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Geopolitics of the Kaliningrad Exclave and Enclave: Russian and EU Perspectives

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Geopolitics of the Kaliningrad Exclave and Enclave: Russian and EU Perspectives

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Abstract: Two U.S. political geographers examine a range of geopolitical issues associated with the shifting sovereignty of Russia's Kaliningrad Oblast (a part of the former German province of East Prussia) during the 20th century, as well as the region's evolving geopolitical status as a consequence of the European Union's enlargement to embrace Poland and Lithuania. They argue that Kaliningrad today can be considered a "double" borderland, situated simultaneously on the European Union's border with Russia as well as physically separated from Russia, its home country, by the surrounding land boundaries of EU states. Although technically neither an exclave nor an enclave, they posit that in many ways it resembles both, and as such presents a unique set of problems for economic development and interstate relations. *Journal of Economic Literature*, Classification Numbers: F210, F220, F500, H770. 2 figures, 1 table, 124 references. Key words: Kaliningrad, East Prussia, Königsberg, European Union, Russia, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, enclave, exclave, military base.

Europe has experienced immense geopolitical changes in the 20 years since the end of the Cold War. By now, the categories of "West" and "East" in Europe have gradually become significantly less pronounced as the divide between the Western free-market and Eastern central planning states is giving way to a common European space. But while the divide is clearly weakening within the supposedly "borderless" confines of the European Union (EU), the broader narrative of pan-European integration tends to obscure a significant re-bordering process along the EU's external borderlands. In contrast to the rhetoric of a "borderless Europe," membership in the EU has often been conditioned upon applicant states' ability to strengthen enforcement measures along their borders with non-EU states.[2] In many ways, this re-bordering process creates new divisions between a "democratic/prosperous" community of European nations and their "unstable/poverty-stricken" neighbors, with borders and borderlands often constituting critical venues for the production of political allegiances, ethnic identities, and social affiliations (Kaplan and Häkli, 2002; Newman, 2006; Diener and Hagen, 2010).

From this perspective, Russia's Kaliningrad Oblast constitutes a borderland *par excellence*. It is indeed a type of "double" borderland, inasmuch as arguments can be advanced that the region simultaneously exhibits the characteristics of both an exclave and an enclave.[3]

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[2]The same trend is apparent in EU's European Neighbourhood Program, which provides financial assistance to adjacent non-member states for increased border controls (Prozorov, 2007; Browning and Christou, 2010; Scott, 2011).

[3]In political geography, an exclave refers to part of a sovereign state separated by foreign territory from the main body of that state. An enclave is an area completely surrounded by the territory of another sovereign state. But

Kaliningrad is part of Russia's sovereign territory even though it is separated from "mainland" Russia by approximately 365 kilometers (about 227 miles).[4] Although exclaves tend to be diminutive in territory and population, they often exercise disproportionate, and often divisive, roles in international relations (Vinokurov, 2007; Berger, 2010b). Recent tensions and violence involving exclaves along the Spanish-Moroccan, Kyrgystani-Uzbekistani, and Indian-Bangladeshi borderlands provide sobering examples (Ferrer-Gallardo, 2008; Bond and Koch, 2010; Jones, 2010). Similar to the manner in which West Berlin assumed global importance during the Cold War, Kaliningrad has also been an important, as well as often disruptive, factor in contemporary relations between Russia, the Baltic states, the EU, as well as the U.S. (Vinokurov 2003, 2004a; Klemeshev 2005a, 2005b).

The purpose of this paper is to highlight and discuss the complex geopolitical issues pertaining to Kaliningrad's shifting sovereignty during the 20th century and its place in contemporary international relations. The first section reviews the area's history as a German territory before World War II. The next focuses on the transfer to the Soviet Union after the war, and finally to Russia after 1991. As a result, Kaliningrad's population is now predominantly ethnic Russian and its economy heavily dependent on expenditures from the Russian federal government. The remaining sections examine the implications of Kaliningrad's emergence as a Russian exclave, as well as an enclave within the supra-national geo-body of the EU. Throughout its turbulent history, this region has served as a veritable geopolitical fulcrum in the relations between its sovereign state and the rest of Europe. Its current and future status complicates a simple division of the wider region into a "cosmos" and a "chaotic zone" (O'Loughlin, 2000) that is predicated on a clear marking of the edge of Europe as the eastern border of the European Union. Other "enclave states" within the EU territory (Switzerland and the Balkan states of Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Albania) have close trade, tourist, and political relations with the broader EU community with all of them, except Switzerland, expressing their interest in membership. The remaining sections examine the significant geopolitical and geoecomomic implications of Kaliningrad's emergence as a Russian exclave, as well as an enclave within the supra-national geo-body of the EU. The small territory can be seen as an anomaly in political geographic terms; the expansion of the EU to the borders of Russia consequent on the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact arrangement has forced the status and external relations of Kaliningrad onto the international arena in a way that was barely imaginable during the heyday of the Cold War.

THE GERMAN EXCLAVE OF EAST PRUSSIA

The territory that would become Kaliningrad has a troubled history.[5] Beginning in the 13th century, Germanic Teutonic Knights conquered the indigenous Prussian population in the region. The knights gradually lost power until their leader dissolved the order in 1525

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because Kaliningrad can be reached from St. Petersburg via international waters/airspace and borders two other sovereign states, it is neither an exclave nor an enclave in the strictest sense; Kaliningrad's situation is more analogous to Alaska, disconnected from the main American sovereign space by Canada but still accessible by air/sea via the Pacific Ocean. But since direct linkages between St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad rely on narrow air/sea corridors and often inadvertently violate the sovereign spaces of other states, the oblast for all practical purposes (and certainly in a geopolitical sense) functions as a Russian exclave and simultaneously an enclave within the EU.

[4]Kaliningrad Oblast encompasses roughly 15,100 km² (5,830 square miles), with ca. 950,000 people, mostly Russian-speakers, currently in residence. In this paper, we will henceforth generally use "Russia" to refer to the main territory of the Russian Federation and its government, excluding Kaliningrad.

[5]For detailed histories, see Isupov et al (1996), Kossert (2005), and Clark (2006).

Fig. 1. German province of East Prussia, showing the Soviet-Polish frontier of 1945, pre–World War I Europe (1910, upper left inset) and location of Kaliningrad Oblast on the western margin of the USSR (1990, upper right inset).

and created the Duchy of Prussia as a fief of the Kingdom of Poland. Centered on the city of Königsberg, this duchy was also a cultural exclave because it was separated from other German-speaking lands by Polish-speaking territories. By the late 18th century, the Polish Kingdom had become very weak, while Germany's ambitious Hohenzollern dynasty had inherited the duchy. To consolidate the duchy with their other territories scattered across northern Germany, the Hohenzollerns helped orchestrate the partition of Poland. This transformed the duchy into the province of East Prussia (Fig. 1) in the new Kingdom of Prussia.

The region was now contiguous with the Hohenzollerns' main territories, but remained a cultural exclave inasmuch as most of the intervening areas remained Polish.

East Prussia experienced a period of relative stability as the Hohenzollerns grew powerful and eventually unified Germany. This stability was upended by Germany's defeat in World War I, which entailed significant territorial revisions. Support for the recreation of a Polish state had grown during the war. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson even included it as one of his "Fourteen Points" for ending the conflict.[6] Partitioning Europe's multinational empires along ethno-linguistic lines seemed straightforward, yet proved incredibly contentious, especially along the German-Polish borderlands. The French and Polish delegations to the Paris Conference[7] argued that Poland should be restored within its borders from the 18th century, leaving Germany significantly weakened, but also placing significant areas with mixed or German-majority populations in Poland. The British and American delegations were more interested in reviving Germany as a trading partner and worried that leaving large German minority populations in Poland would generate future instability.

The final compromise sought to reconcile the goals of national self-determination, the area's complicated ethnic map, and Allies' competing geopolitical objectives. East Prussia was predominantly German, so it remained part of Germany's sovereign territory. The surrounding areas were predominantly Polish, so they were awarded to Poland. To ensure that Poland had access to the Baltic Sea and international trade without crossing German territory, the major port city of Danzig, which was over 90 percent German, was declared a Free City under the League of Nations with special transshipment privileges for Poland. This arrangement left as many as 1.1 million ethnic Germans in Poland, while Danzig (Gdańsk in Polish) contained another 330,000 Germans. Poland was provided direct territorial access to the sea, but that link was tenuously wedged between German territories and relied on Danzig's German dock workers (Fig. 2A). This also meant that East Prussia would again become a political exclave, separated from the rest of Germany by a narrow strip of Polish sovereign territory known as the "Polish Corridor" (Cienciala, 1992; Blanke, 1993; Moorhouse, 2005; Hagen, 2010; Sammartino, 2010).

This solution satisfied no one. Indeed, the Polish Corridor became a serious source of tension in German-Polish relations and international diplomacy. Both Germans and Poles argued that the arrangement violated their rights of national self-determination and precluded each from exercising full sovereignty over their lands. For Germans, East Prussia's perceived encirclement by the Polish Corridor was routinely viewed as unnatural, absurd, and preposterous, and undermined German sovereignty over East Prussia. The obvious solution, from this perspective, was for the Polish Corridor to be returned to Germany and the country made contiguous again. From the Polish perspective, East Prussia was regarded as an artificial colony that constituted a threat to Poland's sovereignty. The logical conclusion was that Poland's territorial sovereignty necessitated control over East Prussia (*Prusy Wschodnie* in Polish) and Gdańsk.[8]

Despite fears this corridor/exclave situation would trigger a war, tensions decreased significantly following the German-Polish non-aggression pact of 1934. Apparently Adolf Hitler wanted to preserve the status quo with Poland while he focused on other objectives, including

[6]More specifically, the Points contained a provision that "an independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations."

[7]The Paris Peace Conference was the meeting of Allied powers in 1919 to set the terms of peace for Germany and other defeated powers at the end of World War I.

[8]An interesting source reflecting Polish territorial claims is Dylik (1942), published by an underground press during World War II. We owe this information to Prof. Luiza Białasiewicz, University of Amsterdam.

Fig. 2. A. post–World War I Europe, showing Interwar Poland, the Polish Corridor, and East Prussia. B. Map of present-day Kaliningrad Oblast relative to neighboring EU and other countries of Europe.

full control over the Rhineland, Saar, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. However, by 1939 German publications demanding a resolution of the Corridor question began to reappear, and Poland's refusal to grant special transit rights and concessions concerning the Corridor provided the *casus belli* for Germany's invasion (Evans, 2005, p. 619.)[9] Germany quickly overran Poland in 1939 and established direct territorial links with East Prussia. This situation would prove short-lived, however, as the Allies defeated Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union occupied much of Eastern Europe, including East Prussia.

CREATING KALININGRAD

After intense fighting, Soviet troops occupied East Prussia during the closing months of World War II. Yet it was unclear what would become of the region. Josef Stalin's territorial ambitions were evident in the early stages of the war, as the Soviet Union occupied much of Poland and the Baltic states in accordance with its 1939 non-aggression pact with Germany. To preclude such actions at the end of the war, American President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in August 1941 had proclaimed the Atlantic Charter, forbidding those countries adopting the principles of the Charter[10] from making unilateral

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[9]Hitler undoubtedly intended to attack Poland eventually in any event.

[10]The Soviet Union was among the countries whose representatives unanimously adopted adherence to the common principles embodied in the Charter at a meeting of the Inter-Allied Council in September 1941 (Inter-Allied, 1941).

border revisions. However, the Charter was not a binding treaty, so the Soviet Union was not bound by its provisions and freely pursued territorial expansion. In addition to reclaiming territories lost after World War I (e.g., the Baltic states and eastern Poland), Stalin also sought to establish sovereignty over East Prussia.

The issue of East Prussia was intertwined with negotiations concerning the post-war revision of the German-Polish-Soviet borderlands. Churchill proposed to re-establish Poland with the so-called Curzon Line as its eastern border and the Oder River as its western border, which would have encompassed East Prussia. Initially, Stalin seemed to indicate that East Prussia would be transferred to Poland as compensation for the westward expansion of Soviet territory. The refusal of the American and British governments to recognize the Soviet annexations of the Baltic states may have induced Stalin to claim northern East Prussia so that "Soviet" territory would flank the Baltic states. Regardless, Stalin's claims were strengthened by the death of Roosevelt and Churchill's electoral defeat. As part of the Allies' broader geopolitical strategy of shifting Poland's borders westward at the expense of German territory, the Soviets proposed ceding the southern five-eighths of East Prussia to Poland's pro-Soviet government while retaining the northern three-eighths, including the city of Konigsberg (Fig. 1).[11] This plan was endorsed by the U.S. and U.K. at the Potsdam Conference, yet *de jure* control, or full-scale legal sovereignty, over the region remained a matter of legal debate because a final conference to officially end World War II was never convened (Sharp, 1977–1978; Frobarth, 2001, pp. 33–49; Plokhy, 2010, pp. 202–203).

Despite some questions about *de jure* sovereignty, the Soviet Union clearly exercised *de facto* control and moved quickly to embed its new territories into the Soviet system. Theoretically, the Soviet Union was a federation of 15 independent Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) based on ethno-linguistic criteria, with the largest ethnic groups receiving their own republics. But because East Prussia's German population was largely gone, the area lacked a native ethnic group that might warrant designation as a Soviet Republic. Incorporation into the adjacent Lithuanian SSR was one possibility, but the East Prussian region had little historical or ethnic affiliation with Lithuania.[12] Furthermore, Kaliningrad's new population was almost exclusively Russian-speaking and Stalin probably wanted to "book-end" the Baltic states with ethnic Russian territory to tie them more closely to the Soviet Union (Frobarth, 2001, p. 60–61). Lacking the sanction of an official peace conference, Stalin unilaterally designated the northern portion of East Prussia as the Kaliningrad Oblast (Fig. 2B) in honor of deceased Soviet politician Mikhail Kalinin and assigned it to the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) on October 17, 1945.

Reflecting its strategic position as the Soviet Union's westernmost territory, efforts to transform East Prussia into Kaliningrad Oblast were swift, extensive, and sustained. One immediate goal of Soviet forces in East Prussia was what today would be termed "ethnic cleansing." In wartime deliberations, Allied leaders seemed in general agreement that some populations would be relocated to reflect the new German-Polish-Soviet border settlement.

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[11]Stalin's decision to award the southern portions of East Prussia to Poland appears to have been influenced in part by the area's predominant population, a group known as the Masurians, who spoke a Polish dialect but were Protestant (unlike Poles, who were predominantly Catholic). After World War I, the vast majority of Masurians voted to remain inhabitants of Germany, rather than join the new Polish state. Most Masurians fled or were expelled to Germany after World War II.

[12]East Prussia's Memel region, now Klaipéda, had been Prussia/German territory until World War I, although it had a predominantly Lithuanian population. Eventually, the international community recognized Lithuania's claims over Memel in 1924. The Soviets annexed the area with East Prussia after World War II, but reflecting its interwar status, transferred it to the Lithuanian SSR in 1948, so that Klaipéda became part of Lithuania in 1991.

The Potsdam Agreement reaffirmed this goal of an "orderly and humane" transfer of German populations. Although the text did not specifically call for the removal of Germans from East Prussia and the region's sovereign status remained unsettled, the tentative recognition of Soviet annexation likely made expulsion a foregone conclusion. Indeed, a chaotic exodus of Germans had already begun as Soviet forces approached East Prussia during the winter of 1944. East Prussia's pre-war population of around 2.2 million[13] had dwindled to between 125,000 to 200,000 by war's end. As many as 800,000 Germans returned to East Prussia following the cessation of hostilities, but starvation, disease, execution, and deportation by Soviet authorities had largely obliterated the region's German population by 1950 (Krickus, 2002, pp. 37–38; Broderson, 2007, p. 86; Kossert, 2008, p. 168).

While emptying Kaliningrad of its remaining Germans, the Soviet government aimed to re-populate this strategic territory with Russian-speaking peoples loyal to the communist regime. By 1959, approximately 611,000 settlers were transferred to Kaliningrad. Russians comprised about 80 percent of this total, with the rest mostly Belorussians or Ukrainians, but they tended to identify themselves as Soviet-Russian, Soviet-Ukrainian, or more simply Soviet-citizens. Those settled in rural areas were largely drawn from the "black earth" region of eastern Ukraine and central Russia, while urban populations tended to originate in Moscow, Leningrad, Smolensk, or Riga. The lack of a German population made it easier for Kaliningrad's new population to imagine themselves and the area as an integral part of Russia's historical homeland. To provide roots and legitimacy for Kaliningrad's newly imported inhabitants, Soviet officials sought archaeological evidence of an imagined Slavic occupation of the region pre-dating the Teutonic conquest, while local histories in schools tended to begin with the Soviet conquest in 1945 (Krickus, 2002, p. 39–41; Sezneva, 2002, pp. 51; Misiunas, 2004, p. 395; Broderson, 2007, p. 86; Berger, 2010a, p. 349).

The creation of Kaliningrad also included a wide-ranging building program that gave the landscape an unmistakable Soviet imprint and style. The war's massive devastation and the absence of an indigenous population afforded Moscow's planners the opportunity to create Kaliningrad as the most "Soviet" of Soviet regions. The transformation of East Prussia into Kaliningrad entailed replacing hundreds of historical churches, medieval castles, and even entire villages with a utopian "Soviet-scape" of broad boulevards lined with modernist-styled government offices, residential complexes, cultural amenities, and mass transit. German place names disappeared, as Königsberg became Kaliningrad and Tilsit became Sovetsk. The region also took on an unmistakable martial flair with the renaming of Insterburg and Preußisch Eylau as Chernyakhovsk and Bagrationovsk in honor of Russia military heroes, while numerous monuments to the Great Patriotic War soon dotted the landscape (Hoppe, 2000; Kibelka, 2000; Sezneva 2002; Dedkov and Fyodorov, 2006; Brodersen, 2008).

The fate of Königsberg Castle was emblematic of this transformation. Originally built by the Teutonic Knights, this medieval fortress would become a residence for the Hohenzollern family. The castle was severely damaged during World War II, but portions of the main walls remained until authorities ordered their complete demolition in 1969. Some locals lobbied unsuccessfully to preserve the ruins, indicating an incipient interest in local history pre-dating 1945. This site was then occupied by the modernist House of the Soviets, but construction was eventually halted, because the underlying ground could not support the massive weight of this administrative building. The result is a completed exterior and unfinished interior, popularly

[13]According to data in the *Statistisches Jahrbuch* (Statistischen Reichsamt, 1942), East Prussia's total population during the four decades prior to the outbreak of World War II remained relatively stable, rising from 1,996,626 in 1900 to 2,186,314 in 1939.

described as one of Russia's ugliest buildings (Hoppe, 2000, pp. 127–147; Kostyashov, 2004).

Yet, the medieval Germanic ambience of the region remained stubbornly conspicuous amidst the modernist styles favored by Soviet planners. Although Marxist ideology interpreted the German legacy in East Prussia as colonial in origin, and thus fit for demolition, some of Königsberg's cultural sites possessed global stature and were therefore considered too valuable to be razed. The Königsberg Cathedral, for example, stands a short distance from the House of the Soviets. This house of worship dated to the 14th century and, like the castle, was badly damaged during the war. Yet unlike the castle, the cathedral had international importance as the burial place of famed philosopher Immanuel Kant. As a result, the ruins were left standing, while the surrounding area was cleared of rubble and converted into a park. The divergent fates of the castle and cathedral illustrate the continued juxtaposition of a Germanic past and Soviet/Russian present.[14] Indeed, much to the consternation of party officials, there was persistent and growing public interest in preserving elements of Kaliningrad's Germanic heritage during the Soviet period (Sezneva, 2002, pp. 55–60; Berger, 2010b, pp. 349–350).

The widespread destruction of German architecture and public symbols that had survived the war, nevertheless opened space for a new Soviet landscape to emerge. Soviet planners aimed to reshape not only the architectural flavor of the region but also the patterns of daily life. For example, the collectivization of agriculture dramatically altered long-standing patterns of land use and tenure, as small private farms became massive, state-run, agricultural complexes. Kaliningrad's economy shifted to manufacturing military goods instead of local handicraft production. In addition to these demographic, architectural, and economic changes, the construction of new transportation networks further reoriented the territory away from its traditional Western linkages toward integration with the Soviet heartland (Knappe, 1996; Frobarth, 2001). Despite efforts to anchor Kaliningrad within the Soviet Union's broader geopolitical, economic, and cultural structures, residents expressed a persistent sense of isolation, abandonment, and neglect due to living conditions in the region and the apparent sense of marginal significance of their territory in Soviet economic planning (Brodersen, 2007, pp. 94–96).

Although well behind the front line of the Cold War, Kaliningrad assumed a prominent role in Soviet military planning and infrastructure. Kaliningrad hosted the headquarters for forces opposing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and a key port for the Baltic fleet. During the Cold War, between 100,000 and 300,000 Soviet military personnel stationed in Kaliningrad Oblast served dual roles: as a buffer against potential invasion, as well as a potential staging area for possible offensive operations against Western Europe. The oblast's military character quickly became a defining feature as its population grew from 610,885 to 881,211 between 1959 and 1989 (Goskomstat, 1962, pp. 20–21; 1989, p. 9; Krickus, 2002, pp. 41–42). Similar to cities associated with the Soviet nuclear program and other sensitive sites, Kaliningrad was "closed" to foreigners and most Soviet citizens. Kaliningrad's strategic importance provided a degree of economic stability for the region but also entailed high levels of dependency on government spending.

Partially as a result of the primacy placed on militarizing the region, Kaliningrad Oblast was among the Soviet Union's least productive and diversified regions. The region remained a constant drain on resources, but potential solutions were not seriously considered until

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[14]Other reminders of Kaliningrad's German history include monuments to Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller, the Amber Museum, several medieval gates, and numerous German villas in the Amalienau neighborhood.

Mikhail Gorbachev acceded to power. With *perestroyka* (restructuring) and *glasnost'* (openness) emerging as national economic and political forces, respectively, Kaliningrad officials began advocating the region's designation as a Free Economic Zone (FEZ) to transform it from a military base confronting NATO to a bridge to an economically thriving Western Europe (Klemeshev and Fyodorov, 2004). As a conduit for foreign investment, trade, and innovation, proponents argued, Kaliningrad could help revitalize the communist system. The oblast was designated as one of six Soviet FEZs in 1991, but it was far too late to arrest the Soviet Union's demise. Although the results were often disappointing, there was no denying that East Prussia had been thoroughly transformed into Kaliningrad Oblast.

THE KALININGRAD EXCLAVE

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kaliningrad Oblast, previously a part of the RSFSR, fell under the sovereign control of the Soviet Union's successor state, the Russian Federation.[15] Kaliningrad was transformed into an exclave and its location was quickly assumed to be inherently problematic, not unlike East Prussia during the interwar period (Wellmann, 1996; Fyodorov, 1998a, pp. 21–22; Holtom, 2003). An article by former EU Commissioner and conservative British politician Chris Patten (2001) likened Kaliningrad to a "hell-hole" (of organized crime), while Russian media often portrayed it as a "curse" or "damnation" (Moses, 2004, p. 128).

Soon a variety of journalists, academics, and government officials produced numerous "white papers," "working reports," and "policy papers" on the issue. These proposals commonly envisioned Kaliningrad's unique location evolving into a semblance of "Hong Kong" on the Baltic that would serve as a "test case" (Smorodinskaya, 2001, p. 3), "pilot region" (Müntel, 2003, p. 261), or "proving ground" (Shakhrai, 2002, p. 109) to facilitate Russia's broader transition from centralized authority to free market capitalism and federal governance through cross-border cooperation. In a very real sense, Kaliningrad was viewed as a test case in Russian foreign policy, governance, and identity, as well as for the world's engagement with Russia (Bilchack et al, 2000; Smorodinskaya, 2001; Klemeshev, 2002; Holtom, 2005; Chmykhov, 2009). In the following sections, we will attempt to examine contemporary developments in Kaliningrad as the region assumes a unique position within broader Russian–EU/U.S. geopolitical, economic, and cultural linkages and networks.

Sovereignty, Security, and Geopolitics

Russia faced significant challenges as the internal borders between Soviet republics transformed into international borders between sovereign states after 1991. The threat of separatism, such as in the North Caucasus region, or irredentism, such as Japanese claims to the Kuril Islands, loomed large. Kaliningrad seemed vulnerable to both possibilities. Already territorially "separate" from Russia, a separatist movement demanding full territorial sovereignty appeared plausible, as did territorial claims by Poland, Lithuania, or a reunited Germany. Indeed, Kaliningrad quickly assumed a prominent role in Russia's diplomatic policy and geopolitical thinking, or what could be termed "hard" security concerns (Fyodorov, 1998a, pp. 21–22; Browning, 2003, p. 567; Browning and Joenniemi, 2008b, pp. 149–150).

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[15]Had Kaliningrad been designated a constituent Soviet republic (i.e., union republic), the area could have become an independent state, although its Russian population would have probably sought some type of affiliation with the Russian Federation.

As a weak government facing strong centrifugal forces and severe economic hardships, Russia's ability to effectively exercise and maintain its sovereignty over Kaliningrad was questionable in the immediate post-Soviet years. Indeed, there were and continue to be scattered claims over Kaliningrad, mostly from Lithuanian, Polish, and German nationalist groups. There were even salacious rumors in the international media that Germany had secretly proposed to buy Kaliningrad. Yet no foreign state made a direct claim to Kaliningrad, and Russian sovereignty gained international recognition. The threat of Russian counterclaims, as well as the simple fact that Germany, Poland, and Lithuania faced enough challenges without the daunting task of trying to absorb Kaliningrad's overwhelmingly Russian population, made irredentism an exceedingly unattractive option.

Another possibility was that Kaliningrad might evolve into some type of joint or shared sovereignty between Russia, neighboring states, or the EU. These proposals were very short on practical details and consistently rejected outright by Russia. As a result, a series of treaties was concluded that affirmed the extant borders and largely ended official consideration of territorial adjustments by the mid-1990s. Russia's desire to maintain unquestioned sovereignty over Kaliningrad continues to dominate governmental approaches to a range of matters from international trade and travel to historical celebrations and local cultural affairs (Krickus, 2002, pp. 81–85; Wellman, 2003, p. 281; Karabeshkin and Wellmann, 2004, p. 91).

Although the irredentist threat receded quickly, the prospect of secessionism remained. The physical distance and isolation between Kaliningrad and Russia loomed large from Moscow's perspective. Many Kaliningraders felt somewhat abandoned as the new Russian government staggered from crisis to crisis during the 1990s, but public support in Kaliningrad for full independence appeared minimal. Opinion surveys varied, but local support for independence appeared confined to the single digits, perhaps spiking briefly to 20 percent in 1993 (Oldberg, 2000, p. 275; Moses, 2004, p. 117). Indeed, some have argued that Russian officials are more likely to raise the prospect of secession (Karabeshkin and Wellmann, 2004, p. 26), whereas others believe Kaliningraders consciously utilize discussions of "autonomy" to extract economic concessions from the Russian government (Browning and Joenniemi, 2004).

As Russian sovereignty over Kaliningrad solidified, neighbors worried the region would persist as a military bastion, possibly undermining security or economic development throughout the Baltic. Between 120,000 and 200,000 uniformed troops were stationed in Kaliningrad in 1991 (Wellmann, 1998, p. 89; Krickus, 2002, p. 58; Misiunas, 2004, p. 388), and troop levels remained high during the early 1990s as Russian units withdrawing from Central and Eastern Europe transited through Kaliningrad. This led to recurring disputes between Russia and Lithuania over the transport of Russian military equipment and personnel via the Lithuanian railroad network. The issue gradually faded as Kaliningrad's troop strength dropped to between 40,000 and 20,000 by 2003, and Russia simultaneously developed alternative transit routes through the Baltic Sea (Krickus, 2002, p. 74; Oldberg, 2002, p. 150, Zverev, 2007, p. 22).

Furthermore, it remains debatable what, if any, military advantage Kaliningrad provides. The only substantive adversary would seem to be NATO, following its expansions in 1999 and 2004 to include Poland and the Baltic states. Yet NATO would have ample opportunity to attack military units in Kaliningrad in the event of a clash, whereas Russia would find support or reinforcement very difficult. Although the chances of military engagement remain quite remote, this does not preclude Russia from seeking to turn possession of Kaliningrad into geopolitical leverage. In an effort to thwart NATO expansion, Russian officials delayed ratification of its border treaty with Lithuania, for example, while also threatening to reverse troop

reductions in Kaliningrad and revive its role as a military bastion (Krickus, 2002, pp. 74–75; Oldberg, 2002, p. 151; Wellmann, 2003, pp. 281–282; Misiunas, 2004, p. 386). These efforts ultimately proved unsuccessful and may have actually made EU and NATO membership more desirable, especially to Poland and Lithuania, which envisioned a heavily militarized Kaliningrad as a "Trojan Horse" within the Baltic realm.

The situation has stabilized, but Russia periodically raises the possibility of deploying nuclear weapons to Kaliningrad during disagreements with the U.S., EU, or NATO (Chillaud and Tetart, 2007, p. 175–177).[16] This threat resurfaced in response to plans for a U.S.-backed missile defense system in Eastern Europe. While the Obama administration has delayed deployment, American anti-missile sites are allegedly functional in Poland and soon to be in Romania as well. The U.S. depiction of these as "anti-terrorist" sites finds little sympathy in Russia (Trukhanchev, 2010). The resulting situation resembles the classic notion of a "security dilemma": Russian efforts to project influence through Kaliningrad bolstered Polish and Lithuanian determination to join NATO, which then reinforced Russia's determination to maintain a significant military presence in Kaliningrad. Inconsistent signals from both sides exacerbate the situation. The U.S. and NATO emphasize Russia as a strategic partner, but from the Russian perspective, the expansion of NATO and the development of American missile defense systems in Central and Eastern Europe appear suspiciously like efforts to encircle and isolate Kaliningrad. For its part, official statements from Russia emphasize Kaliningrad's economic role as a transit point for trade goods or providing security for the Nord Stream pipeline (Ericson, 2009, pp. 48–59) delivering natural gas to Western Europe. Yet Russian officials often raise the possibility of missile deployments to Kaliningrad or strengthening the Baltic Fleet whenever some regional development displeases them.

Kaliningrad also complicates EU-Russia relations. The EU's European Neighbourhood Policy, which provides financial assistance to bordering countries to implement policies consistent with EU standards, offered a platform for addressing a range of cross-border issues related to Kaliningrad. Russia declined to participate, fearing it would position them as junior partners in EU-Russia relations. Instead, the EU and Russia implemented the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in 1997 (Browning and Joenniemi, 2008a, pp. 536–538), which serves as an alternative pathway for addressing practical complications arising from Kaliningrad's exclave status. By 2006, the EU had provided nearly €100 million for technical assistance involving border infrastructure, environmental management, and transportation/ energy projects in Kaliningrad, and pledged an additional €132 million for cross-border cooperation between 2007 and 2013 (Archer and Etzold, 2010, p. 336). However "hard" security concerns, especially the Russian-Georgian conflict in 2008, have largely frozen the PCA, as well as high-level cooperation concerning Kaliningrad.

Kaliningrad's unique situation would seem ideal for facilitating productive dialogue and exchange between Russia and its neighbors (particularly Poland and Lithuania), thereby constructing a new Baltic region where hard security concerns no longer exist. But Kaliningrad has played a rather different role in the lingering transit disputes across Lithuania, Russian airspace violations, and contentious military deployments in the region. The ratification of the New START Treaty between the U.S. and Russia in late 2010 (Weir, 2010) represents a modest improvement in the overall climate, but progress on other issues appears to have stalled. Combined with the 2007 cyber-attacks on Estonia and the Russian-Georgian conflict,

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[16]In early 2001, in the lead-up to NATO's expansion into the Baltic states, it was reported that some U.S. intelligence officials believed Russia had actually moved short-range missiles into Kaliningrad (e.g., A Russian Base, 2001). This report was denied by then-President Vladimir Putin (Tyler, 2001).

Kaliningrad has too often served as a cause for saber rattling in Russia–NATO/U.S. relations. Its dual role as a geopolitical boon for broader Russian objectives and simultaneously a source of possible vulnerability, not to mention a complex logistical challenge, seems firmly in place.

Trade, Transit, and Trafficking

Kaliningrad was poorly equipped to contend with the economic crises convulsing Russia during the 1990s. Given that between 35 and 50 percent of residents were connected to the military as soldiers, dependents, veterans, or defense-related civilian workers, reduced government expenditures and the closure of many military-industrial sites hit Kaliningrad especially hard (Misiunas, 2004, p. 388). Kaliningrad also found its established economic links with its neighbors increasingly restricted as those countries began preparatory steps required for EU membership, especially concerning border security. These new border regimes made commerce and travel with Russia prohibitively expensive and complicated for Kaliningrad residents.

As a result, the exclave's economic decline was more precipitous than the average in Russia. Kaliningrad Oblast recorded 61 percent and 50 percent declines in industrial production and agricultural output between 1990 and 1995, compared to 51 and 29 percent declines for all of Russia (Fyodorov, 1998b, p. 35). By 1999, industrial production was 30 percent of the 1990 level (Misiunas, 2004, p. 389; Vinokurov, 2008a, p. 169). Rates of unemployment and poverty rose dramatically. As subsidies from Moscow declined during the 1990s, Kaliningrad hoped its relatively cheap labor force and proximity to Western Europe would attract foreign investment.[17]

Kaliningrad was declared a Free Economic Zone (FEZ) in 1991, which eliminated duties and customs on most goods, as well as offered tax breaks for new businesses (Oldberg, 2000, p. 274; Krickus, 2002, p. 47–48; Misiunas, 2004, p. 403; Moses, 2004, p. 109). Although proponents believed this special designation would potentially transform Kaliningrad into the Baltic version of Hong Kong, these hopes proved illusory for a variety of reasons. First, the Russian government continued to view Kaliningrad as a hard security matter, tending to ignore calls for greater economic autonomy out of fear that this could lead to political separatism. Perhaps a greater threat was that foreign investors, especially Germans, might gain unwanted influence. The prospect of German dominance even prompted some liberal politicians to warn that Kaliningrad could become a "small Alaska," referring to Russia's sale of that territory to the United States in 1867 (Oldberg, 2002, p. 159; Krickus, 2002, pp. 48–49; Browning and Joenniemi, 2008b, p. 149). Both scenarios jeopardized Russian sovereignty over Kaliningrad.

Kaliningrad's FEZ status also generated internal opposition. Prominent business interests in St. Petersburg and Moscow worried about potential competition, government officials grumbled over lost tax revenues, while other parts of Russia complained about preferential treatment received by the region. Reflecting these competing interests, the Yel'tsin administration's policies toward Kaliningrad were rather erratic and makeshift (Krickus, 2002, pp. 48–49, 94; Oldberg, 2002, pp. 148–149; Stein, 2003, p. 355; Yastrzhembskii, 2006, pp. 13–18). It is

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[17]In the immediate aftermath of the USSR's disintegration, Yuriy Matochkin, Kaliningrad's representative in the Supreme Soviet (and later its governor and representative in the Federation Council), argued that the region should receive the status of an independent republic with the authority to strike deals with foreign investors to acquire much needed capital and technology (A Fourth, 1992).

not surprising that trade volumes increased modestly and foreign direct investment remained rather meager (Kushnirsky, 1997, p. 147; Fyodorov, 1998b, p. 46).

Russia restructured Kaliningrad into a Special Economic Zone in 1996 to assert greater federal control and preclude any possible movement toward secession.[18] This again demonstrated Moscow's determination to retain full sovereignty over the region (Oldberg, 2000, p. 278, Schmidt, 2001; Meister, 2008, pp. 112–113). Special tax privileges were eliminated, but duty-free status was maintained for raw materials and parts imported into Kaliningrad and then processed into finished products for export to Russia or other countries (Oldberg, 2002, pp. 146–148; Zverev, 2007, p. 11). In many ways, Kaliningrad would function as an import substitution zone.

As the Russian economy recovered after the 1998 Asian financial crisis, Kaliningrad experienced significant economic growth, as its manufactured exports to Russia increased ninefold and cargo volume more than tripled from 1999 to 2005. Yet Russian firms accounted for the vast majority of exports, while most freight consisted of Russian and Kazakh petroleum products transiting to Europe. Foreign direct investment remained relatively flat, and while Heineken, General Motors, BMW, and KIA established local affiliates in the early 2000s, few multinational corporations sustained investment in Kaliningrad (Stein, 2003, pp. 359–361; Lamande et al., 2004, p. 79; Moses, 2004, p. 109; Zverev, 2007, pp. 11, 15; Meister, 2008, p. 117). The recovery, however, was not insignificant. From 2003 to 2009, Kaliningrad's per capita monthly income rose from 66 to 85 percent of Russia's national average. The official unemployment rate dropped dramatically, reaching its lowest point of 3.4 percent in 2007 (compared to the national average of 6.1 percent). The "Hong Kong" vision of SEZ proponents seemed close to becoming a reality before the global financial crisis hit Kaliningrad hard. Unemployment soared to 10.9 percent by 2009, well above Russia's 8.4 percent (Rosstat, 2003–2010).

Despite some improvements, Kaliningrad's SEZ still faced significant obstacles, including obsolete infrastructure, increasing competition from modernized ports in Poland and the Baltic states, uncertain transit linkages with Russia, shifting federal economic policies, and widespread corruption (Krickus, 2002, pp. 96–97; Moses, 2002, pp. 916–917; Stein, 2003, pp. 362–363; Karabeshkin and Wellmann, 2004, pp. 47–65). Kaliningrad also faced a decidedly negative international image. Even some Russian observers were concluding that the SEZ had failed, leaving "a black hole" in the Baltic region (Shakhrai, 2002, p. 110). Furthermore, Russia's economic policies pertaining to Kaliningrad continued to reflect hard security concerns, such as assuring the region's energy independence through the construction of new natural gas and nuclear power plants,[19] containing foreign investment, and prioritizing linkages with Russia.

In 2006, President Putin approved modifications of the SEZ's structure by replacing the customs exemptions with temporary tax reductions for larger investors. These changes encourage Russian firms producing for the Russian market but offer little incentive for foreign or export-oriented businesses (Zverev, 2007, p. 11; Meister, 2008, p. 113; Vinokurov, 2008a, pp. 171–175). Foreign direct investment did jump from US $80.8 million in 2006 to $375.9 million in 2008 before collapsing to $112.2 million in 2009 as the global financial crisis intensified (Rosstat, 2007–2010). Yet it appears that Russian businesses working though

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[18]See Federal Law "On the Special Economic Zone in Kaliningrad Oblast," adopted by the State Duma on November 15, 1995 and approved by the Federation Council on January 5, 1996 (Rossiyskaya Federatsiya, 1996).

[19]In September 2009, the Russian government announced plans to construct the Baltic Nuclear Power Plant, consisting of two reactors with a combined capacity of 2300 megawatts. The first reactor is scheduled to be commissioned in 2016 and the second in 2018 (Russia to Build, 2009).

offshore financial centers such as Cyprus accounted for the majority of this "foreign" invest-ment.[20] Indeed, the Moscow, Volga, and Siberian regions account for around 80 percent of Kaliningrad's imports/exports (Meister, 2008, pp. 117–120; Vinokurov, 2008b, pp. 54, 66). Thus, Kaliningrad's potential as a gateway to Eurasia's vast markets remains problematic and uncertain.

Similar to other exclaves, transit has become a major issue for Kaliningrad and its neigh-bors. Although some routes between Russia and Kaliningrad run through Poland, most civil-ian travelers pass through Lithuania and Belarus. Border controls were quickly established in 1991, but Lithuania and Russia soon reached a provisional arrangement allowing visa-free travel for Russian citizens across Lithuanian territory. Although the agreement func-tioned reasonably well, Lithuanian and Polish membership in the EU eventually transformed Kaliningrad into an exclave within the Schengen area, which requires an official passport and visa for entry (Vinokurov, 2004b; Holtom, 2005; Zernov and Shopin, 2006).[21]

EU negotiators initially proposed that Kaliningrad's citizens receive Schengen passports. Worried that any special status could undermine sovereignty over Kaliningrad, the Russian government countered that its citizens had a right to travel from one sovereign Russian territory to another without a passport. Therefore, all Russian citizens should be eligible for visa-free travel through the EU, a non-starter for the EU, for reasons discussed below. Con-sequently transit between Kaliningrad, Russia, and the EU threatened to become a serious international issue (Aalto, 2002; Karabeshkin and Wellmann, 2004, p. 83; Misiunas, 2004, p. 386; Zverev, 2007, p. 18). The Russian press went so far as to accuse the EU of erect-ing a "Blue Curtain" (the color of the EU flag) around Western Europe (see Evans-Prichard and Strauss, 2002). Eventually, an agreement was reached in 2002 that allowed Russians with valid passports to purchase inexpensive "facilitated transit documents" (FTDs) to travel between Russia and Kaliningrad. Basically functioning as multiple-entry visas, these FTDs have worked reasonably well, although travel between Kaliningrad and Russia has clearly become more complicated and complaints persist from both sides (Ignatyev et al., 2008). In the end, the EU basically got its way, maintaining the visa requirement to enter the Schengen zone, while Russia's goal of visa-free travel across EU space remains uncertain.

Part of this impasse stems from differing approaches to the issue—i.e., the EU tends to view the transit situation and other issues concerning Kaliningrad as soft security problems, while Russia emphasizes the hard security aspects (Browning and Joenniemi, 2008b, pp. 149–150; Moroff, 2008, p. 72). Indeed, the Russian government clearly perceives the international borders dividing Kaliningrad from Russia as worrisome because they could be closed arbi-trarily or unilaterally. Air and sea routes from St. Petersburg can reach Kaliningrad without crossing foreign territory but are unreliable because they are subject to icing in the Gulf of Finland, delays resulting from severe storms, or fear that the narrow air and sea corridors across the Baltic could be closed in the event of a conflict. The FTD agreement is also suspect, inasmuch as it relies on Lithuanian authorities to grant visas authorizing Russia-Kaliningrad travel. The possibility that Lithuania might impose restrictions on road and rail transportation led Putin to declare regular ferry service between St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad as "a matter of national security." Russia's government-controlled media described the ferry as a means of depriving "the Baltic States of an instrument of influence over Russia" (Osborn, 2006, p. 19).

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[20]This phenomenon is typical of a considerable amount of inward foreign direct investment in Russia more broadly, which involves the repatriation of the capital of Russian companies held in offshore accounts (e.g., see Hanson, 2010, pp. 639–640, 652).

[21]The Schengen Agreement allowed visa-free travel between most EU member states, as well as common policies for the EU's external borders.

The FTD transit arrangement marked a high point in Russian-EU cooperation. Additional agreements do not appear imminent following the Russian-Georgian conflict and Russia's preference for bilateral negotiation with individual European states rather than the EU. Nevertheless, there has been movement toward practical cooperation on select soft security concerns, such as smuggling, illegal immigration, organized crime, and environmental management (Archer and Etzold, 2010, p. 333; Kulhanek, 2010, p. 59). After its expansion into northern Europe, the EU sought to develop a coherent approach for cooperation on regional issues. This Northern Dimension (ND), as it was termed, began as an extension of EU foreign policy but evolved into a framework for strengthening cross-border cooperation among four equal participants (the EU, Russia, Norway, and Iceland). Unlike the PCA, which focused on high-level negotiations, the ND aims to facilitate cooperation among provincial, municipal, and non-governmental organizations on practical matters like cultural exchanges, public health, environmental protection, and trade and transportation, especially related to natural resources and energy (Timmermann, 2002, pp. 99–101; Haglund-Morrissey, 2008, p. 206; Moroff, 2008, pp. 75–79; Archer and Etzold, 2010, p. 340).

Because it emphasizes cooperation at the local level, the ND promotes engagement with Kaliningrad somewhat removed from the broader geopolitical concerns that have hindered the PCA. Indeed, the ND's initial objectives positioned Kaliningrad as a focal point for addressing numerous regional issues across northern Europe and Russia (Moses, 2004, pp. 111–112; Zverev, 2007, p. 17; Browning and Joenniemi, 2008a, pp. 541–544; Haglund-Morrissey, 2008, pp. 204–205). Despite this potential, the Putin administration's success in centralizing decision-making in Moscow complicates the type of local and regional cooperation envisioned by the ND.

Indeed, Kaliningrad remains a persistent concern regarding its role as a home base for criminal groups engaging in illegal "trafficking" of people, narcotics, or goods. The possibility of Kaliningrad devolving into a "cesspool of negatives" marginally governed by Moscow while compromising EU sovereignty is a recurring theme in press reports and diplomacy (Misiunas, 2004, p. 391). Smuggling and shuttle trading, especially with northeastern Poland, support a significant portion of the population, perhaps accounting for over 50 percent of the oblast's economy (Moses, 2004, p. 111; Zverev, 2007, p. 21; Dykhanov, 2008, p. 183). The EU looks to Russia to stem these semi-legal and illegal flows, while Russia counters that the EU should implement economic policies that minimize the value of smuggled goods. Russian leaders also point to the benefits accrued through Kaliningrad's untaxable smuggling economy as grounds for refusing requests for greater autonomy or increased government spending. This impasse further limits Kaliningrad's economic potential, likely pushing even more residents to operate in the region's black and grey markets.

Identity, Culture, and Politics

The possibility that increased economic and cultural exchanges could foster troublesome identity politics in Kaliningrad appears very real, especially when viewed from Moscow. Yet despite the economic difficulties and physical separation, the loyalty of Kaliningraders to "Mother Russia" appears quite solid for a variety of reasons, including the high number of residents linked to the Russian military, cultural similarities, and the steady anti-Western, nationalist sentiment emanating from Moscow relating to NATO, Chechnya, Georgia, and Wiki-Leaks. Public support for independence has remained very low. The prospect of greater autonomy within the Russian Federation enjoys more backing, perhaps averaging around 20 percent, but significant majorities consistently express support for retaining Kaliningrad's

current status (Oldberg, 2000, p. 275; Moses, 2004, p. 117; Zverev, 2007, p. 10). Relatively recent surveys indicate 77 percent of residents identify themselves as Russian, closely mirroring support for maintaining Kaliningrad's oblast status, compared to 21 percent identifying themselves as European (Zverev, 2007, p. 11).

Although secessionist sentiment has remained weak, Kaliningrad's geographic marginality within the Soviet Union and now Russia may facilitate the development of a unique borderland identity. This is reflected in the common tendency to differentiate spatially between Kaliningrad and Russia, for example, by referring to a trip from Kaliningrad to Moscow as going "to Russia" (Oldberg, 2000, p. 281). Here the spatial gap between Kaliningrad and Russia manifests as a conceptual gap in self-identity. The costs and bureaucratic requirements of travel reinforce this sense of differentiation by dissuading many Kaliningraders from "visiting" Russia. Despite regular visits to Lithuania and Poland, around 70 percent of Kaliningraders under the age of 30 have never traveled to Russia (Karabeshkin and Wellmann, 2004, p. 39). As a result, Kaliningraders seem to have developed a stronger regional identity than other ethnic Russians, and several scholars have noted a nascent "Kaliningrad" or "Baltic" identity, especially among younger residents (Matthes, 2002; Andreychuk and Gavrilina, 2004, pp. 184–185; 2008, pp. 24–25; Misiunas, 2004, p. 398; Brodersen, 2007, p. 94–96; Karpenko, 2008, p. 130). This identity is distinct from, but not necessarily in opposition to, being Russian; in a sense it is being "Russians with a difference" (Berger, 2010a, p. 361).

This has found concrete expression in grassroots movements to document, preserve, or restore elements of Kaliningrad's German heritage (Myers, 2002). Viewed with contempt by Soviet officials, the ruined cathedral and castle have become objects of increased local interest. After standing decades as a ruin, the cathedral was restored during the 1990s. Several medieval gates in the city were restored during the 2000s and most prominent German buildings now enjoy legal protection. Increasing use of the word "Kenig" to reference Kaliningrad, especially common among younger residents, alludes to this German heritage and its offer of distinctiveness within the broader Russian cultural domain (Oldberg, 2000, pp. 276, 281; Matthes, 2002; Misiunas, 2004, pp. 398–399).

There have also been continuing calls to rebuild Königsberg's medieval castle. Despite difficult economic times since 2008, reconstruction appears to enjoy significant public support. Putin previously pledged government funding and the regional government announced plans for a referendum on the matter, although financial troubles seem to have arisen.[22] This renewed interest in historical architecture parallels debates concerning place names in the region. Some residents advocate restoring the previous German names. Kaliningrad would again become Königsberg, or perhaps its literal Russian equivalent of Kenigsberg, while others have proposed entirely new names, like Kantgrad (Oldberg, 2000, p. 276; Karabeshkin and Wellmann, 2004, pp. 34–40; Misiunas, 2004, p. 399). The eventual renaming of Kaliningrad appears plausible, because Mikhail Kalinin had relatively few achievements and no specific connection with the region. Two other cities previously named after him, Korolyov and Tver', were already renamed in the 1990s. The sustained nature of local engagements with German history, even predating the Soviet collapse when the area was closed to visitors, suggests deeper issues of cultural identity and territorial attachment beyond the simple promotion of tourism.

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[22]On funding and other problems encountered in the restoration of iconic buildings and other structures in nearby St. Petersburg, see Trumbull (2010).

Table 1. Total, Russian, and German Populations of Kaliningrad, 1939–2010

Year	Total	Russians	Germans	Other[a]
1939[b]	1,113,281	n.a.	1,033,220[c]	80,061
1959[d]	610,885	469,771	n.a.[e]	141,114
1979	807,985	632,717	n.a.	175,268
1989	881,211	683,563	1,307	196,341
2002	955,449	786,885	8,340	160,224
2010	941,424	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

[a]Includes Poles, Lithuanians, as well as Germans (in 1959 and 1979), among other groups (e.g., Ukrainians and Belorussians after World War II).
[b]Population of German subregions (*kreise*) of Ostpreussen (East Prussia) that became Kaliningrad Oblast.
[c]German population in 1939 is an estimate based on the population reporting Protestant religious affiliation in the May 17, 1939 census (Rademacher, 2006). Although not all Germans were Protestant, in the vast majority religious affiliation provides a reasonable proxy for a determination of the relative size of the German versus non-German populations in the nine kreise and two cities (Königsberg and Tilsit) that found themselves in Kaliningrad in their entirety and the six kreise located there only in part (40 to 80 percent) in 1945.
[d]Population numbers for the year 1959 differ in various sources. Some list the number of Russians in Kaliningrad Oblast as 473,861 and the total population as 611,000. The numbers provided here derive from Kabuzan's (2009) work, drawing on *Arkhiv Instituta Etnologii i Antropologii RAN*, Fond. Perepisi 1959 g. Delo. Kaliningradskaya oblast, L. 1-2.
[e]The few German residents of Kaliningrad Oblast remaining after World War II were unlikely to confess their German heritage, but the ones who did likely were listed under the category of "other" during the 1959 and 1979 Soviet censuses.
Sources: Compiled by authors from Statistischen Reichsamt, 1943; TsSU SSSR, 1961, pp. 34–35; 1962, pp. 20–21; 1984, p. 94; Goskomstat SSSR, 1992, p. 9; Vserossiyskaya, 2004, 2011; Rademacher, 2006; and Kabuzan, 2009, 78–82, 143.

The official response to these cultural developments has been cautious and inconsistent. Reflecting its emphasis on sovereignty and hard security, the government's response is tentatively supportive as long as Kaliningrad's current cultural "Russianness" is not undermined. Paralleling suspicions toward German investors during the 1990s, the arrival of ethnic German migrants from Central Asia seemed to portend waning Russian cultural identity in Kaliningrad. In an effort to avert possible Germanization, the oblast and local governments banned the use of foreign words in advertising and street signs, as well as any return to German place names (Oldberg, 2000, pp. 278–279, 2002, p. 159; Adelaja, 2008). Kaliningrad did experience a net positive migration exceeding 100,000 persons between 1991 and 1999, but most of these migrants were ethnic Russians (Zverev, 2007, p. 10). Ethnic German migration may have increased Kaliningrad's total German population to over 40,000, but the vast majority of these migrants eventually continued to Germany. The ethnic distribution of the oblast's population is given in Table 1.

More recently, economically disadvantaged groups from various parts of the former Soviet sphere have moved to Kaliningrad seeking employment in the industrial sector or through illicit activities. As a result, by the mid-2000s, perhaps as little as 43 percent of Kaliningrad's population was born in the oblast. This likely influenced the government's decision to designate Kaliningrad as a target area for the resettlement of ethnic Russians from

abroad to maintain Russian predominance within the oblast (Zverev, 2007, p. 10; Emeliyanova 2008; Rybakovskii, 2010, p. 48). The recent construction of a new Orthodox cathedral prominently located on Kaliningrad's main city square symbolizes the Russian character of the city and serves to counterbalance restoration efforts involving the Germanic cathedral and castle. There was also a revival of government-sponsored research to prove that Slavic settlement of Kaliningrad pre-dated the Teutonic invasion and hence the area belonged to Russia's national territory (Oldberg, 2000, p. 279; Karabeshkin and Wellmann, 2004, pp. 44–45; Misiunas, 2004, p. 397).

Two municipal anniversaries during the mid-2000s highlighted this balancing between celebrating the region's German past while affirming its Russian present and future. Significant public debate emerged as to whether Königsberg's 750th anniversary in 2005 should be celebrated and if so how. Kaliningraders seemed generally supportive of the idea, but Moscow worried the event could encourage those seeking autonomy or independence. Eventually, authorities expressed support for celebrating "750 Years of Kaliningrad," rather than Königsberg, to be followed by celebrations in 2006 marking the 60th anniversary of Kaliningrad (Karabeshkin and Wellmann, 2004, pp. 29–34; Misiunas, 2004, p. 397; Berger, 2010b, pp. 350–352). Geopolitical calculations were also evident, as German and French leaders were invited but not those of Lithuania or Poland.

Despite some movement toward more inclusive approaches to Kaliningrad's history, the centralization of political power in Moscow and Russia's tendency to prioritize hard security perspectives has limited political and economic cross-border cooperation. It has also limited possibilities for governmental and non-governmental cooperation on cultural and social issues. Polish NGOs, for example, have found collaboration difficult with their counterparts in Kaliningrad. The Polish NGOs are generally more proactive and encouraged by the EU and Polish governments to pursue local or regional cross-border objectives. In contrast, NGOs in Kaliningrad tend to be rather reactive and steered by federal authorities to focus on national priorities (Gänzle et al., 2008, p. 5; Sagan, 2010, pp. 447–449).

The renaming of Kaliningrad State University as Immanuel Kant Russian University of Kaliningrad in 2005 suggests a willingness to share the historical-narrative space. President Dmitry Medvedev's recent order (President of Russia, 2010) further renaming Kaliningrad's university as the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University also suggests greater willingness to identify at a regional scale at least in educational matters. Yet these re-namings contrast with official policy regarding the EU's Bologna process, which promotes international mobility for students and faculty by standardizing state university systems. Federal authorities have selectively implemented certain Bologna elements while clearly trying to preserve national traditions (Gänzle et al., 2009, pp. 542–543). Similar tendencies have been noted regarding cooperation concerning environmental, social, and health policies (Berlin and Mestdag, 2008; Dykhanov, 2008; Müntel, 2008).

The appointment of Georgiy Boos as oblast governor in 2005 signaled Putin's intent to exert greater federal control and prioritize linkages between Kaliningrad and Russia. Yet Kaliningraders retain some ability to influence the federal center. For example, local grievances are often combined with rhetoric emphasizing Kaliningrad's marginality, vulnerability, or even secessionist potential. Playing on Moscow's existing geopolitical anxieties, such language provides a means to gain special concessions, benefits, or status within the federal system (Browning and Joenniemi, 2004; Berger, 2010a, p. 352). This was evident in public protests throughout 2010 that aroused considerable concern among federal officials, ultimately derailing Boos' prospects for a second term (Schwirtz, 2010). This contrasted with similar local protests at Russia's other territorial extreme, Vladivostok, where federal

authorities responded forcibly by dispatching additional riot police and security personnel. Although attracting significant international media attention, Putin's allies continue to occupy nearly all meaningful official positions and Kaliningrad basically functions as a normal oblast within Russia's highly centralized federal system. As a result, it is likely that trans-border cooperation and regionalism on cultural, educational, and environmental matters will remain limited to pragmatic efforts designed to address specific problems.

CONCLUDING NOTE

The collapse of the Soviet Union radically altered Kaliningrad's relative location, as well as its significance in Russia's domestic and foreign affairs. These changes initiated a period of uncertainty, ambiguity, and redefinition within Kaliningrad. Scholars, politicians, and journalists debated whether Kaliningrad would continue functioning as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" projecting Russian power westward, or perhaps evolve into an "assembly workshop" bridging Eurasian markets (e.g., see Kuznetsova and Mau, 2002). As Russia assumed a more assertive stance in international affairs, observers viewed Kaliningrad as a test case for relations between Russia and its neighbors on a range of issues. The general consensus was that Kaliningrad would illustrate, and perhaps even stimulate, Russia's willingness or ability to adopt more "European" approaches to foreign policy, federalism, and cross-border cooperation (Gänzle et al., 2008).

After 20 years as an exclave, projections of Kaliningrad's ability to serve as such a conduit appear to have been overly optimistic. Russia's continuing focus on maintaining sovereignty over Kaliningrad leads it to view most foreign and domestic policy decisions from a hard security perspective. This approach has tended to be generally incompatible with the EU's emphasis on addressing problems though soft security approaches so that prospects for Kaliningrad's meaningful participation in the deepening networks of cross-border cooperation in the Baltic region are limited. This tends to create a certain degree of apathy, indifference, or incomprehension within the EU toward Kaliningrad, with the region's exclave status largely responsible for its partial political, economic, and cultural isolation from Russia and its EU neighbors. As well as Russia's policies for the exclave, the future status and prosperity of Kaliningrad also depends on the nature of EU policies towards the territories on its margins, that also include Ukraine, the Balkan states, and Turkey. EU border policies have toughened significantly in the past half-decade and initiatives designed to build cross-border relations have been scaled back. Whether enthusiastic plans for reducing the "cosmos-chaos" divide that appeared in the wake of the entry of Poland to the EU in 2004 will be reinvigorated depends in large part on recovery from the deep recession that has affected the wider area since 2008. Kaliningrad therefore does not control its own destiny but, as for much of its checkered history, remains a pawn of more powerful geopolitical entities and forces.

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