple approach to waste management. This technique not only helps reduce waste but also serves as an educational tool, encouraging young people to adopt environmentally responsible behaviors from an early age (Dinas Pendidikan Kota Surabaya, 2020). This approach aligns with the broader goals of the "Green City" initiative, where both governmental and grassroots efforts contribute to sustainable urban development. Through such community engagement, Surabaya has been able to replicate some of the advanced waste management strategies seen in Kitakyushu, adapting them to local needs and encouraging greater participation in environmental preservation.

Key Takeaway: Building an Institutionally Strong Paradiplomacy

Building an institutionally strong paradiplomacy requires a strategic approach that ensures sustained and productive cooperation between subnational entities. The partnership between Surabaya and Kitakyushu serves as an exemplary model, highlighting three key elements: a well-defined motive, a regulating body, and inclusive programs reaching key stakeholders.

First, a clear and shared motive is the cornerstone of any successful paradiplomatic effort. The long-standing cooperation between Surabaya and Kitakyushu can be traced back to the Joint Declaration of the Kitakyushu Conference on Environmental Cooperation in 1997. This declaration has provided both cities with a common platform to understand and address each other's environmental needs and goals. Such a shared history fosters mutual respect and commitment, essential for the longevity and depth of their cooperation. The continuous dialogue and collaboration have enabled both cities to align their environmental policies and strategies, ensuring that their paradiplomatic efforts are not only symbolic but also impactful and sustainable.

Next, an effective paradiplomacy requires a dedicated bureaucratic institution to manage and oversee international cooperation. In the case of Surabaya, the Cooperation Administration Division plays a crucial role. This division is subdivided into three key areas: Foreign Cooperation Administration, Domestic Cooperation Administration, and Cooperation Reporting and Evaluation. The establishment of such a specialized body ensures that paradiplomatic activities are organized, monitored, and evaluated systematically. Similarly, Kitakyushu's Asian Center for Low Carbon Society acts as a pivotal institution, focusing on reducing CO₂ emissions and promoting sustainable practices. These regulatory bodies are essential for maintaining the momentum of cooperative projects, addressing challenges promptly, and ensuring that both cities stay committed to their shared goals.

Lastly, for paradiplomacy to be effective, it must extend beyond government personnel to include a wide range of stakeholders. This inclusive approach ensures that the benefits of international cooperation are felt across different sectors of society. The Surabaya-Kitakyushu partnership has exemplified this through various initiatives. For instance, the involvement of local businesses, NGOs, and educational institutions in the green sister city programs has been pivotal. These stakeholders bring diverse perspectives and expertise, enriching the collaboration and enhancing its impact. Programs such as the Kitakyushu and Surabaya Smart Community project and joint efforts in environmental management have engaged local communities, fostering a sense of ownership and active participation.

Institutionalising paradiplomacy involves creating a robust framework that incorporates these three elements. The cooperation between Surabaya and Kitakyushu demonstrates how a well-defined motive, a dedicated regulatory body, and inclusive programs can collectively build a strong foundation for international cooperation at the subnational level. This framework not only facilitates efficient management and implementation of joint initiatives but also ensures that the cooperation is resilient and adaptable to changing circumstances. The Surabaya-Kitakyushu partnership offers valuable insights into how these elements can be harmoniously combined to create a robust and sustainable model of subnational international cooperation, moving beyond what Tavares

(2016) dubs as the “ceremonial paradiplomacy”. By following this model, other cities can develop their paradiplomatic efforts to address global challenges and foster international collaboration effectively.

Pathway for Future Research

Paradiplomacy remains a relatively new and neglected study that leaves many cases to explore and theories to test. As a topic initially developed in the West by referring to case studies of developed countries and the federal type, new scholarship needs to pay more attention to paradiplomacy activities outside the mainstream case studies, for example, in cases involving developing countries. This article has attempted to refute the assumption that para-diplomacy activities in the Asian region have a ceremonial character. The green sister city activity carried out by Surabaya and Kitakyushu can be seen as a positive anomaly which may in fact prove the norm. There are also sister city activities in Asian countries that have been well institutionalised and have a clear motive for cooperation.

As a potential future field of research, the author sees that attention can be paid to how regions in developing countries are undertaking para-diplomatic activities that are based on clear motivations with structured institutionalisation. It is hoped that the results of this research can also contribute to improving the quality of paradiplomacy as a means of responding to the challenges of globalisation today.

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