

The Baltic Sea Region  
in the European Union:  
Reflections on Identity,  
Soft-Security and Marginality

“The Baltic Sea Area Studies: Northern Dimension of Europe”  
Working Papers edited by Prof. Dr. Bernd Henningsen

financed by the Fifth Framework Programme for Research  
and Technological Development of the European Union

Volume 8  
Fabrizio Tassinari (ed.)

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© 2003 by *BaltSeaNet*  
Layout by *BaltSeaNet*  
Typeset by *Robert Smoliński*  
Cover design by *Andrzej Taranek*  
ISSN: 1642-865X

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Gdańsk–Berlin 2003



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## Abbreviations

BSR	Baltic Sea Region
BSSSC	Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Co-operation
CBSS	Council of the Baltic Sea States
CSR	Common Strategy on Russia
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ENGO	Environmental Non-Governmental Organisation
ESI	Environmental Sustainability Index
EU	European Union
FEZ	Free Economic Zone
GRID	Global Resources Information Database
HELCOM	Helsinki Commission
ICBSF	International Commission on the Baltic Sea Fishing
IFI	International Financial Institution
IGO	International Governmental Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International Relations
ISPA	Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession
JTDP	Joint Trans-national Development Programme
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
ND	Northern Dimension
NDEP	Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PCA	Partnership and Co-operation Agreement
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Action for the Restructuring of the Economy
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
TACIS	Technical Assistance on the Commonwealth of Independent States
UBC	Union of the Baltic Cities
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VASAB 2010	Vision & Strategies around the Baltic 2010
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## Preface

This working paper is the result of a panel discussion entitled “Regional Constructions in Search of Identity: the Case of the Baltic Sea Area” promoted by BaltSeaNet. The discussion took place within the framework of a special convention organised by the Association for the Studies of Nationalities (ASN) and the Centre for Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans (CECOB) at Bologna University entitled: “Nationalism Identities and Regional Co-operation: Compatibilities and Incompatibilities” that was held in Forlì, Italy on the 6th of June 2002.

The panel aimed at providing an overview of the Baltic Sea/ Northern European regionalism, presenting the most defining aspects of this complex phenomenon. The articles presented in this working paper represent revised versions of the contributions given by the authors in that occasion.

All the articles share a common point of departure, in the attempt of interpreting a various range of concomitant phenomena occurring around the Baltic Sea and their relations with the processes connected with European integration.

At the conceptual level, the contributions read this multifaceted reality through the lenses of critical paradigms of international relations (IR) theory. By doing so, the theoretical spectrum of analysis of the specific dynamics that are discussed in each article is expanded and it opens up to a variety of agents and structures that are usually neglected or underplayed by traditional rationalist paradigms, primarily focussing on the state as the main political actor in the international arena, and on its survival as the main rationale of IR.

The applicability of these critical approaches is justified by the peculiarities of the political environment in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). This introduces a second common denominator of a more empirical nature that the contributions presented in this working paper share.

The nature and the developments of the political phenomena occurring in Northern Europe/Baltic Sea area over the past decade have broken fresh ground not only to the theoretical and conceptual thinking, but also to more empirically oriented assessments. With this respect, the Baltic Sea area is a valuable source of inspiration when reflecting upon the configuration of the future European Union (EU).

The heterogeneity and the complexity of the political interaction around the rim has functioned in many ways as a sort of experimental testing ground for the enlarged EU. With this respect, the contributions in this volume are not only united by their focus on different dynamics within the Baltic Sea area but also they can all be inscribed into the wider debate on the role and potentials of the Northern European space in the enlarged EU.

The working paper opens with the contribution by Nicola Catellani, who is a PhD Candidate at the Department of International Relations at the London School of Economics. He tackles the challenging theme of regional identity. He frames the conceptual background of the identity discourse as a dichotomy between on the one hand the *Gesellschaft*, understood as the existence of a social unity prior to the formation of a community. On the other hand, he introduces the concept of *Gemeinschaft*, which is based instead on the social contract. He first applies this dialectics to the processes leading to the formation of a European identity. Then he discusses the image and the reality of identity processes in the Northern periphery of Europe, particularly focusing on the institutional outcomes. He concludes confronting the two dynamics and their interdependence.

The second article is by Fabrizio Tassinari and Leena-Kaarina Williams. The former is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Political Sciences, University of Copenhagen. The latter is a PhD Candidate at the Institute for Northern European Studies at the Humboldt

University, Berlin. Both are BaltSeaNet Young Researchers. The main hypothesis of their article is to consider the concept of soft security as a major agent of regional aggregation in the BSR. With this respect, they assume that the region remains part of wider EU policy-frameworks but succeeds also in developing autonomous regional strategies. The authors first provide the roots of the conceptual discourse on soft-security by inscribing it in the newly emerged concepts of IR theory. Then they apply their theoretical assumptions to the case of one specific 'soft' security issue, that of the environmental co-operation, to the case of the BSR.

The working paper is concluded by the contribution of Christopher S. Browning and Pertti Joenniemi, respectively Research Fellow and Senior Research Fellow at the Danish Institute for International Studies (IIS) in Copenhagen. The aim of the paper is to try to illustrate and account for how it is that since the end of the Cold War Kaliningrad has moved towards a position of subjectivity and constitutive power in European politics, *vis-à-vis* Moscow and Brussels. The paper starts by utilising a distinction between peripheries and margins that has been made by Noel Parker. Taking these concepts as ideal types, peripheries are defined as the largely subordinate and voiceless fringes of a single entity. In contrast, margins are understood as being self-conscious (and often 'contested') spaces in-between two or more centres that as a result are possessed of a certain amount of influence, power and subjectivity. Pushing Parker's approach further, and using Kaliningrad as a case study, the paper posits a number of variables and preconditions that will affect whether disenfranchised peripheries will be able to escape their subordinate position to embrace the more empowered position of a margin.

Fabrizio Tassinari,  
Copenhagen

January 2003

NICOLA CATELLANI

## EUropean Identity-Building and the Northern Periphery

On the eve of the next round of the enlargement process, the European Union (EU) is not only faced with issues pertaining to institutional reforms but it is also facing problems related to the range of support it enjoys among its own citizens.

A key issue in the debate concerning the legitimacy and the identification of the EU's citizens with the institutions in Brussels is a development of a 'European identity'.

This paper will look upon the process of identity-building on the European level and will compare it with the process of identity-building that has been going on at the Northern periphery of the European Union, in particular in the Baltic Sea area.

The key question pointed out in this paper relates to whether there is a link between the difficulties that the EU is facing in grounding a EUropean identity and the relatively good results of the attempts of developing a Baltic<sup>1</sup> identity.

The debate about the European identity and the conceptual frame within which such a debate takes place, lead us to point out that a key difference between the European and Baltic identity rests on how history has been successfully used in the process of identity-building. In particular, it will be pointed out that a clearly defined vision of the common past of a Community, be it Baltic or European, is a central component of a process of identity-building.

Although the main focus of this work will be on identity, it is evident that the implications of the identity-building process stretch to

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1 In the context of this paper the term 'Baltic' is referred to the whole Baltic Sea Area, unless otherwise specified.

the institution-building process that is taking place both on the European and regional level. The interrelation between the identity-building and ‘institution-building’ processes are particularly marked on the European level where the weakness of the European identity is reflected into an institutional weakness, in terms of legitimacy, particularly for those bodies, like the EU Commission, representing the whole Union and the *esprit communautaire*.

### Framing the Debate on European Identity

European identity is a controversial topic that has received a considerable amount of academic attention. The plurality of views existing about the very concept of identity, on the one hand, and the relative hybrid nature of the European Union as a form of supranational political authority on the other, have contributed to the creation of a body of literature that seems to have been focusing mainly on the essence of European identity, i.e. the key question has often been whether there is a European identity and, if so, what it is about.

Here, however, attention will be on the actual use of primordialist and constructivist elements in the debate about European identity, and more in general, about the future shape of the European Union.

The basic distinction existing in the debate about European identity revolves around two different typologies of identity: the one based on an idea of *Gesellschaft* and the other based on the concept of *Gemeinschaft*. Ferdinand Tönnies underlined that while the concept of *Gesellschaft* is based on a sense of belonging to a community that shares the same values and norms, and therefore it is a concept based on ‘a priori social unity’, the idea of *Gemeinschaft* is based on a ‘social contract’ that relates each member of the community to one another, but which is intrinsically constructed (Tönnies 1974).

As pointed out by Peter van Ham, on the basis of these basic concepts, two main views have developed at the edges of the conceptual spectrum of identity formation. On the one hand, there are those “that see national identity and nationalism as primordial to human beings in the sense that all belong as if ‘by nature’ to some ethnic community”.

On the other side instead are “those who consider these notions as ephemeral, as manifestations of a modern, state centric era now drawing to an end” (Van Ham 2001, 227).

The key element that differentiates the two approaches is whether such sense of belonging to the European Community and the norms and values that regulate it are taken as given or if they are ‘constructed’, created through social interaction.

According to the primordialist conception, nations, states and nationalism are the central framework of reference for understanding and creating a European identity. In particular, one major scholar supporting this view, Anthony Smith, has argued that a central component of identity formation is the existence ‘a priori’ of a collective national ‘memory’ (Smith 1995). According to Smith, a collective memory is necessary to construct boundaries around the nation and therefore to define it. Consequently, one could derive that exclusion is elevated to a constitutive principle of national identity that is developed by drawing against the distinction between the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’. The differentiation between what is in and what is out – i.e. either you belong or you do not – emerges in sum as the key dichotomy on which a national identity is developed and strengthened.

Therefore, in the same way as nation states have their national identity because of a common memory, a truly European identity could materialise by reclaiming the link with a European community of the past that has always been there, or in other words by reclaiming a sort of ‘Europeanness’ given by nature.

Such an approach is reflected in the use of symbols and myths resembling those, which have been created by member states in order to reinforce the sense of belonging of their citizens.

The other argument holds that national identities, as well as the nation state itself, are political and social constructs that have been functional to a particular era, the one of the Westphalian state system, that is near to its end. National identity appears as ephemeral and constantly open to modification, it is in sum not something based on

a mythical or sedimentary essence (in Van Ham 2001, 229). In order to support this thesis it is argued that the nation-state as a model of political authority is in historical terms rather recent while for example empires have been characterising much of history.

Most importantly, the notion of empire rests largely on 'an idea' or 'a principle' rather than on a territory. This makes it, according to constructivists, a model more in tune with an era of globalisation characterised by 'a continent-size interdependent market regulated by one, clear set of economic and political rules and values'. This conception of identity reflects a post-modern cosmopolitan vision of Europe, eclectic in essence, based on 'a pastiche of cultures, rather a single, specific one' (cf. Smith 1995). The fact that a European identity along these lines is based mainly upon the loss of centrality of nation states reveals perhaps a key weakness of this approach in its purest version that is the fact of being negatively constructed i.e. against nation-state as a principle of organising political space and identity.

Van Ham himself points out that the process of development of a European identity does not stand somewhere in the middle of these two extremes of the conceptual continuum but at the same time it is hard to avoid picking up on elements emerging from both approaches (Van Ham 2000, 10-11).

If we try to project the debate into the framework of the European integration process, what emerges is a substantially clear-cut picture, especially if we take a Brussels' point of view. At first sight, the predominant approach that seems to be guiding the processes of identity formation is one that resembles rather clearly a process of national identity.

Since the 1980s, and largely parallel to the deepening of the European integration process, the introduction of a Common Market and the elaboration of the EU Treaties (Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice), there have been attempts to create some kind of shared elements, a possible embryo of a sense of common belonging to a single community. In this respect the creation of symbols like for example the EU flag and, more recently and certainly most importantly, the Euro should be

considered as founding elements of a European identity. Along the same line, the recent elaboration of the Charter of Fundamental Rights could be interpreted as a symbolic act that by defining the basic rights recognises and protects all over the territory of the Union, strengthens the sense of belonging to a single community of values and by contrast stresses on the difference between those who is part of the community and the rest (Council of the European Union 2001).

On a more general level, the procedures and workings of the European Union, and this emerges very clearly in the framework of the enlargement process and in the external relations with the neighbouring areas, reproduce *de facto* a similar pattern by stressing constantly on the difference between what is in and what is out in the exclusive modernist terms associated with nation states. This contributes to strengthening the division between the inside and outside or, in other words, between the self and the other. In other words, the EU aims indirectly at reinforcing its own identity by not letting the 'outsiders' to influence its own internal decision-making procedure.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, is the process related to the creation of a Europe dominated by a primordial understanding of identity? Even if at first sight the concrete behaviour of the institutional actors might suggest that to be true, a closer look reveals a picture that is certainly more multifaceted.

Despite the wide use of primordial symbols in the rhetoric of the EU, one could argue that the leading actors of the European integration process are as a matter of fact constructivists since they realise that while constructing the Union institutionally, they are contributing in the same time to a process of an identity construction. The question perhaps might be, as Neumann highlighted (Neumann 1998), that approaching European identity as if it was primordial through the use of symbols and myths is necessary for the institutions representing the whole Community in order to be able to construct the questioned identity. Talking openly about the construction of the European identity

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2 For a more general discussion about the construction of the European identity see Browning 2001a.

implies attaching to the EU some artificial flavour that could further undermine the legitimacy of the Union especially from the perspective of institutions like the Commission and the Parliament.

Furthermore, one should underline that in the framework of the EU the actors that contribute to the process of construction of a collective identity are many and often express distinct sensibilities and reflect therefore the complex supranational nature of the organisation. When it comes to a definition of the European identity the most active actors are the institutions representing the whole community, i.e. the Commission and to a lesser extent the European Parliament, and the member states perceive the creation of the European identity.

Because of its very essence and mission, i.e. to represent the interest of the whole European Union, the Commission's approach to the construction of the European identity seems to have been permeated by an approach, which firmly roots in the objective to construct a European Union resembling a European state, a sort of continental-wide reflection of its members. The centrality it has acquired, as an institution, in fostering the integration process, its administrative structure divided according to functional areas mirroring those of national ministries, as well as the top-down approach that permeates its vision of policy-implementation are all elements that frame the Commission in a sort of self-perception as an embryonic government of a future EU super state. It is not a coincidence that the most successful tools of the EU – the European Monetary Union as well as the educational Erasmus programme – have been conceived to foster the European identity and to create the first 'Europeans', and both originated from the Commission. In other words, the idea of creating founding symbols and myths seems to be largely reflected in the stands of the Commission and the Parliament and is also a result of their institutional role.

If one instead looks at the governments of the member states of the EU, the primordialist/constructivist question becomes more marginal. In fact, it can be argued that while on the one hand national governments are engaged in the construction of EU – or regional identities, they are in the same time tend to protect their own national identities from this new identities they contribute to create.

When it comes to the process of definition of the European identity, the question is not primordial or constructed but rather seems to be a creation of an allegiance towards a kind of European Union in which member states retain their centrality and in which a European identity coexists but remains 'secondary' vis-à-vis the national ones.<sup>3</sup> The discourses of several national governments, the United Kingdom, France, Spain, and Italy for example, in the framework of the debate about the future of Europe offer a good example of this approach.

The direction the debate is taking seems to be indicative of the fact that a large part of the member states governments do seem to envisage a European Union in their discourses, both institutionally and indirectly, in terms of identity preserving the centrality of nation states.

Summing up, it can be argued that in the current debate about the construction of the European identity the direction the process is taking is still rather unclear. Despite the presence of elements pertaining both to the primordial and to the ephemeral conception of identity, there seem to be two main approaches that are distinctively emerging in a rather conflicting fashion. In fact, while on the one hand there is an attempt to create a basic set of symbols, images upon which a nation-state-like modern identity at the EU level is to build, and which would hardly cohabit with strong 'regional' identities, on the other there seems to be an approach that favours the creation of a European identity relying on various levels of identification and substantially based on a multiple, or 'concentric circles' of allegiance (in Smith 1993, 129).

These two approaches are somehow conflicting but the outcome is not likely to be an either/or one. So far the attempts to bring about a European identity through primordial elements, have provided mixed if not negative results. The European identity along modern lines is in sum still far from being a reality. A crucial element for shaping and

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3 One should point out that not all member states of the EU approach the issue in a similar fashion. As a matter of fact, the distinctions existing in terms of visions about the future of Europe are rather marked.

influencing the development of the European identity with modern or post-modern characteristic will be certainly the strength of the identities that have been developing after the end of the Cold War in the border-areas of the EU in parallel to the European one. Among them there is one that has been acquiring increasing solidity: a Baltic identity. The essence of this identity and the subjectivity it will acquire are going to be, as we will see below, crucial elements that will certainly play a role in directing the process of identity formation on the continental level.

### Emerging Identities at the Northern Periphery of the EU

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union opened up a new political space at the periphery of the European Union. Political cooperative processes have been initiated with a goal to bridge the economic and social divide which resulted from nearly fifty years of East-West confrontation.

The Baltic Sea region has been one of the first European Union's peripheries in which regional cooperation flourished on several institutional levels. On sub-regional level cities and sub-national administrative units began establishing political and economic links across the sea that had divided them in the period of the Iron Curtain. Important results, however, were also obtained on the intergovernmental level with the creation of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS).<sup>4</sup>

The organisation, launched in 1992 on a German-Danish initiative, was developing consistently throughout the 1990s and has moved from an essentially confidence building role between Russia and the Baltic States to actively embracing a large number of areas ranging from environment to fight against organised crime.<sup>5</sup>

Together with the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the CBSS is today the only regional organisation in Europe that counts among its members

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4 For a Russian perspective see Uspensky and Komissarov 1993.

5 For a more detailed overview of the activities of the organization see: CBSS homepage

the European Commission.<sup>6</sup> In parallel with its increasing influence and scope, the organisation has been incrementally involved in the activities of the European Union. As a matter of fact, the organisation has been able to draw the attention of the EU to the region, and in particular of the Commission, through the Baltic Sea Region Initiative, the sole case in Europe in which the Commission has launched an initiative in the framework of a regional organisation and that has recognised a complementary role to an 'outsider'. More recently the organisation has further increased its involvement in the activities of the EU through the role it has acquired in the implementation of the Northern Dimension, a policy framework that the EU has developed to deal with (North West) Russia and the candidate countries on the Southern shore of the Baltic Sea.<sup>7</sup>

In sum, the CBSS is a growing organisation that is increasingly acquiring importance in the framework of the EU and its activities in the region especially in the light of the enlargement process.

An aspect that has been growing in importance parallel to the cooperative process that is taking place in the Baltic Sea area was, and still is, related to the attempt to construct a Baltic regional identity.

The origins of the process of identity creation are largely entangled with the concrete objectives of the Scandinavian, as well as German, policy makers. There seems in fact to be a close link between the political objective to establish cooperative ties across the Baltic and the need of creating a sense or a form of common belonging to a single community. In other words one could argue that, at least in its early stages, the process of identity creation in the Baltic was largely connected to the need to justify the ongoing cooperation that was flourishing in the region.

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6 Despite the EU Commission is one of the signatory parties of the founding declaration of the CBSS, there is still the question of whether the Commission is or is not a full member

7 For an analysis of the CBSS and its activities see Joenniemi, 1999 and 1999a; Catellani 2001.

A common denominator of the Nordic discourses on the Baltic Sea cooperation has been the stress put upon the cultural, economic and political links that it is argued have existed in the region for centuries and a constant reference to the Hansa or Pomor<sup>8</sup> (Tunander 1994, 31) as symbols of interdependence and unity across the region. The common and unifying elements of history are highlighted in the attempt of creating a sort of collective sense of belonging (Browning 2001). This is clearly a primordial element that has been used to bring about a constructed identity.

From this early and loosely constructed sense of common belonging to a single community, the process has certainly developed characteristic of identity formation more similar in a way to those used by nation states to strengthen national identities. However, the regional identity that is being created in the Baltic Sea area has been assuming rather different traits from the traditional national identities as it does not seem to be in a position to challenge them. A reason behind the relative harmlessness of the Baltic identity vis-à-vis the national identities is nested in the fact that the regional identity has increasingly become a part of the national ones. The Swedish, Danish and to a less extent Norwegian identities are elevating the regional identity to an increasingly important element of self-definition.

Indeed, a common, even if remote, past on which to build symbols and myths of a collective memory does exist in the Baltic Sea area. Such a past most importantly reflects a widely shared set of values and norms. The Hansa in particular seems to be the image of the past to which the large majority of national discourses recur. It should also be pointed out that there seems to be a sort of incongruity between the employment of a representation that was a network of cities, a post-modern<sup>9</sup> one in essence, and its use in the framework of a process based on both discourse and acts aimed the creation of an identity

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8 Pomor refers to a trade network between Russian and Norwegian merchants in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

9 The network as a form of organisation of political space recurs often in the post-modern literature as a key theme together with the importance of socio-economic and political links emerging regardless of state borders.

along primordial lines. The creation in 1997 of an institution focusing on cooperation in ‘safeguarding and developing’ the common cultural heritage in the Baltic Sea region indicates in fact that efforts are not only discourse-related but have also a rather active and concrete side.<sup>10</sup>

An element that characterises the cooperative constellation emerging in the Baltic Sea area, and that has also important implications in terms of identity-building, is the inclusion of Russia as an equal partner in the cooperative dynamics of the region. The role and the responsibilities of Russia in the CBSS represent an exception in the context of the wider post-Cold War relationship between Russia and EU-Europe.<sup>11</sup> Due to the weaknesses of Russian economic system, the relationship between the EU and Russia has always been unbalanced and rather based on aid-like dynamics. What formally is a partnership, in practice is an unbalanced relation in which the EU is transferring resources in order to support the transformation of Russia into a solid democracy based on a market economy. This element is openly reflected in the EU discourse on Russia that is characterised by a constant identification of Russia as ‘the Other’, or in other words as an external element against which the European identity is strengthened and to a certain extent defined. As Christopher Browning pointed out: “with EU-Russian relations in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the Common Strategy conducted through high level consultations, summits and regular committees, an institutional framework has been established of mutual recognition that re-enforces each other’s geopolitical subjectivity in modern terms” (Browning 2001a, 22). At the regional level what seems to be emerging from the regional discourses and narratives linked to the cooperation in the Baltic Sea area is the construction of an inclusive, non hierarchic, identity in which Russia is fully part of the ‘Self’, and which departs from the EU discourse, as well as practice, of exclusion (Wennerster 1999, 272–296). However, as Browning has argued, “the underlying narratives of the new region building (even the post-modern ones) have a propensity to reproduce a similar pattern of exclusion and [...] ultimately despite their positive rhetoric remain imbued in a hierarchical discourse of Western superiority” (Browning 2001, 48).

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10 See Baltic Sea Heritage Cooperation 1999.

11 Cf. the contribution by Browning and Joenniemi in this volume.

More recently, the launch of the EU Northern Dimension initiative in the framework of the external relations of the EU, has been followed by the emergence of a new constructed image: the North, intended as a post-modern marker capable of expressing a political subjectivity of its own in the context of a 'regionalised' Europe (Joenniemi 2002).

To a large extent, the North as a constructed concept is a product of the Finnish academic circles and its link with the Northern Dimension, a Finnish initiative, might be an indication of the fact that the North expresses to a large extent a Finnish vision of the North that seems to be in some sort of competition with the Baltic identity which instead seems to be a product or rather a reflection of Swedish and Danish efforts.

Despite of the fact that the main argument in presenting 'the North' as a subject is revolving around the organisation of political space, the concept is certainly loaded with an identity.

So far the debate about the North has been to a large extent limited to the Scandinavian academic circles. The notion of North has not been so widespread among the political elites in the same way as the concept of Baltic cooperation and identity has been. A reason can be found in the fact that North as a symbol is by definition fluid and defined mainly in geographical terms.

But is there a common memory on which a 'Northern' identity be constructed? The answer is to a certain extent similar to what we saw above when discussing of the EU. The absence of a clearly identifiable and shared past, like the Hansa period in the case of the Baltic identity, makes it more difficult for actors involved in the process of identity-building to use primordial myths and symbols in the construction of a Northern identity. In other words, it could be argued that one of the reasons why the Northern Dimension of the EU has failed to catch people's imaginary in the same way as the Baltic Sea 'identity' has, is related to fact that there is no past to reclaim and as a consequence of that the focus has been on the geographic/spatial element.

The North does challenge the construction of a European identity along state-like/modern lines since it aims at offering a competing representation of Europeanness but, as Pertti Joenniemi and Marko Lehti point out, at the same time the North “aspires to a certain inclusive standing, although without fully abandoning its traditional peripherality and its ‘real self’”(Joenniemi and Lehti 2001, 48).

From a certain point of view, the Baltic and the Northern identity coincide in the sense that both tend to overcome the modern division between insiders and outsiders and both aspire to a stand of their own. However, the two main elements that seem to differentiate them are, on the one hand, the degree of inclusiveness and, on the other, the narratives that construct the two images.

Summing up, the creation of a Baltic identity has been, and still is, a process that embeds differing constitutive patterns. On the one hand, the process has relied largely on the creation of a sense of belonging to a single community by recurring to images of the past. On the other, the inclusive element of the identity does seem to be softened and is not challenging the processes of identification taking place at nation-state level and at the EU level.

### Conclusions

As it has been shown in this paper, identity-building both at European and regional level is an issue that cannot really be detached from the political process relating to it.

This paper has looked upon two examples of identity-building processes: the European one and the one unfolding in the Northern periphery of the continent. What do these processes tell us about identity and what do they tell us about the actual political process underlying identity formation?

Two elements in particular have emerged from this analysis:

First of all, when discussing identity-building the dichotomy primordial/ephemeral seems to be rather misleading since it does not help us much in understanding the link between the identity-building

processes and the political dynamics underlying them. Both at EU and at regional level, i.e. in the Baltic Sea area, the political actors are aware of being part of process of identity construction, artificial in essence, but in all cases they have tried to adopt symbols and myths which are primordial. Furthermore, the creation of self-other dichotomy is implicit in all the identity-building processes described above. It is therefore difficult to talk about a purely ephemeral approach to identity without losing touch with the reality of the ongoing political process of integration/cooperation in Europe. What can be argued instead is that the construction of 'the Other' is an integrant part of the most identity-building processes underway both at the 'core' and at the periphery of Europe. Also in the Northern and Baltic case there is indeed a construction of 'the Other', even if in more gentle terms than at EU level.

The second, and perhaps most important, point concerns the use of the collective past as key element on which to construct a 'new' identity. The failure or better the scarce results of the attempts made by the EU institutions to create a EUropean identity through symbols and the relative positive results obtained in the construction of a Baltic identity open questions related to the (successful) use of history. The images of Hansa and Pomor have been effective because, on the one hand, they are clearly defined images of a Community recalled in the imagination of the people of the region and the symbolism they incorporate is shared by most of the actors involved in the process both at national and sub-national level. On the other hand, such images reflect an idea in tune with the political message that policy makers of the area have tried to attach to the political process of cooperation they launched. The image of the Hansa is suiting well the present cooperation in the Baltic Sea area since it fosters in substance the idea of a rather open community less centred on the division insider-outsider than, for example, the EU is. The CBSS incarnates this idea (or identity) rather effectively through its rather flexible institutional structure which allows it to operate as a complement of other actors (or identities), be its member states or the EU.

One instead could argue that the EU has difficulties in grounding its identity through history and through the use of primordial elements

similar to those used in the Baltic because such images/elements are problematic (Neumann 1998). The fact is that the EU lacks of a shared image of the past which suits the political aims behind the process of European integration. Is there such an image or symbol?

Some, like Pope John Paul II and former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, have suggested more or less openly that Christianity could be the symbol and the set of values on which to ground the enlarged EU and its identity. However, the recent debate about granting access to Turkey has shown that the political leadership of the EU has not yet decided what the Union itself should be mainly about in cultural and identity terms.

In the same way, the Northern Dimension initiative and its scarce impact in terms of identity-building shows that spatiality, i.e. the creation of an identity not through collective memory but through a sort of allegiance to a space defined geographically, is not sufficient for grounding and constructing a new identity which aspires to be post-modern or ephemeral according to the classification used above.

The debate about identity does not only have 'ephemeral' implications but also leads to some more practical conclusions about the perspective of the current dynamics of integration in Europe.

Given the increasing role that the regional organisations are acquiring, especially in Northern Europe, in managing aspects related to the external and internal policies of the European Union, one might wonder to what extent this increasing role and the enhanced capacity to act in terms of policy coordination of such constellation might influence the process of redefinition of the EU both in terms of institutional reform and identity-building.

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Soft Security in the Baltic Sea Region:  
Environmental Co-operation as a Pilot Project  
for Regional Integration in the Baltic Sea Area<sup>1</sup>

This study aims to explore the newly emerged concepts associated with the so called 'soft security' co-operation which has played a major role in redefining the political space of the Baltic Sea over the last decade, turning the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) into an area of intense co-operation characterised by a mosaic of overlapping institutions, where regional and sub-regional integration is fostering peaceful relations and stability and where a remarkable shift from traditional 'hard' security to 'soft' security issues has taken place.

In the first part of the article, the concept of soft security will be explained and theoretical approaches within the scientific debate will be discussed. The theorisation of soft security as an agent of regional integration within the BSR will then be followed by a case study on environmental co-operation that will demonstrate how soft security co-operation could exemplify future regionalisation strategies around the Baltic Rim.

During the course of the narration, it will become more evident how our observations on soft security and the case of environmental co-operation are meant to justify our more general views on the future perspectives of the BSR with the wider European integration process<sup>2</sup> and on theories of regionalism as such. These arguments derive from two main hypotheses.

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1 The paper is a revised version of the authors' contribution in Hedegård, Lars and Lindström, Bjarne (eds.): *The NEBI Yearbook 2001-2002: North European and Baltic Sea Integration*. Berlin, Springer, forth. 2003. We wish to thank Aino Bannwart, Christopher S. Browning, Pertti Joenniemi, Marko Lehti and Carl-Einar Stålvant for their useful comments.

2 Cf. Catellani's contribution in this volume.

The first hypothesis focuses on a re-interpretation of the chronology of region-building in the BSR, from which a different understanding of the nature of regionalism derives. The spurring of regional politics around the Baltic Sea is traditionally associated to the aftermath of the Soviet Union and thereby to the disruption of the bipolar world order, responsible for erecting ideological and geo-political barriers within the region. Yet, as will be discussed in the second section of this study, environmental co-operation around the Rim dates back the early 1970s.

By unfolding this assumption, our understanding on the centrality of soft-security in the present and future Baltic regional discourse derives. In fact, from this shift in time derives that region-building in a number of soft-security issues has had a steady and regular development over the past three decades – albeit the epochal geopolitical changes that involved the region. Our argument is therefore that a new understanding of regional phenomena in the Baltic Sea area can be constructed by observing how soft security co-operation in the field of environment has developed.

The second argument that will be demonstrated during the course of this study focuses on the innovative contribution that the environment as successful soft-security model can offer to the traditional approaches on regionalism in international relations (IR) theory. As will be clarified below, discourses on regionalism are constructed around the dichotomy ‘top-down’ (regionalisation from ‘above’)/‘bottom-up’ (regionalism from below), which corresponds to the more complex confrontation between rationalist and critical IR paradigms.

This study advocates a possible complementarity of the two components of this dichotomy in the field of soft-security, given that a thoroughgoing synthesis is epistemologically and ontologically not sound. We argue that soft-security can provide the means to achieve this complementarity, which will ultimately provide a framework where the two dimensions can co-exist and even reinforce each other, as the case of the environmental co-operation in the BSR aims to exemplify.

1 'Soft' Security Co-operation in the BSR

*Counting Missiles or Talking Soft Security? The Emergence of New Security Scenarios in the Scientific Debate of the 1990s*

The end of the Cold War brought about a set of new opportunities and ideas for the re-definition of the security agenda within the political and academic discourse of the region. Different 'schools' and political factions debated the possibilities of re-arranging security constellations within the Baltic Sea Region, which with the dissolution of the Soviet Union was made up of a very heterogeneous group of states. This group was constituted by the partly allied and non-allied (and even 'neutral') Nordic Countries and Germany, the newly independent Baltic States and Poland, each of which was clearly heading for NATO-membership as their respective foreign policy debates indicated and Russia, the 'great unknown' of the region with its coastal presence in the Baltic Sea now reduced to the Leningrad and Kaliningrad *oblasti*<sup>3</sup>.

The new agenda associated with the concept of soft security opened up the traditional military security debate to a wider framework and conception of security. Central to this was a move away from state-centred thinking and increasing consideration of other issues such as environmental threats, and social, political and economic risks as equally important for stabilising the regional security agenda.

It would be exaggerated to argue that all changed with the end of the Cold War. Already during the 1960s these issues had slowly but steadily become increasingly 'securitised' in the 'West'. In particular, constantly rising population levels were seen as a threat to both natural resources and the climate. At the same time, the economy was liberalising and globalising at an even faster pace which too was understood as entailing a certain security dimension. These developments naturally gained more importance as the prevailing military security agenda of the post war era progressively contracted and gave more room to these new, 'soft' security issues.

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3 Russian regional administrative unit.

The scholarly input was therefore valuable and needed. According to Olav Knudsen, the term *soft security* has attained its meaning by influences from three different sources:

First, the term soft power gained currency due to the 1989 book by Joseph Nye and the 'soft power resources' he said characterise the conduct of the United States in world affairs. Second, there was the widening of the security concept, accelerated by the end of the Cold War. Thirdly, the emphasis on 'hard security guarantees' in the Central and East European security debates of the early 1990s brought about the almost inevitable companion concept of 'soft guarantees'.

(Knudsen 1998:48)

The scientific discourse offered different and, more importantly, also some completely new lines of argumentation. To capture these developments, Barry Buzan divided the security debates into three different 'security schools': 1) Traditional Security Studies, 2) Critical Security Studies, and 3) The Copenhagen School, the latter being the School most involved in theorising soft security (Buzan 1997, 5).

Traditionalist thinking in security studies is dominated by neo-realist concepts, which confine themselves to analysing the influence of power constellations on state actions and interest formations. Power constellations, in this approach, are defined by states' varying military potential and survival skills in the 'anarchical' international arena. The state is the main actor, who operates according to interests and power constellations and thereby influences the stabilisation of security patterns in an international scope (Kindermann 1991, 117). One should also note, however, that rationalist approaches have been undergoing a profound reflection on their epistemological foundation and especially liberal thinking has progressively challenged the rigidity of neo-realist axioms, by for instance introducing a more thorough focus on the domestic dimension of the state and thereby a less exclusive spectrum of actors and structures participating in the security debate.<sup>4</sup>

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4 A discussion on the debate between neo-liberal and neo-realist thinking is beyond the scope of this paper. However, the complementarity between neo-realist and neo-liberal arguments is often referred to as the 'neo-neo' synthesis (cf. for instance Söderbaum 2002)

Once the debate was sparked, the idea of questioning the very *meaning* of security subsequently derived. The rigid logic of Cold War and bipolar thinking opened up to new figures of thought in security studies. By challenging the traditionalist view of security raising, the question of the meaning of security, has been centred to widening the security agenda – from hard to soft security (Huysmans 1998, 227).

Hence, the discussion about the meaning of security has moved beyond the analytical question it raises. It has become a challenge of the theoretical and philosophical foundations of rationalist security studies in International Relations (IR). Theoretical approaches such as social constructivism or post-modernism (or post-structuralism)<sup>5</sup> contest the foundations of the neo-realist ontology and epistemology. In the centre of this ontology, neorealists position the state as the subject of security. For neo-realists, the state is a rational actor confronted by an environment populated with similar actors. These other actors are a source of insecurity, therefore each state finds itself in a security dilemma. In an anarchical ‘self-help system’, rational states mainly look for their own interest. Neo-realist studies on security are based – as Krause and Williams put it – on the idea that they represent an objective reality (Krause, Williams 1996, 233).

The problem with rationalist position, as Der Derian notes, is that: “Rationalists cling to the faith that there is an object, a truth, a reality out there, that is waiting for the right method to come along and in the name of scientific progress make use of, make sense of, give order to it” (Der Derian 1992, 6). In contrast, a social constructivist (or post-modern) approach appeals to a theoretical reading where the reality of rationalists<sup>6</sup> is understood as a construction that only gains momentum within the wider framework of the discursive structure and where knowledge is always dependant on cultural and historical contexts.

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5 See for further reading constructivist/postmodernist scholars: Wendt (1992), Katzenstein (1996), Risse (1995) and many others. Scholars that can be ‘labelled’ as post-structuralists are Walker (1987), Ashley (1987), Der Derian (1987).

6 Meaning by that the ‘real’ world of the realists, disregarding the fact whether it really exists

Critical schools of thought such as feminist security studies, constructivism and post-modernism have therefore problematised neo-realist epistemology and have in many cases called for the use of ‘anti’-methods such as de-construction, genealogy and intertextuality<sup>7</sup>, in order to demonstrate the constructed and contingent nature of the world that rationalists take as given and unproblematic. The wider concept of security, however, allows for a non-statist view, where the threat to “different referential objects can replace the state: ‘things, that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have legitimate claim to survival’” (Bannwart 2000, 1 cf. also Buzan/Wæver/de Wilde 1998, 36).

As Buzan puts it, the Copenhagen School belongs to the group of the so called ‘wideners’, willing to extend the security agenda to non-military issues, while the proponents of the Critical School generally question the whole conceptualisation of security. The Copenhagen school also opposes the view, that the key issue within security studies is war and force and that only adjacent problems can be taken into account in this context (Buzan 1997, 13). The Copenhagen School constructs “a more radical view of Security Studies by exploring threats to referent objects, and the securitisation of these threats, that are non-military as well as military” (Buzan 1997, 13).<sup>8</sup>

Within this framework, Ole Wæver has introduced the idea of security being a speech act:

[S]ecurity is not an objective condition with an a priori existence, but on the contrary has no ontological basis outside discourse. Security is understood as a discursive practice, which is coined [by Wæver] as *Securitisation*. Security is therefore a speech act, an act that comes into play by the very utterance of the word security. Something is a security matter when it is denoted as such.

(Bannwart 2000, 2)

By claiming something to be a threat to security, the legitimisation of extraordinary measures, even of wars, takes place. As such,

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7 See for example: Hansen 1997, 369.

8 See further on the Copenhagen School: Huysmans 2000

securitisation is a self-referential act, that convenes to own rules and legitimising references.<sup>9</sup>

Here, Buzan adds that the security speech act has, though to be accompanied by “the designation of existential threat, requiring emergency action or special measures, and the acceptance of that designation by a significant audience” (Buzan 1997, 15). The decision as to what comprises an existential threat can vary significantly depending on the object of analysis. In the field of the environment for example, Buzan denotes a very wide range of possible referent objects:

Ranging from relatively concrete things such as the survival of individual species (tigers, whales, human kind) or types of habitat (rain forests, lakes) to much fuzzier, larger scale things such as the maintenance of planetary climate and biosphere within the narrow band that human beings have come to consider normal during their few thousand years of civilisation

(Buzan 1997, 17).

This widened view of security put forward by the Copenhagen school opens up for a variety of referent objects, where the perception of threat applies. Thereby it functions as a tool or a guideline for the newly emerging regional scenarios in the world, in Europe and especially in the BSR.

### *Regional Dimensions and the New Regionalism in the BSR*

As stated above, threat has changed since the end of the Cold War, or rather, the *perception* of threat has shifted from hard military confrontation to a more diversified picture of potential dangers. Anders Björner has recently identified the possible causes of conflicts leading to threat perceptions within Europe since the end of bipolarity:

- Historical injustices (real or perceived) with implications for inter-ethnic relations and inter-state borders;
- Weak societal, legal and democratic structures as well as a low performance of administrative capacity (corruption) in transition societies;
- Socio-economic disparities between and within countries;

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9 See further: Wæver 1994

- The break-up or weakening of national security structures (armed forces, border guards) resulting in permeable borders which give rise to trafficking in human beings, illegal immigration, organised crime and smuggling;
- Trans-border environmental threats, pollution, atomic waste and security. (Bjurner 1999, cited partly in Hubel and Gänzle 2001:10)

These factors show one clear common link: they call for cross-border co-operation comprising, according to Buzan, five levels of interaction and analysis: the international system (global); international sub-systems (regional); units (national); sub-units (sub-national); and individuals (Buzan, Wéver and de Jaap 1998, 45).

The point here is that the widening of the security agenda has implied a redefinition of geo-political space, and one that is no longer limited no more limited to the simple interaction among state-actors. One result of this is that regions have become a category that interesting is seen as more useful in comprehending the new challenges of the widened security environment.

Buzan's theorisation of *security complexes* can help to identify the variables that are most suitable to define regional dimensions. One unavoidable condition for regional interaction is geographical proximity among the actors. However, a number of other factors should also be unfolded. For example, regional formation and integration are also determined by the degree of interaction among the actors involved. According to Buzan, regional integration is characterised by the amity – enmity pattern. *Amity* ranges “from genuine friendship to expectation of protection or support” (Buzan 1991, 189), while *enmity* implies “relations set by suspicion and fear” (ibid.). Security complexes are the regional formations resulting from these dialectic formations, which “emphasise the interdependence of rivalry as well as that of shared interests” (ibid.).

Yet – given this framework – how has the BSR come into being? In the early 1990s, when regionalism came to be an indicator of changing international relations, two main strands of co-operation were detectable in the BSR, one, with a clearly idealistic element to it, of finally politically

uniting what was forcefully held apart by history, the other, with far more pragmatic motivations, involved matters of common concern for the whole Region. As early as the beginning 1980s, a slow process of increasing co-operation among various institutions began. This was especially the case in the cultural and environmental fields, however, in the early 1990s this movement also reached the political level. A multi-co-operative pattern emerged at the trans-regional and inter-governmental levels which was used by both public and private actors. NGOs, however, were the first to use and establish networks; it was only later that governmental institutions began to participate.

Institutionally, the BSR consists of a loose superstructure. Apart from multilateral and institutionalised inter-governmental co-operation within the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), co-operation is predominantly situated at the sub-regional level. Interest groups, municipalities with similar problems, or even cities, make up these new networks. Baltic Sea co-operation is characterised particularly by the combination of governmental and non-governmental organisations working in this area and by a wide variety of associations. However, it was not historical determinism or regionalism from ‘above’ that launched the process, but rather a movement from ‘below’, with numerous actors in the beginning striving for completely different goals. “They had very different aims, were interested in very different parts of the region, and meant different things by the region, but they all found it useful to launch their activities under the slogan of the BSR. Thereby, the region became self-reinforcing” (Wæver 1997, 305). According to Wæver, it was the fact that the cultural events which took place in the first years were reported by the press that led to a Baltic Sea consciousness developing: “All this was reported as indications of something big happening. And therefore it became so” (ibid.).

Baltic Sea co-operation therefore originated as a grassroots and a ‘bottom-up’ movement.<sup>10</sup> It is based on the lowest common denominator of a geographic and economic entity, in this case the Baltic Sea. Baltic Sea co-operation does not focus on integration but on concrete,

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10 This means that co-operation is organised from below towards the top and also originated in that way. Actors co-operate on bilateral grounds and are not in anyway obliged to the CBSS or to any other higher instance.

flexible and selective co-operation under the expanding umbrella of the European Union (EU). It does not present an alternative to EU integration; for some states it is, on the contrary, an opportunity for obtaining more rapid EU accession through economic co-operation and the exchange of information and experience. Presently, there are some seventy networks for Baltic Sea co-operation, in both the private and the public sector which are working together.

In practice, the specific fields consist mainly of improving frameworks for building a market economy in the transition countries, ensuring better transport infrastructure, balancing social and economic differences (e.g., democratisation, human rights), supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and promoting the cultural and economic exchange of ideas within the region. There is no 'master plan' for Baltic Sea co-operation. It consists, nevertheless, of a set of common, interrelated interests and the striving for the strengthened representation of these within EU structures.

*Delimiting the Soft Security Landscape in the BSR and Reasoning Behind the Environmental Case*

The security environment around the Baltic Rim has changed considerably over the past few years. Actors, dimensions and different dynamics overlap, providing a multifaceted framework, which appears quite fuzzy at times. One could argue that at present no clear redistribution of duties or co-ordination of policy-initiatives is present around the Baltic Sea, both in soft security as well as hard security matters.

The dominant issue when dealing with hard and soft security matters in the BSR, however, is certainly the ongoing process of extending Euroatlantic structures, which is set to be completed with the inclusion of the three Baltic States and Poland. The accession of these four countries to NATO and the EU looks increasingly imminent and will imply a significant restructuring of the (overlapping) patterns of regional co-operation currently operating.

In a short-to-medium term perspective, eight of the nine littoral countries will soon be members of the EU. The change from a multilateral framework to Russia-Euroatlantic bilateral relations is likely to

enhance the prevailing (hard) security theme around the rim. Already existing platforms of dialogue have adapted to this trend and appear to aim explicitly at tackling the problems of regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea as a matter that is strictly related to the degree of Russian integration into regional structures (in Tassinari 2002a).

The Northern Dimension (ND) is the EU policy-framework that is directed to addressing these issues, to implementing EU initiatives in the region, and to establishing a privileged *forum* of dialogue with Russia. Despite the relatively low profile maintained by the ND so far and despite the on-going debates concerning the nature and the need for re-structuring this initiative – issues that this study intends to address only marginally – there is a clear trend taking shape in the Baltic Sea Region.

In the future, the BSR is likely to be identified as “an internal sea of the European Union” (Joenniemi 1999, 6) and the main challenge, especially concerning soft security, will be to homogenise and co-ordinate bilaterally the EU and Russian agendas in the area.<sup>11</sup>

Arguably, a re-assessment of co-operation in the region will imply a clear interlock of both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ security issues. More interestingly, this will also necessitate – as it does already – a clearer re-assignment of competencies among the actors operating in the Region.

Wider dynamics such as the EU and NATO enlargement imply that those actors involved in region-building processes around the Baltic rim will have to redefine their targets and limits. One could take as a starting point the fact that the BSR will be a sub-regional dimension *within* a wider geo-political dynamic where local and regional actors will have to reformulate their role.

This factor may be considered an indirect heritage of the region-building discourse of the late 1980s and beginning of the 1990s. Arguably, the ‘bottom-up’ dimension of regionalism in the Baltic Sea has remained somewhat crystallised – as far as high politics and hard security are concerned – at the level of the scientific debate. Wider

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11 On these issues cf. Nicola Catellani’s contribution in this volume

actors (e.g. the EU, NATO and the riparian states) have progressively intervened 'from above', and have taken over the 'bottom-up' forces in the process of dealing with 'hard' security matters in the Region.

Thus, local actors are progressively moving away from hard security in the region, which is instead dealt with at the level of those wider geo-political structures involved in the Region.<sup>12</sup>

Yet, networking 'from below' is still the most suitable approach to tackle regional soft security threats. This is because on these issues the interventions of larger actors frequently is less effective, because it is less focused. In fact, soft security co-operation can more efficiently take advantage and is better oriented to the tight networking established within and among local and non-governmental structures more efficiently than for 'hard' security matters. In other words, by focussing on soft security, regional decision-makers operate on a level that is unlikely to be 'taken over' by higher institutions.

The point here is that the BSR can utilise soft security issues in order to carve out a *niche* in which to develop a particular character of regional co-operation in which regional actors, on the one hand, acknowledge the influence of wider geo-political dynamics in the region – i.e. the EU and to a certain extent NATO – but, on the other hand, succeed in enhancing co-operation with a significant degree of autonomy.

Within such a framework, the BSR can indeed be defined as a 'new region', such that the issues at stake can, to a considerable degree, be dealt with independence from the 'outside'. These issues, here classified as soft security, contribute to developing a pattern of regional integration that resembles that of the new regionalism.

Thus, in the big picture of 'high politics', the BSR is turning into a sub-dimension of the EU, whereas in the restricted environment of

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12 For instance, the CBSS Summit in June 2002 did address the Kaliningrad question – which represents a case of major uncertainty for the security of the region – but only to delegate the solution of the matter to the joint work of Russia and the EU. Cf. *Baltinfo* 2002.

soft security issues, regional operators act and react in the security environment relatively autonomously, even though they are deeply interrelated. Decisions of one regional actor on a specific soft security threat around the Baltic Sea Region can affect the response and the decision of another actor on the other side of the Baltic Rim, and can indeed limit and condition choices. Regional actors will be opposing different agendas on how to tackle a certain matter at a regional level, and the choices will affect the whole region.

It is, therefore, to be underlined that at times some actors within the region will share the same interests and support them jointly within the region, which following Buzan's theorisation on security complexes can be defined as an 'amity' pattern. At other times, they may oppose each other and therefore establish an 'enmity' pattern.

In this soft security framework, as for that of security complexes, geographical proximity is a necessary condition. In this sense, a decision taken by a municipality of the Baltic Sea concerning its waste water treatment policy is unlikely to affect decisions of municipalities in the Mediterranean, but is very likely to affect the choices of other cities on the Baltic Sea.

The example is merely illustrative, but it emphasises our assumption that, paraphrasing Buzan, the BSR can be re-constructed as a sort of 'soft security complex'. The amity-enmity pattern in the Baltic Sea can apply to soft security in a positive way and provide an idea of how regional soft security and the prospective orientation of future regional integration around the Baltic Rim may develop.

Arguably, regional integration based on soft security suggests functional connections among the actors. Co-operation is enhanced to solve common problems within the region. In contrast, relations among sub-regions in Europe might not necessarily be characterised by indifference, but by shifting densities among sub-regions, with co-operation being purely functional and aimed at tackling only specific trans-regional soft-security issues.<sup>13</sup>

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13 We wish to thank Carl-Einar Stålvant for drawing our attention to this point.

## 2. Soft security Co-operation in the BSR in the Case of Environmental Protection: Actors, Priorities and Future Scenarios

The relevance of the environmental issue-area, and the reason why it has been chosen as a case in point should be connected, on the one hand, with the serious pan-regional nature of environmental issues in the Region, which makes the state of the Baltic Sea a matter of common concern among the actors involved, as will be more widely explained below.

On the other hand, disparities in terms of environmental standards, performance, institutional capacity and policy making between the South-eastern (Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the North-western Regions of the Russian Federation) and the North-western shores of the Sea (Finland, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany) are still marked, and the developments of regional co-operation are a significant tool to bridge this gap.

### *Thirty Years of Environmental Co-operation in the BSR 1972–2002*

The North-eastern European space, and the BSR in particular, have followed the developments of the environmental discourse occurring on the global arena, by means of its institutional structures and by implementing trans-border co-operation. It was not by accident that the First UN Conference on Human Environment – that in 1972 gave the impetus to the dawning international environmental discourse<sup>14</sup> – took place in Stockholm.

Since the early 1970s, when the global environmental debate began to take off, the Nordic Countries have taken advantage of the opportunity to push forward the debate – beyond the borders of the static cold-war diplomacy.

Both with respect to the international scene and to the BSR in particular, the Nordic countries played a crucial role. In the case of the

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14 Cf. for instance Meadows D. and Meadows D. (eds.) (1972).

BSR, Finland and Sweden reached an agreement to enhance environmental research regarding the Gulf of Botnia, by establishing the Gulf of Botnia Committee in 1972 (see Kohonen 1994, 210–211).

It should be taken into account that during this period the South-eastern shore of the Sea was composed of the German Democratic Republic, Poland and the Soviet Union: a very different pattern than the geo-political framework of the 1990s. This is the visible reason to argue that environmental co-operation – because of its relative low profile and because of the soft nature of the commitments taken – paved the way and can in fact be considered as having been a precursor of wider political developments. As Pertti Joenniemi and Ole Wæver argued in 1992:

One of the main obstacles to the development of the institutional relations encompassing all the littoral countries has been represented by the political divisions of the post war period (...) growing awareness of the precarious state of the common resources – brought two important multilateral conventions addressing joint problems in the field of environmental protection.

(Joenniemi and Wæver 1992, 12)

The first regional binding agreement was signed in 1973: the *Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources in the Baltic Sea and Belts*, also known as ‘the Gdansk Convention’, which has now been ratified by all the countries around the Rim.<sup>15</sup> From this Convention, the *International Commission on the Baltic Sea Fishing* (ICBSF) was derived (cf. Joenniemi and Wæver 1992, p. 12). However, the most outstanding result of environmental co-operation in the mid-1970s was the *Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area*, better known as the Helsinki Convention (cf. Kohonen 1994), which determined the foundation of the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM<sup>16</sup>), which is still the most representative operational body of environmental co-operation in the BSR.

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15 Cf. Danish Institute for Fisheries Research, Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries. Home-page

16 Cf. HELCOM Home page

Since its foundation, HELCOM has had the task of monitoring the state of environmental pollution around the coastal zones and of providing a scientific platform for adopting appropriate measures, although the Commission as such has not been directly involved in enforcing actual policy strategies (Kohonen 1994, 213).

In 1980 – when the Gdansk Convention and the related Commission became operational – HELCOM elaborated a long-term monitoring and research programme whose first results were published in 1986 (Kohonen 1994, 212). Within this framework, a Ministerial Declaration was issued in order to commit the parties to reduce the discharge of waste and emissions to the Sea by 50% by 1995<sup>17</sup>.

In April 1992, a new Convention for the protection of the Sea was approved within the framework of HELCOM. The reason for this was the need to actively involve the new-born Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the regional policy making.

The convention called for concrete commitments with respect to operational strategies focusing on the themes and the issues discussed in 1974 in order to, as the Conference statements clarify, “assure the ecological restoration of the Baltic Sea, ensuring the possibility of self-restoration of the marine environment and preservation of its ecological balance” (qtd. in Kohonen 1994, 216–217).

The convention was connected with the elaboration and enforcement of a Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Action Programme, which remains the most comprehensive strategy that has been developed to combat environmental threats in the Baltic Sea, both because of the heterogeneous composition of the actors involved (cf. below) and because of the long-term structure of the programme (until 2012).

The post-Cold War geo-political map encouraged a number of institutional initiatives which related directly to environmental co-operation.

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17 However, the Scientific Committee of the Commission then stated that this target could not be realistically achieved within the given timeframe (in Kohonen (1994), 214).

The establishment of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) was particularly important. With specific respect to environmental policy, the establishment of the CBSS gave impetus to regional strategies by providing a platform composed of all the riparian States (including Russia).

The most outstanding results within the framework of the CBSS were achieved in May 1996, at Visby. The Visby Summit developed the idea of applying the principles of Agenda 21 to the BSR. This resulted in the creation of the Baltic 21 process, the aim of which is to develop detailed regional environmental strategies in seven crucial sectors with the active participation of a different range of actors from all the littoral countries. An *Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region* was finally adopted in June 1998.<sup>18</sup>

In the meantime, the process of European integration, primarily centred around the EU policies aiming at the enlargement, also contributed to tackling environmental issues. One of the most important operational frameworks where EU commitments on environmental matters are carried out is the Northern Dimension (ND), which was mentioned above.

A number of EU instruments are also devoted to environmental protection of the BSR, both towards the littoral accessing countries and the neighbouring areas such as the North Western Russia's coastal areas. Relevant examples of the EU commitment are PHARE – which has devoted between 1994 and 2000 some 55 billion Euro for environmental projects in the BSR – ISPA, focusing on the environmental implications of transport development, and TACIS, especially in North Western Russian *oblasti*.<sup>19</sup>

The environmental concerns of the BSR have also been the object of growing interest among a number of external actors, such as the United States (via the Northern European Initiative and its Environmental Protection Agency), the UN Development Program (UNDP) and, more importantly, several International Financial Institutions

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18 Cf. CBSS home page.

19 Cf. EU Northern Dimension Home Page

(IFIs) such as the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) (Bober 2002, 3–7).

### *The Actors*

The environmental milieu in the BSR can be roughly divided into four categories.

The first is the level of *non-governmental* actors. A growing number of initiatives have emerged by means of voluntary activities. Environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and research bodies have been increasingly co-operating over the past decade, and the result has been the development of a number of well functioning networks.<sup>20</sup>

The main goal of these NGOs is to rise awareness of regional environmental issues amongst those groups in the public opinion and civil society that are attracted to such matters but lack channels to participate actively. Environmental education and raising youth awareness are particularly stressed. The more operational side is to exchange information and know-how in order to strengthen the ties of co-operation.

The second sector of this brief overview is that of *sub-national* actors. Local authorities, municipalities and counties have played a crucial role in the development of regional environmental co-operation. Local co-operation is a sound tool to encompass environmental matters on a smaller scale, by tightening the connections that are already established at the governmental level.

In this respect, the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Co-operation (BSSSC) unites over a hundred local governments around the Baltic Sea. One of its strategic goals is “environmental plans and awareness actions” as well as “co-operation in impact evaluations, new energy sources and opportunities for energy saving, co-operation between institutions in monitoring and development of statistics”.<sup>21</sup>

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20 Cf. for instance Baltic Environmental Information Dissemination System (BEIDS) home page

21 Baltic Sea Sub-regional Co-operation Home page.

A second sub-national initiative is the Euroregion Baltic which gathers together some eleven local governments of six of the Baltic Sea countries (Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Russia, Lithuania and Latvia) and develops locally-focused strategies that take advantage of EU funds allocated for sub-regional co-operation (Bober 2002, 9–10). Within this framework, local co-operation takes advantage of the active participation of the Nordic countries, that contribute by sharing and providing expertise and methodologies. Within the Euroregion Baltic, one result of this co-operation was the elaboration of the Joint Trans-national Development Programme (JTDP) which includes a substantial component on sustainable development.<sup>22</sup>

Thirdly, the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) numbers about a hundred municipalities around the Sea. It contributes to environmental co-operation by means of its Commission of Environment, which was established to increase exchange of knowledge among the member cities. UBC is also currently involved in the implementation of the Local Agenda 21 which is the most advanced tool to transpose to municipalities and local government the principles of Agenda 21.<sup>23</sup>

*Intergovernmental co-operation* is another valuable instrument for regional environmental policy in the BSR. Within this framework, a wide range of bilateral agreements is currently in force among the Baltic Sea countries. Of particular interest, it is the provision of expertise by the Nordic Countries to those of the South-eastern shore. This is mainly achieved through the exchange of personnel employed in environmental institutions.<sup>24</sup> Within the CBSS framework, environmental activities are carried out by HELCOM and by the Baltic 21.

Another useful framework for intergovernmental co-operation is “Vision & Strategies around the Baltic 2010” (VASAB 2010), established in 1992 and which focuses on environment related issues particularly with regard to spatial development planning.<sup>25</sup>

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22 Cf. Euroregion Baltic Home page.

23 Cf. UBC Home page.

24 Cf. for Instance The Danish Environmental Protection Agency, 1999.

25 Cf. VASAB 2010 homepage [www.vasab.org.pl](http://www.vasab.org.pl)

The fourth level of regional environmental co-operation in the Baltic Sea is the *supra-national level*. Several international organisations and IFIs are actively involved in the Baltic Sea. The UN Environmental Programme is located in Arendal (Norway) with a partner institution of the so called Global Resources Information Database (GRID), which monitors the state of the Baltic Sea and provides statistical information. On the other hand, the interest of IFIs such as the World Bank or the EBRD in the BSR is crucial because of the availability of funds and credit. In particular, the World Bank, by means of its Global Environmental Facility has intervened consistently in the BSR. The large Baltic Sea Regional Environmental Project is in fact of salient interest. It was launched in October 2001 and it will be completed by the year 2006. It involves all the littoral countries in developing coastal management and enhancing institutional capacity-building.<sup>26</sup> The project's implementing agencies are in the Nordic countries (mainly HELCOM in Finland), and the targets are mainly identified as located on the South-eastern coast of the Baltic Sea (Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Russian Federation).

The involvement of the EU in the BSR environmental co-operation was briefly sketched above. However, a tool of particular interest is the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership (NDEP). This initiative was launched in 2001 by the EU and the IFIs active in the region – the World Bank, the EBRD, the European Investment Bank and the Nordic Investment Bank, to coordinate the actions of these organisations in tackling environmental threats in the Region. It focuses on Russia and on its active involvement in the initiative, on nuclear waste, and on the mobilisation of resources.<sup>27</sup>

### *Issues, Problems and Priorities*

This section of the study aims to identify the structural nature of the environmental problems in the BSR, therefore avoiding a detailed (and incomplete) analysis of several environmental sub-sectors. The aim is to sketch the macro-perspective in order to provide a broad view

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26 Cf. Baltic Sea Regional Project – World Bank Home page.

27 Cf. Northern Dimension Home Page

of the regional state of affairs with respect to regional environmental co-operation.

The Baltic Sea is the world's largest body of brackish water. Regional environmental actions, have therefore initially focused on the serious issues related to the progressive worsening of the state of the Sea and of its coast. However, a broad range of environmental issues not necessarily connected with the state of the Sea have also become the object of regional co-operation.

The Baltic 21 process, for example, has identified seven sectors where regional co-operation can operate, and each Member State has been assigned one: agriculture (Sweden and HELCOM), energy (Denmark and Estonia), fisheries (International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission), forests (Finland and Lithuania), industry (Russia and Sweden), tourism (Finland, Estonia and the Baltic Sea Tourism Commission) and transport (Germany and Latvia)<sup>28</sup> (Baltic 21 1998, 6).

In parallel, the 1993 HELCOM Convention has based its Joint Comprehensive Action Programme on the identification of 132 'hot spots' which "comprise actions to address point and non-point source pollution in the Baltic Sea catchment area" (Helsinki Commission 1993, VII). This programme also includes the Czech and Slovak Republics and, partly, Ukraine and Belarus. It should be noted that at present twenty-six of the original 132 hot spots have been cleaned up.

In order to provide a broad perspective of the state of the environmental co-operation in the Baltic Sea area, a comprehensive index will be utilised. The *Environmental Sustainability Index* (ESI) 2002, a study carried out by Columbia University, Yale University and the World Economic Forum<sup>29</sup> offers a wide view concerning policy towards and management of environmental issues and can be easily applied to the BSR.

The ESI ranks 142 countries on the basis of 20 environmental indicators that relate to five main categories: environmental systems;

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28 Baltic 21 1998, 6.

29 Cf. The Columbia Earth Institute Web site

environmental stresses; human vulnerability to environmental risks; societies institutional capacity to respond to environmental threats; a national stewardship of the shared resources of the global commons (The Columbia Earth Institute 2002, 2–3). The evaluation on each category ranges from 0 to 100.

According to ESI, the BSR offers a very heterogeneous pattern that deserves to be observed and analysed. Finland, Norway and Sweden are ranked as the *first three countries in the world* (with indexes of 73.7 for Finland; 72.8 for Norway; 72.2 for Sweden). Other four BSR countries appear among the first 30: Latvia is 10<sup>th</sup> (index of 62.8), Estonia is 19<sup>th</sup> (59.8), Denmark is 24<sup>th</sup> (58.1)<sup>30</sup>, and Lithuania is 28<sup>th</sup> (56.9). Concerning the remaining three BSR countries: Germany is 54<sup>th</sup>, Russia 74<sup>th</sup> and Poland 88<sup>th</sup>. The Nordic Countries, therefore, according to this index, are confirmed as the world leaders in terms of environmental performance.

Observing these data more carefully some insights can be drawn. The results, firstly, suggest that environmental standards are not necessarily connected to economic performance. For instance, the GDP per capita in Poland is higher than in Latvia, and likewise, that of Denmark is higher than in Finland.

Concerning ‘Social and Institutional Capacity’<sup>31</sup> a marked divide persists in the BSR countries. The scores of the Baltic Sea EU countries (plus Norway) are in general very high (between 76 out of 100 for Germany and 87 for Sweden), while those of the four EU accession countries and Russia are lower (between 27 for Russia and 61 for Estonia).

In the category ‘Reducing Human Vulnerability’<sup>32</sup> all nine countries have, on average, very high standards.

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30 Concerning the low rank of Denmark some more specific remarks should be noted. The *Environmental Performance Index* carried out by the same partners of ESI ranks Denmark 5th. The EPI accounts for the performance in four core matters (air, water, land, climate change), while the ESI gives a more general perspective. Cf. Columbia University Centre for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN).

31 The category accounts for 5 indicators: Science and technology, Capacity for Debate, Governance, Private Sector Responsiveness, Eco-efficiency.

32 The category relates to Basic Human Sustainability and Environmental Health.

The category ‘Reducing Stresses’<sup>33</sup> also offers a rather heterogeneous pattern. The five post-socialist countries have high standards (between 60 and 69, apart from Poland) while the EU countries have a lower average (between 25 and 58).

Concerning the very broad category of ‘Environmental Systems’<sup>34</sup>, a pattern is difficult to discern. Three countries have rather low standards - Poland, Germany and Denmark – which can be explained by the negative records concerning land exploitation.

The last criterion that comprises the index is that of ‘Global Stewardship’.<sup>35</sup> As in the case of the first category (Social and Institutional Capacity), the divide is mainly between the very high results of the EU countries and Norway (between 50 in Germany and 67 in Sweden) and the low average along the Southern-eastern shore of the Baltic Sea (between 14 in Russia and 45 in Lithuania).

Giving a short account of the figures of the ESI, a clear pattern seems to emerge with respect to the environmental state of the BSR and the related foci of co-operation. The outcomes are contrasting. On the one hand, in the categories ‘Social and Institutional Capacity’ and ‘Global Stewardship’, the EU countries plus Norway are far ahead of the accession countries and Russia. On the other hand, in the category ‘Reducing Stresses’, the three Baltic States and Russia have higher standards than the BSR countries belonging to the EU.

This appears to suggest that the countries of the Southern-eastern shore of the Sea lack an institutional and managerial framework to successfully carry out reforms and strategies, but that in terms of willingness to improve and to take action (‘reducing stresses’), their record

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33 This category includes: reducing high air pollution, reducing water stress, reducing eco-system stress, reducing waste and consumption pressures, reducing population growth.

34 This includes: air quality, water quantity, water quality, bio-diversity and land.

35 Global stewardship includes: 1) Participation in International Co-operative Efforts 2) Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions 3) Reducing trans-boundary Environmental Pressures

is significantly more positive than in the Nordic Countries. What is lacking – one could argue – is ‘capacity building’.

Environmental capacity building – which comprises “local capacity to finance and manage projects; environmental monitoring; project preparation including environmental assessment” (Helsinki Commission 1993, IX) – is at present probably the structural matter of most importance in the BSR’s environmental co-operation and a considerable part of regional planning and funding is devoted to it.

### Conclusions

The case of regional co-operation in the field of the environment in the Baltic Sea appears to support the hypothesis presented in the first section of this study concerning the feasibility and durability of a *soft security complex* around the Baltic Sea.

Regional co-operation in the field of the environment, which was launched in the 1970s, has a long tradition. This presupposes a rather significant detachment, or perhaps a sort of ‘transversality’, of this sector from the radical geo-political (and ideological) changes that have occurred especially since the end of the 1980s.<sup>36</sup>

This suggests a sort of *neutrality* of soft security issues, as they can develop fruitfully being relatively mildly influenced by the salient geo-political environment where the institutional structures involved happen to operate. Rather, the political and ideological flexibility of soft-security has contributed to enhance stability in the region.

This assumption, in particular, confirms the hypothesis that the up-coming enlargement of the EU, and possible developments in EU-Russia bilateral relations, are likely to add new insights to the debate<sup>37</sup>,

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36 It is illustrative that Mikhail Gorbachev himself opened for environmental security as a common concern back in 1987. We thank Carl-Einar Stålvant for the information.

37 Similarly, the end of the Cold War has brought to the specific framework of environmental co-operation a substantial shift towards pragmatism, when

but will hardly obstruct the development of regional approaches on the environment.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, as has been noted elsewhere (Tassinari 2002b), environmental co-operation has revealed a pattern where two parallel levels of regional co-operation have developed over the past three decades on their own accord.

The first, more heterogeneous one is the result of a 'bottom-up' sort of dynamic. The variety of actors operating in the field has made the environment a tangible issue. Public opinion is sensitive to environmental issues concerning the Baltic Sea because co-operation is organised in a way so that all actors can contribute to the cause, not just the legislators that provide regulations and the IFIs that provide funding.

It should also be noted that the independence movements in the Baltics in the late 1980s were primarily composed of green movements (later Parties), and that independence was achieved mainly because of their activism (Vebrá 1994, 6–7). Although the political impact of environment is nowhere more apparent than in the Green Parties in the national parliaments, the social and civic grip of these movements is still strong as the regional non-governmental networking demonstrates.

The second dynamic, was developed in the early 1990s. This dynamic refers to a 'top-down' process that relates to the increasing levels of institutional intervention and commitment in the environmental matters of the Baltic Sea area. The focus of institutional activities – which includes both bilateral governmental agreements and

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compared with the Soviet approach where environmental strategies did exist but were "characterised by scientific precision rather than enforceability" (Vebrá 1994, 3).

38 With this respect, it should be noted, the states around the Baltic Sea have so far demonstrated a rather co-ordinated approach on environmental issues of global interest. All the countries around the Baltic Sea have for instance signed the so-called the Kyoto Protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Moreover, in occasion of the CBSS Summit in St. Petersburg in June 2002, the Baltic Sea States government sent a joint message to the UN Summit on Sustainable Development scheduled to take place in Johannesburg, August 2002.

programmes promoted by IGOs – is not in contradiction with the processes initiated ‘from below’ described above. This ‘from above’ aspect of the regional integration provides structures, methodologies, expertise and funds for co-operation.

It should be noted that financial resources allocated for environmental co-operation in the BSR are far more generous than in most of the other policy fields as well as in most of the other sub-regions within the EU. This can be interpreted, on the one hand, as an obvious confirmation of the serious nature of the environmental problems in the Baltic Sea. On the other hand, massive intervention on the Baltic Sea environment acknowledges the fact that the practice of funding environmental projects from the ‘outside’ and implementing strategies from the ‘inside’ is considered a successful approach.

Environmental funding from the ‘outside’ has established and strengthened the *redistribution of competencies* between the external actors (first and foremost the EU) and Baltic regional organisations which was advocated in our theoretical section above. This might constitute the most significant insight of a more structural nature that our case study has suggested.

IGOs, IFIs and the competent EU agencies are increasingly delegating the implementation of regional environmental programmes to local actors. Once funds are allocated, these external actors limit themselves to monitoring the smooth development of the strategy. In this framework, environmental capacity is built and regional sustainability is enhanced.

The building of environmental capacity by means of regional co-operation helps to demonstrate that the two dimensions – regionalisation from ‘below’ and from ‘above’ – are two sides of the same coin. They are complementary, they can operate simultaneously, and in fact, they take advantage of each other, improving the effectiveness of regional integration in tackling environmental threats. The external intervention of IFIs, IGOs and the EU tends to enhance regional institutional capacity (e.g. HELCOM and Baltic 21). In parallel, non-governmental and sub-national networking disseminates information, improves awareness and increases public participation.

Summing up, this paper attempted to suggest a model for the short-to-medium term future of the BSR, supported by the empirical evidence given by environmental co-operation.

The theoretical model has adapted approaches on regional security and new-regionalism to the case of the Baltic Sea, referring to the numerous policy-sectors that compose regional co-operation and have contributed to the widening of the security agenda in the area.

Moving away from a hard security discourse, soft security scenarios have contributed to the emergence of multi-level and trans-regional security dimensions, fostering stability and sustainable development in the BSR.

The Baltic Sea soft security regional co-operation demonstrates the adaptability of the new regional model. Regional integration began by encompassing those matters which hard security (military and territorial issues) was not concerned about, in a period when the political and diplomatic divide in the region prevented the enhancement of further co-operation.

The strong soft security ties have been strengthened over the past thirty years on the basis of informal and voluntary networking, at non-governmental and sub-national levels. When the geo-political framework changed, these well-established links facilitated co-operation in other matters. The case of environmental co-operation as a well-developed model of soft security integration suggests a further step.

The Baltic Sea is likely to continue a process of regional integration in relative autonomy from the up-coming major geo-political developments – i.e. NATO and EU enlargement – by focusing on soft security. The idea of a ‘soft security complex’ is likely to succeed, as the two complementary dimensions that originally promoted regional co-operation integrate effectively.

Integration ‘from below’ increases the chances that soft security co-operation will evolve democratically. Institutional intervention ‘from above’ provides those operative tools that can enhance co-operation, and contribute to optimising the development of soft security.

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## The Identity of Kaliningrad: Russian, European or a Third Space?

In recent years, Russia's Kaliningrad exclave situated on the Baltic coast between Lithuania and Poland, has been the focus of growing academic and political debate. At issue has been to understand what the effects of European Union (EU) enlargement to its neighbours will have, not just on Kaliningrad, but also on the character of EU-Russian relations more generally. In much of this debate, however, the actual influence of Kaliningrad on this process tends to get ignored and the region rather ends up depicted as an object of Brussels-Moscow negotiations. In contrast, this paper argues that Kaliningrad's developing position in-between Russia and the EU actually provides it with a certain amount of constitutive power. Developing the work of Noel Parker, the paper draws a distinction between the relative constitutive power of the geopolitical positions of 'peripheries' and 'margins'. Taking a historical perspective, it is argued that Kaliningrad's Cold War peripheral position appears to be being replaced by a more marginal position. However, the extent to which this will occur depends on several variables, the most important of which is whether a distinctive identity of Kaliningrad and Kaliningraders will emerge.

### Introduction

In recent years Russia's Kaliningrad exclave, situated on the Baltic coast between Poland and Lithuania, has been the focus of growing attention in EU/West-Russian relations. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s the Kaliningrad oblast was separated from the Russian mainland, thereby attaining a unique position as a Russian outpost near the heart of Europe, closer to Berlin, Brussels, Vilnius and Warsaw than it is to Moscow. In being sandwiched between two applicant countries, Lithuania and Poland, that are already abiding by many EU rules and regulations, by default Kaliningrad has landed in a position where it too is significantly affected by the policies of the EU. The oblast, being an overlapping case, is thereby influenced by the policies of the EU as well as those of Russia.

Thus, with the ongoing processes of NATO and EU enlargement, Kaliningrad's geopolitical location and detached position has raised significant questions and concerns. On the one hand, considerable concern exists on the part of Kaliningraders that, surrounded by NATO and the emergent Schengen wall, they are set to be isolated from their neighbours and from European integration more generally, doomed to backwardness and peripherality. On the other hand, the problems of Kaliningrad are frequently understood in terms of EU/West-Russian relations more broadly, in particular focusing on whether Kaliningrad will become either a testing ground for forging a new East-West partnership or a catalyst for future conflict.

In this context, the Kaliningrad question usually remains framed in the traditional terms of East-West relations, a frame that actually has the effect of marginalising Kaliningrad, by making it simply an object of a much broader discourse. Put another way, when Kaliningrad is discussed in these terms the focus of attention shifts from a concern with Kaliningrad and Kaliningraders to the question of what the geopolitical location and problems of Kaliningrad mean for the EU and Russia. Consequently, in many discussions and articles on Kaliningrad, the hopes, aspirations and plans of Kaliningraders often slip into the background, with analysis instead shifting to the plans of Moscow and Brussels.

Thus, when looked at in this way, that is in the context of East-West relations, Kaliningraders appear to lose any sense of subjectivity or constitutive power, rather they are seen to be at the mercy of the plans of others. Traditional approaches to international politics tend to support such views, with implicit assumptions being made that see peripheral regions like Kaliningrad as largely disenfranchised in the international political game, with power rather seen to reside at the centre.

In contrast, this paper starts from the premise that, despite their peripheral position situated in the borderlands between the EU and mainland Russia, Kaliningraders have more power and influence than is usually recognised. Although the resources available to regions like Kaliningrad do not match up to the power resources of Brussels or Moscow, this paper will argue that edges, peripheries and margins can

– at least potentially – play important constitutive roles in shaping the perceptions and identities of various centres, and more broadly in shaping the very landscape of European politics. Whilst this has always been the case, the end of the Cold War and the growing impact of globalisation have arguably enhanced this constitutive power. Thus, in comparison to the Cold War period when the geographical, political, ideological and economic borders of the West (EU Europe) and Russia appeared clearly defined, today they are much more problematic and a source of considerable anxiety to both Moscow and Brussels.

With the end of the Cold War questions of who is inside and who outside have been opened up, whilst globalisation, localisation and regionalisation processes increasingly make a focus on clearly defining one's borders appear anachronistic (Parker 2000, 3-6). With the territorial state in decline, new concepts and ideas – such as fragmented sovereignties, overlapping authorities and virtual networks have emerged. Rather than embracing these developments, this new situation has been a cause of much worry for both Russia and the EU. The fear of Moscow has been that the country's regions will seek self-determination and undermine the coherence of Russia once and for all. For its part, the EU's hesitance in pursuing enlargement and opening up for external influences has reflected fears that its current borders protect the ordered Union from a chaotic outside, a sphere where all manner of risks and threats are manifest. Although such perceptions can make the edges and borderlands of Europe and Russia appear unstable and vulnerable, what this discourse also illustrates is the lack of control the EU and Russia have over their borders and the increasing scope of action that the margins and peripheries now have in order to constitute their own identities and in turn to influence the constitution of Europe and Russia more generally.

The aim of this paper is therefore to focus on Kaliningrad as a subject of international politics in its own right. In particular the paper asks questions concerning how and why Kaliningrad has gained a greater role in comparison to the past, and what have, are and will be the implications and effects of this attainment of a more substantial subjectivity for the wider context of EU-Russian relations and Europe's construction. More specifically, and focusing on the concerns

of Kaliningraders, the paper asks how the oblast will be able to make it in the post-Cold War world, and how it may be able to use its peripheral position vis-à-vis both Moscow and Brussels as a resource for its own benefit. As will become clear, the role of history as both a resource and a constraint in providing a vision for the future is very important.

### Margins and Peripheries

Before turning to our analysis of Kaliningrad, however, it is first important to elaborate upon our understanding of the power and resources that those distanced from the centre possess. In this we follow, and try to extend, Noel Parker's recent attempt to provide a greater richness to how we understand the edges of polities. In his case he focuses upon the edges of the European Union.<sup>1</sup>

As Parker points out edges come (and are discussed) in different forms. Parker identifies five categories of edges: boundaries, borders, frontiers, peripheries and margins, with each designation implying a "progressively more substantive view of what lies at and beyond the edge" (original emphasis) (Parker 2000, 7). Thus:

Whereas the 'boundary', for example, is primarily the point where the present territory stops, the 'border' is what has to be crossed to get to the adjacent one. The 'frontier' actually seems to require that something be done with regard to what lies beyond the edge: it may be that defence is needed against the threat from the other side; conversely it may be that – as in the image of space as 'the final frontier' – the frontier must be breached and taken forward. (original emphasis).

(Parker 2000, 7)

What concerns us in this paper, however, is the distinction Parker makes between peripheries and margins. In the first instance, peripheries and margins imply much more complex relationships than the concepts of boundary, border and frontier. Not least, peripheries and margins exist as "substantive territories in their own right", that, whilst wedded and largely defined by that (the centre(s)) to which they are

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1 This section draws explicitly on (Parker 2000, 7-13). Unless otherwise stated all subsequent references in this section refer to this work.

peripheral/marginal, also exist as sites of action themselves. The central point that Parker wishes to make, therefore, is that peripheries and margins “are not merely the product of external powers” (Parker 2000, 7), but actually exist in two-way relationships with those powers. The distinction, however, is that with peripheries this relationship is heavily weighted in favour of the centre, with peripheries existing as subordinate and mainly mute entities - though never completely so. As will be seen below, Kaliningrad during the Soviet period corresponds well to this position. In contrast, margins possess much greater autonomy and potential power.

To highlight this point, Parker notes that ‘margin’ is etymologically related to the old word *marches*, which referred to “those edges that were difficult to penetrate and from whence various shadowy dangers threatened a feudal order” (Parker 2000, 7). Thus, whilst the medieval *marches* existed as zones where the feudal order was challenged, today’s margins can rather be seen as posing problems and questions for the Westphalian order of neatly demarcated territorial spaces. What this link emphasises, however, is that it is wrong to associate marginality with inferiority and dependency. Indeed, margins can be very important, possessing considerable power to impact back on the centre, to “bite back” as Parker puts it (Parker 2000, 8), and in turn to reconfigure the entity and political environment as a whole.

It is important to understand just what constitutes the power and influence of margins. Simply put, the margins’ power and influence stems from their uncertain status on the edge. Margins, by their very nature, exist in the shadows of the inside/outside distinctions of any particular order; their belonging and incorporation within any given entity always somewhat open to question. This position, Parker argues, gives them significant and utilisable capital to push their own agenda. Parker makes this point by problematising an argument made by A. O. Hirschman in a classic text examining the effects of exiting/leaving on organisations, firms and states (Hirschman 1970). One of Hirschman’s central arguments, Parker contends, was that those most loyal to an entity, those closest to the centre, can exert a much greater impact on the centre by threatening to leave (disloyalty) than those on the margins of an organisation/state, because their loyalty is much

more fundamental to the existence and identity of the centre in the first place. In contrast, Parker argues that the contrary conclusion is probably more justifiable and that it is in fact marginal groups that often possess the greatest influence. The reason is that the loyalty of those on the inside and close to the centre is virtually guaranteed since, themselves being defined by the centre they have nowhere else to go, therefore making their departure and disloyalty ultimately unlikely. In contrast, maintaining the support of the margins is much harder since margins (and marginal groups) often do have somewhere else to go. They harbour alternative identities that could be fostered in contact with other realms.

Parker makes the point with reference to election campaigns, where it is frequently the case that political parties take their 'core' supporters loyalty for granted and instead place greatest emphasis on enticing and securing the votes of those whose support is less certain (Parker 2000, 11–13). Similarly, and in terms of processes of nation-state building, it is notable that one of the primary points of emphasis of states has traditionally been on securing the loyalty or obedience of those nearest the margins of the polity. In this context, margins need not just be territorial, but can also be social and economic.<sup>2</sup> In either case, however, nation-builders have always been forced to negotiate, bargain, accommodate, entice, suppress and, if necessary, subjugate marginal groups in order to assert the authority of the centre (Parker 2000, 10–11). However, in these processes the margins clearly have a capacity to act back upon and to redefine the whole.

For the purposes of our paper, it is best to understand periphery and margin as different ends of a spectrum, rather than as clearly distinguishable opposites. In this respect, the argument of this paper is that, whilst during the Soviet period Kaliningrad occupied a predominantly peripheral position under the strict supervision of Moscow, today Kaliningrad has the potential (and is beginning) to move towards the position of a margin where it is possessed with much more constitutive power and influence.

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2 Although as Paasi makes clear in an extensive analysis of Finland (Paasi 1996), territorial borders frequently have a particularly pertinent symbolic importance in this regard.

However, whilst this broad frame and distinction between the positions of periphery and margin laid out by Parker appears instructive to us, the frame also leaves a number of questions unanswered, and it is here that we hope to make a contribution. From taking the broad frame we hope to be able to provide some insight into the mechanisms at work. The most obvious questions are how it is that a periphery can turn into a margin and what is the qualitative difference that is entailed in this move? For our particular case, therefore, the question is why and how it was that from being a periphery of the Soviet Union Kaliningrad is now assuming a more marginal position based on its stance as an overlapping case? How is it that this situation comes about? Or put more directly, how and when does a margin become a margin?

In Parker's elaboration these questions are essentially avoided, which can leave the impression that the process of moving from a peripheral to a marginal position is straightforward and unproblematic. There is a sense that all that is needed is that marginality be proclaimed to bring it, and the power resources and influence thereby entailed, into being. In our view, this impression is too simplistic. In being too taken for granted, it misses the political processes involved. Instead, we endeavour at sharpening the idea of marginality by exploring it as a contextual category and lay out three broad variables that will then be analysed through the case study on Kaliningrad, before a summary of our theoretical conclusions is presented at the end of the paper. These three variables concern:

- the presence (or lack) of agency and identity within the margin,
- the structure of the international/regional environment, and
- the structuring role of the attitudes of the centre(s) towards the margin.

Starting with the first variable, it is our contention that before a margin can come into existence actors are required who can actively elaborate, push and capitalise on the idea of marginality. These actors are essential in order to construct an identity for the margin in question that differentiates it from the centre to which it is predominately tied. In this respect, margins are margins by virtue of a constructed identity that places the region in a floating 'in-between' position vis-à-vis both its primary and at least one other centre. Unless actors take the lead in constructing an identity of difference (marginality) from the centre(s)

a margin will not emerge. Without a separate identity there is no subjectivity and consequently there can be no margin capable of wielding influence. In this respect, peripheries are peripheries precisely because they lack any significant sense of an 'in-between' identity. Rather, peripheries are characterised by their position as isolated and strictly bordered areas on the edge of a whole and lacking a distinct identity that the inhabitants occupying the area are able to capitalise upon in the pursuit of their collective interests. Finally, margins also require actors who are not only able to mobilise and inspire their own regional population, they also need to be able to mobilise and inspire opinion at the centre(s), to convince the centre(s) that their marginality is of wider benefit to all. This point will be returned to.

Secondly, structural forces are also important in constraining and enabling the opportunities for margins to emerge. In this respect, the Cold War period was not particularly conducive to marginality because the distinction between insiders and outsiders was very clear and conflict driven. Playing on the margins was therefore risky and usually unsuccessful, as Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland each discovered to their cost and these states were consequently condemned to a peripheral status despite their clearly distinct identities. On the other hand, Finland is one example of a state that during this period was able to successfully attain a marginal position that prevented it from having to choose sides and instead to prosper by deliberately blurring the inside/outside distinction. Notably, this policy was dependent upon convincing both the Eastern and Western blocs that they too had something to gain out of Finland's marginality. Arguably, however, the more open post-Cold War international and regional structure is more conducive to the emergence of margins. Among other things, ideology no longer functions in the same divisive manner as previously. It is important to emphasise, however, that structural change does not in itself produce margins (or peripheries), it only opens or closes down the room available for manoeuvre.

Thirdly, and as indicated by the examples of Finland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, this room for manoeuvre is also affected by the attitudes of the centres to which a margin is trying to carve out a distinctive position for itself. As pointed out by Anssi Paasi, representations

of margins and peripheries are typically constructed and defined by the central actors (Paasi 1995, 255). This is to say that marginality, as with all other identities, is dependent upon an audience of outsiders (in this case the relevant centre(s)) for verification and endorsement of the identity in question.<sup>3</sup> On the positive side, if a margin is able to convince the centre(s) of its uniqueness and difference, and more particularly if the margin is able to sell its marginal status as also being beneficial to the centre(s), then the centre(s) may well pick up the idea and promote its further development. On the negative side, however, if a margin is unable to adequately sell itself to the centre(s), a marginal status may be denied and the peripherality of a region re-inscribed. As we will see below, Russia's hesitant and somewhat suspicious attitude to regionalisation, which it is feared may be undermining the unity of the Russian state, has been one significant factor in curtailing the emergence of a marginal identity for Kaliningrad and reaffirming its position as a Russian periphery. Likewise, the EU still remains to be fully convinced, although in both cases we will see that more positive developments are now becoming apparent.

Thus, even when structural factors may be in one's favour, and even when actors within a region are motivated to tell stories of marginality, playing on marginality may still yet fail. In this respect, we argue that successfully capitalising on marginality is actually a very complicated task for those involved and a task that unquestionably entails significant processes of trial and error and learning. These difficulties are compounded by the fact that since marginality entails gaining acceptance for an identity of being 'in-between', this acceptance is required not simply from one centre, but at least from two, and maybe more depending on the margin and situation involved. This, as we will see, can make acceptance of marginality dependent on the character of relations between the centres involved. If these relations are characterised by suspicion and distrust, the possibility for capitalising on a marginal position may be diminished, since the ability of the margin to carry both centres along with the idea will be seriously problematised.

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3 For a theoretical elaboration of such identity issues see, (Carr 1986; Ringmar 1996; Schrag 1997).

As stated, with regard to the example of Kaliningrad we argue that Kaliningrad currently appears to be in the process of moving from a peripheral to a more marginal position, where it has greater influence and power, enabling it to contribute to setting the agenda of regional politics in the European north. Instead of just being influenced by one centre, the region is influenced by two. More particularly, however, we will argue that the idea of Kaliningrad as a margin, as opposed to a periphery, has taken some years to emerge and was only at its infancy in the early 1990s. This is to say that a sense of Kaliningrad as possessing a distinct marginal identity vis-à-vis the rest of Russia, and also in relation to the EU, was largely absent. Lacking this sense of distinctiveness the region appeared unable to mobilise itself to the challenges it has faced, instead abnegating responsibility to Moscow, and to a lesser extent to the EU. This situation is now changing as a distinct identity is emerging that in turn is presenting Kaliningraders with a sense of subjectivity and a desire to take responsibility for their own affairs. Before analysing these developments, however, it is first necessary to provide a brief historical background to Kaliningrad, as well as to examine in more detail how the region became peripheralised during the Soviet period.

### A Brief History of Kaliningrad

The region and city today known as Kaliningrad has not always been confined to the fringes of European politics. Indeed, before its incorporation into the Soviet Union after World War II, the city of Königsberg (as it was previously called) had often played a much more central role. Of particular note, was Königsberg's position as one of the central city's in the Hanseatic trade regime of the 14th–16th centuries that was dominated by German traders. This trade regime linked up merchants from as far away as Novgorod with those in the Dutch towns of Kampen, Stavoren and Deventer, and also included such cities as Tallinn, Tartu, Riga, Danzig, Stettin, Hamburg, Bremen, Lübeck, and Bergen. In this trade regime, Königsberg existed in a rather open and internationalised space, with the Hansa establishing a “network linking Northern Europe to the Continent and linking the Baltic states to England, a network through which goods, persons and ideas have floated freely for 600 years” (Bakke 1996, 42).

The region has also existed as a nodal point in intellectual terms. Established in 1544, for over two and a half centuries Königsberg University was the main centre of learning and academic culture for the whole of East Prussia, with Immanuel Kant, Gottfried Herder and Johann Georg Hamman all closely connected to the institution, and whose works had considerable impact throughout the Baltic Sea Region, including in Russia (Joenniemi 1996, 85).

Politically, Königsberg and its environs have also at times held a position of importance. The earliest recorded inhabitants of the area appear to have been the Prussians, a people related to their Baltic neighbours and speaking a language similar to Latvian and Lithuanian. During the 13th century, however, the German order of Teutonic Knights began their conquest of this part of the Baltic coast, building a series of forts throughout the region and in 1255 establishing the city of Königsberg. The assimilation of the Germans to the Prussians and vice versa became such that, whilst the Prussians' language and cultural distinctiveness was to die out over the following centuries, the Germans in turn began to call themselves Prussians (Krickus 2002, 17–18). In the 15th century the domination of the Teutonic Knights in the region was replaced by that of the Polish-Lithuanian union. However, during the 17th century the Germans began to assert themselves once more, with Prussia gradually being absorbed by the German state of Brandenburg and in 1701 Prussia became a kingdom in its own right, with Frederick I as King and with Königsberg designated the capital of the new entity (Krickus 2002, 18–19; Joenniemi 1996, 85). Thus, it was from Königsberg that the emergent and powerful Prussian state of the 18th and 19th centuries had its origins, a fact that has not been lost on present day romantic German nationalists, who since the collapse of the Soviet Union have argued for the re-incorporation of Kaliningrad/Königsberg into Germany.

During the Seven Years War (1756–63) East Prussia, including Königsberg, was temporarily occupied by the Russians, whilst in 1772, following the division of Poland, East Prussia (which it was henceforth called) became reunited with the rest of the Prussian state. Subsequently, East Prussia was to play an important role in German resistance against Napoleon, with Prussian King Frederick William III

moving his court from Berlin to Königsberg in the face of Napoleon's advance. Following the First World War, East Prussia became a central point of international debate as it was geographically isolated from the rest of Germany with the recreation of Poland and the establishment of Danzig (Gdansk) as a free city. The problems of German access to and from East Prussia, which was inhibited by the 'Polish Corridor' providing Poland with access to the Baltic Sea, were such as to contribute to the outbreak of the Second World War (Krickus 2002, 19–23; Joenniemi 1996, 85–86).

### Kaliningrad and the Soviet Union

After World War II, Stalin demanded that Königsberg and the surrounding area of East Prussia be given to Russia. The motivations for this were several. On the one hand, the annexation of German Königsberg and East Prussia was seen as compensation, reward and revenge for German aggression against the Soviet Union and the sacrifices the country had made during the war. In this respect, Kaliningrad was to become important for the Soviet Union and Soviet identity as a whole, as a symbol of the suffering and victory of the Great Patriotic War. However, it was also notable that Stalin claimed that East Prussia had originally been a Slavic territory in any case. On the other hand, it was also claimed that the area would provide Russia with an ice free port. Finally, the region was also claimed on military grounds as an outpost that would provide a frontline base against future aggression from the West. Subsequently, the region was turned into a heavily militarised garrison town, with a military personnel of some 100,000 and the Headquarters of the Baltic Sea Fleet located there. Combined, all these things tended to assert a rather strong territorial logic on the region where borders became of great importance. Notably, Kaliningrad's borders with Poland and the West were totally sealed and even Soviet citizens had difficulty gaining access. Moreover, the military and symbolic importance attached to Kaliningrad was also to be significant in the region's subjugation and peripheralisation to the demands of Moscow thereafter (Oldberg 2000, 271; Sergounin 2002, 3).

The peripheralisation of Kaliningrad to Moscow was, however, principally driven by considerations of identity. Having annexed the territory of

the former East Prussia to Russia, it was important for the Russian authorities to 'naturalise' this connection by Russianising the territory. In this respect, Königsberg's rather rich history provided a great problem for Moscow. As Sezneva puts it, if identity is largely constituted through historical consciousness, then the history of the region was problematic (Sezneva Forthcoming 2002). Despite Stalin's claim that East Prussia had originally been Slavic territory, it was clear that Russian connections to the region were limited at best. What resulted was a rather radical process of historical erasure and replacement, with the complete denial of the region's German heritage, which in turn was substituted for the region's Sovietisation. Put another way, Kaliningrad was to become a place without history, or rather a place where history was limited to the post-war period.<sup>4</sup>

This process began with the de-Germanisation and de-historicisation of the region. Most obvious, of course, was the renaming in 1946 of Königsberg as Kaliningrad, after Mikhail Kalinin, the recently deceased Soviet President, and an action clearly demonstrating the power of the centre to define the position of the periphery (Oldberg 2000, 272). Neither was Königsberg the only place to undergo renaming: other cities, towns, villages, streets, areas and geographical features such as rivers were also given new identities in this way. The German past had to be erased. This was further accompanied by the deportation of the almost 140,000 surviving German inhabitants of the region (the last leaving in 1947), to be replaced by settlers from the rest of the Soviet Union, principally Russians, Ukrainians and Belarussians and the Soviet army.

Architectural features and forms also received transformation in order to prevent Kaliningrad's new inhabitants from identifying with the non-Soviet past. Thus, most of the old buildings that had managed to survive the bombing raids of the British Air Force during the war were torn down. Particularly symbolic was the fate of the ruins of

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4 As Sezneva points out, this imperative was also mandated by Marxism's teleological (progressive) view of history that might begin to encourage unwelcome comparisons with the past. On this logic the only solution was the silencing of the past (Sezneva Forthcoming 2002).

Königsberg's medieval castle, which were blown up on the orders of the Communist Party authorities in 1968. The decision was no less symbolic for the fact that it was taken in direct response to a proposal from the West German government that they would pay for the renovation and rebuilding of the castle as part of a good will gesture. Having destroyed the castle's ruins, the authorities instead ordered the building of the 'House of Soviets' on its foundations, a huge block building that locals referred to as the "Monster". In this symbolic action of the 'new' modern Soviet world replacing that of the 'old' feudal German past, it was not lost on Kaliningraders, however, that the House of Soviets was never occupied, never quite finished and thought by many to be unsafe.<sup>5</sup>

The architectural transformation also extended to town planning, with the winding cobblestone streets of medieval Königsberg being straightened into asphalt covered Soviet avenues lined by the same block buildings and interspersed with the same memorials and statues that adorned many Soviet cities (Oldberg 2000, 272). This architectural standardisation, Alexei Yurchak has argued, was considered a central part of the wider State ideology in which uniformity and omnipresence was prioritised (with distinctiveness and individuality frowned upon) and in which authority was asserted through the 'hegemony of representation'. Kaliningrad, too, was forced into this frame and as such visually subordinated to the centre (Yurchak cited in Sezneva Forthcoming 2002).

These visual representations were also accompanied by new historical narratives that further contributed to Kaliningrad's peripheralisation and its subordination to Moscow. Unable to draw on Kaliningrad's local history to emphasise its Russian/Soviet belonging, the region's history was instead retold in terms of a wider Russian grand narrative. In this, Kaliningrad's/Königsberg's local history was ignored and the importance of Kaliningrad as a territory to Russia was instead played up.<sup>6</sup>

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5 Oldberg ascribes the decision to knock the building down to a regional party leader (Oldberg 2000, 272). In contrast, Krickus claims the decision came direct from Brezhnev (Krickus 2002, 38).

6 If the German period was discussed at all it was denigrated as feudal, capitalist-imperialist and fascist (Oldberg 2000, 272).

Thus, whilst on the one hand school children were shielded from the pre-Soviet political and social history of Kaliningrad, they were instead taught extensively about the geography, flora and fauna of the region. History as such only entered the picture with World War II, with Kaliningrad receiving its identity as one arena in which the Soviet Union fought and defeated German fascism (Sezneva Forthcoming 2002). To quote a recent popular booklet on Kaliningrad from 1996:

The new era began in Kaliningrad in April 1945. Half a century ago, the youngest, western-most and the most multi-national Oblast of our Motherland arose from the remnants of the ruined East Prussia. A former nest of fascist aggression was turned into a peaceful outpost on the border between the Russian Federation and Europe. Literally, every inch of this land is drenched with the blood of Russian soldiers and patriots.

(qtd. in Sezneva Forthcoming 2002)

In this discourse, therefore, it was the fertilisation of the land by Russia's dead soldiers and patriots that made Kaliningrad Russian. In this way, Kaliningrad was factored into the wider Soviet war epic. It is notable, therefore, that Kaliningrad's subsequent distinctiveness came from its designation as a military outpost and first line of Soviet defence (and attack). This profile reaffirmed Kaliningrad's subordination, peripheralisation and reliance on Moscow, a point further inscribed by the fact that Kaliningrad, unlike the Baltic republics, was placed directly under the administrative control of the Russian Federation (Sezneva Forthcoming 2002).

All this is not to say that a sense of Kaliningrad as somehow distinct from the rest of Russia was entirely absent during the Soviet period. As Sezneva points out (Sezneva Forthcoming 2002), as the years unfolded a sense of difference did begin to emerge. Despite their efforts, the Soviet authorities were never able to totally eradicate the past, and those bits that did remain, for example in people's memories and in architectural fragments, did inspire a certain nostalgia for the German/European past.<sup>7</sup> This became most pronounced towards the

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7 As Oldberg notes, not everything could be destroyed. Whilst some of the still intact buildings were needed for various reasons (offices, warehouses, etc), in

final years of the Soviet Union, during the period of Perestroika and Glasnost. During this period a certain hybridisation of identity materialised (Byrløkken 2000) and the idea of Kaliningraders as ‘Western/European’ Russians began to emerge, a point that was sometimes emphasised by reference to the ‘European’ time zone Kaliningrad existed in, one hour later than Moscow. Also notable was the establishment of the ‘Prussian Club’, an underground society of some of the region’s intelligentsia that began looking back into the past and set out to catalogue all the remaining examples of German architecture in Kaliningrad and to promote the East Prussian heritage. Likewise, some artists also embarked on their own imaginary and idealised historical reconstruction of the former Königsberg in their paintings and sculptures (Sezneva Forthcoming 2002).

However, whilst there was some level of differentiation from the rest of Russia and an understanding and identification of Kaliningrad as somehow distinct, this was not widespread (Oldberg 2000, 274). Indeed, on the whole it seems most Kaliningraders did not distinguish themselves from the rest of their Soviet and Russian counterparts in any meaningful sense. This would almost certainly have been the case with regard to the 100,000 military personnel plus their families, whose residence in Kaliningrad was often transitory, and who made up a substantial proportion of the region’s nearly 1 million inhabitants. In this respect the population had a ‘migrant’ character to it (Oldberg 2000, 271). The point, however, is that this absence of a strong identification with Kaliningrad as a distinct space with its own identity and traditions separate from the rest of Russia contributed to the region’s peripheralisation within the Soviet Union and its subordination to the power of the centre. Lacking a clear sense of a distinct identity, the region also lacked any real subjectivity. Instead, Kaliningrad existed as simply an object of the greater Russian whole, but one stuck on the periphery and for the most part voiceless.

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line with Marxism-Leninism statues and monuments dedicated to ‘progressive’ Germans were also kept. This explains why Immanuel Kant’s tombstone was left intact Oldberg 2000, 273).

After the Soviet Union  
*Structural Change*

The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s drastically changed Kaliningrad's environment. Not only has this structural change opened up room for Kaliningrad to manoeuvre away from its Cold War peripherality to a more marginal position, to a certain extent marginality has almost been thrust upon it. This is to say that once the Baltic States and Belarus claimed their independence, Kaliningrad de facto became something of an in-between and overlapping space. This position will be further enhanced by the forthcoming EU enlargement, which will leave Kaliningrad territorially enclosed within the EU's borders. Indeed, the effects of this are already being felt as the Baltic States and Poland begin to institute the rules and regulations of the EU's *acquis communautaire*, thereby bringing their social and economic production and distribution practices in line with EU norms and standards. Being surrounded by EU states, Kaliningrad will also be forced to adapt to these standards if it is to preserve, let alone increase, its economic trade with its neighbours. Thus, operating at the watershed between the integrated/integrating and the unintegrated Kaliningrad now occupies a position where it is not just subject to the governance of Moscow, but also of the EU (Joenniemi 2001, 320, 330).

Kaliningrad's new position as an enclave of the EU also entails a series of problems for Kaliningrad that have been well documented and provide the essence of the current Kaliningrad dilemma. Amongst other things, there is a danger that Kaliningrad will lose its energy supply from Russia if Lithuania leaves the old Soviet energy grid and links up to the European one, as it has indicated as its intention. Also of concern is that, locked out of the EU, Kaliningrad's economic imbalance vis-à-vis its neighbours is likely to grow. This is already clear in that, as accession countries, Poland and the Baltic States are recipient to sizeable EU funds to assist them in developing their social and economic systems and infrastructures up to EU standards. These funds dwarf those received by Kaliningrad through the TACIS instrument

(Smorodinskaya 2001, 61).<sup>8</sup> The most well known issue, however, is that with EU enlargement Kaliningrad will be surrounded by the EU's Schengen Wall. This is going to have a number of negative effects for freedom of movement, not least by requiring Kaliningraders to purchase a visa if they wish to travel to the Russian mainland by land (car, bus, train), which is the easiest and by far the cheapest option.<sup>9</sup> It will also adversely affect the many shuttle-traders (estimated to be around 10,000 by the EU Commission (Commission of the European Communities 2001)) who make a living out of cross-border trade (Trenin 2000, 35).<sup>10</sup> Whilst the recognition of these problems has begun to inspire a search for solutions, the important point from our perspective is that these structural developments have emphasised Kaliningrad's geographical distance from Russia, highlighting its unique status as an exclave and opening a space by which Kaliningraders might begin to move away from a peripheral position towards the marginal position of an in-between.

Importantly, other aspects of the structural change occasioned by the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union have also created greater possibilities for Kaliningrad to capitalise on a marginal position, and to move beyond its former peripheral status. On the one hand, whilst it has been shown that playing on marginality during the Cold War was not impossible (note Finland), with the Cold War premised on conflict the abilities for this, however, were

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8 According to Stephen Dewar, between 2000-2006 Poland will be eligible for up to EUR 1.1 billion in EU assistance funds per year. For Lithuania the figure will be about EUR 180 million. In contrast, through TACIS Kaliningrad only receives around EUR 4-5 million a year (Dewar 2001, 102).

9 As Victor Romanovsky of the Kaliningrad Administration has complained: "In fact there could be a situation when a visit of an inhabitant of the Oblast to any region of Russia, for instance, to relatives, on a business trip, to funerals of relatives or friends will be dependent on the norms and rules of the Schengen States or the decisions of euro-officials responsible for visa registration. The visa regime for the inhabitants of the Kaliningrad Oblast is the first really dividing line, which could turn the region into a large 'reservation' inside Europe" (Romanovsky 2001, 90).

10 For a more specific analysis of the problems of Schengen and of Schengen in relation to Kaliningrad see (Arnswald and Jopp 2001, 60-96).

limited and rather case specific. This is to say that, in an era of allies and enemies the Eastern and Western blocs placed a premium on defining the membership of the opposing alliances, of carving the world up neatly into spaces of 'ours' and 'theirs'. This left little room for in-between cases, which were often viewed suspiciously, and which made playing on this idea difficult and often unattractive. Moreover, the nature of the marginality that could be developed was also highly constrained by the very environment of conflict. With the end of the Cold War these conflictual frames have dissipated. Instead of the pre-occupation with the territorial division of the world into ours and theirs, the end of the Cold War has thrust issues of globalisation, regionalisation and localisation onto the agenda. The point is that these concepts open greater space for marginality, with marginality actually often encouraged. Indeed, in the emergent world of post-modernity, 'difference', or playing on the margins, is often understood as a great resource, rather than the handicap it has traditionally been understood to be. In this respect, in the postmodern world to be successful it is important to have a unique brand or logo, something that sets one apart. This is a world where it is precisely difference that sells.

As such, therefore, the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union have created a structural change in two respects. On the one hand, Kaliningrad finds itself thrust into a radically different geopolitical position, soon to be a territorial enclave within the EU. On the other hand, globalisation, regionalisation, localisation, and the attendant talk of postmodernity, have radically changed dominant frames of reference, with Cold War questions of high politics military security being replaced by an emphasis on economics and questions of identity. These structural changes, it is argued, have created an environment for Kaliningrad that is highly amenable for the oblast to move away from its peripheral status to a more marginal position possessing its own subjectivity. In this section, we will analyse whether Kaliningrad and Kaliningraders have been able to respond to these challenges. In the first place, we look at developments and discourses within Kaliningrad. We then place Kaliningrad in the context of EU-Russian relations, in order to show how the centres in relation to which Kaliningrad could be able to capitalise on a marginal status, are either helping or hindering this process.

*Discourse in Kaliningrad*

In the initial post-Cold War years there were some signs that Kaliningraders might have rather quickly managed to grasp the possibilities that lay in developing a distinct identity for Kaliningrad and claiming some subjectivity from Moscow. The Governor, Yuri Matochkin, who was appointed by President Yeltsin was important in this regard. Amongst other things, Matochkin advocated linking Kaliningrad more closely with its neighbouring regions and proposed that Kaliningrad be upgraded to the status of a republic of the Russian Federation, so that the regional authorities would have more powers to cope with the problems facing Kaliningrad (Joenniemi 2002, 428). This period, however, was short lived and for most of the 1990s Kaliningrad has remained closer to the peripheral end of the scale, being rather unwilling to take responsibility into its own hands.

Perhaps the central problem here has been ‘the problem of history’. With its Russian foundations lying in the Soviet annexation of the region and Stalin’s forced deportations of the previous German inhabitants, Kaliningrad appears inimically tied to the Russian centre. Thus, whilst Leningrad was able to return to the historical legacy of St. Petersburg in order to reorient itself to the new situation and to stake out its separate interests from Moscow in the post-Soviet world, Kaliningrad lacks such historical resources. Those choices that do exist, such as returning to Königsberg and East Prussia, are highly controversial and have reminded Kaliningraders (and Russians more generally) of Russia’s limited claim to the territory (Joenniemi 2002, 418). Arguably, this historical problem has resulted in a form of reactionism as a result of which Kaliningrad’s identity is seen simply in terms of its position as only one part of the Russian Federation.

This thinking has been further emphasised by the fact that, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Kaliningrad is all that remains of the territories to which Russia expanded during the Great Patriotic War (Wellman 1996, 172). This symbolic link between great Russia and Kaliningrad has only become stronger with the shrinking of Russia’s sphere of influence. This way of relating to the past tends to reproduce binary thinking of either-or and self-other. Throughout

much of the 1990s the result was that Kaliningraders (and Moscow) became suspicious of talk of opening up Kaliningrad to the external environment, seeing it as endangering Russia's geographical and political integrity, as well as aimed at undermining the collective consciousness of Russia (Joenniemi 1996, 95, 96).

Moreover, these concerns have made Kaliningraders (and Moscow) highly sensitive to claims of nationalist groups in Germany, Poland and Lithuania who have each expressed some right to the territorial possession of Kaliningrad. Despite the fact that the governments of these states have generally refrained from raising such issues,<sup>11</sup> they remain highly motivational in Kaliningrad and perpetuate understandings of Russia as an opposition to the West, an identity that leaves little room for Kaliningrad to adopt the marginal position of an 'in-between'. When such fears are to the fore, playing up marginality and an in-between status becomes an unpatriotic activity threatening to sell out the country to the Western imperialists. Fears of re-Germanisation have been foremost here and the region has been highly sensitive towards German investment in Kaliningrad, particularly when this might involve land purchases (Oldberg 2000, 279; Joenniemi, Dewar and Fairlie 2000, 6).

Kaliningrad's inability in the early 1990s to grasp the opportunity to seize a marginal status and escape its peripherality, was also promoted by the fact that Kaliningrad became a major transit and transfer point for Soviet forces leaving Eastern Europe. Up until mid-1994 the military population of Kaliningrad increased sizeably, further enhancing Kaliningrad's status as a garrison/fortress city/region. This tended to reaffirm Kaliningrad's peripherality as simply one edge of the Russian whole, with the large military presence reproducing a territorial logic of inside/outside, in which borders are seen as sites of exclusion, not of interaction and integration (Joenniemi 2002, 422).

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11 Lithuania is a partial exception here as in 1993 the Lithuanian Ambassador to the United States claimed Kaliningrad as Lithuanian territory. However, the Lithuanian government subsequently retracted all such statements (Krickus 1998 5–6; Also see Wellman 1996, 171–174).

The lack of a distinct regional identification, and Kaliningrad's subordination to the broader idea of Russia, became manifest at the 1993 Duma elections, at which Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's nationalist Liberal Democratic Party became the largest party in Kaliningrad (Oldberg 2002, 60). In mirroring the nationalist reaction throughout Russia to the Westernising moves of the Russian government immediately after 1991, this vote indicated the way in which most Kaliningraders were unable to differentiate Kaliningrad from the rest of Russia. This subordination of Kaliningrad to the broader Russian discourse, and the absence of leaders in Kaliningrad able to provide a vision, in which Kaliningrad could capitalise on a position of marginality, was then entrenched with the replacement of Matochkin by Leonid Gorbenko at the Governorship elections in 1996. Mired in allegations of corruption throughout his governorship, Gorbenko appeared to lack any clear vision for Kaliningrad. Although sometimes Gorbenko did talk of the need for greater integration with the West, and even argued that Kaliningrad could act as a bridge between Russia and Europe, at other times it is clear that he also feared such interaction. Indeed, Gorbenko even went so far as to proclaim that he wanted 'regional autarky' for Kaliningrad, i.e., to isolate Kaliningrad from its neighbouring countries, but also from Russia if necessary (Holtom 2001; Oldberg 2002, 61–62). Come the Duma elections of 1999, however, Gorbenko threw his support behind the Unity movement of Prime Minister Putin, which topped the polls in Kaliningrad, once again showing the region's affiliation with the centralising trends in Moscow (Oldberg 2002, 63).

However, whilst for most of the 1990s Kaliningrad and Kaliningraders have appeared to lack both the identity and the individual leaders that would enable the region to capitalise on a position of marginality, thereby condemning the region to peripherality, towards the turn of the century significant signs that this is changing have become apparent. The clearest sign of this has been the defeat of Gorbenko by Vladimir Jedorov in the elections for governor in November 2000. Despite his former position as Admiral of Russia's Baltic Sea Fleet, and despite clearly being supported by Putin in the elections, Jedorov has done much to enliven debate in Kaliningrad and to claim a greater sense of distinctiveness and subjectivity for the region vis-à-vis Moscow. In doing so, Jedorov has begun to challenge the peripheral

status of Kaliningrad by clearly pointing out that the region not only needs to take into account the actions of Moscow, but also those of Brussels. Thus, rather than being a periphery on the edge of Russia, Jegorov seems instead to work with an understanding of Kaliningrad as a margin sitting in-between two centres and with a subjectivity of its own.

Central here, has been the initiation of a much more open discourse on Kaliningrad's role in European politics. Key, has been the idea that Kaliningrad could develop into a linking-region between the EU and Russia, a 'gateway', 'test case' and 'pilot region' for the future of European governance (Jegorov 2001, 12; Romanovsky 2001, 91). Indeed, Jegorov and his fellow officials have even drawn parallels between Kaliningrad's position and that of Hong Kong, the idea being that, like Hong Kong, Kaliningrad could be an innovative space where one country might experiment with two systems (Khlopetsky 2001, 55). Particularly radical has been a proposal by two members of the Yabloko party in Kaliningrad, that the oblast should be granted an autonomous status that would therefore enable it to join the EU economic area without ceding from Russia (Oldberg 2002, 67). Also notable, though, has been the recommendations of the Kaliningrad Regional Duma that explicitly make a case for opening the region to greater internationalisation, politically and economically, and ideas promoting the blurring of the region's borders (Klemeshev, Kozlov and Fyodorov 2002, 300–325).

All of this talk is driven by a desire that Kaliningraders should have a say in confronting the problems that EU enlargement to Poland and the Baltic States will bring to the region. As a result, the regional administration is taking an increasingly internationalised stance, forging contacts and playing host to numerous international visitors in a way that before simply did not happen (Holtom 2001). This has also included hosting a conference on Kaliningrad's future, towards which one observer has asserted Moscow was highly hostile, even to the point of threatening to ban it as a result of fears of the unexpected consequences that such paradiplomatic activity can bring (Jakobson-Obolenski 2001).<sup>12</sup> As we

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12 The conference was held on 8–10 February 2001.

will see below, all this reflects Moscow's continuing desire to retain strict centralised sovereign control over Russian territory. The point, however, is that such actions and events further serve to create a subjectivity for Kaliningrad as an actor in its own right, not just in the minds of Kaliningraders, but also in the consciousness of Moscow and Brussels.

Beyond the structural changes identified above, this development of a distinct subjectivity for Kaliningrad has no doubt also been facilitated in at least three other respects. Firstly, following the military transfers of the early 1990s, it is notable that with this period of transition over, the militarisation of Kaliningrad has declined significantly. Indeed, Russian military planners seem to have concluded that in the present age Kaliningrad has little military strategic significance, whilst its isolated status makes it virtually indefensible. As a result, the numbers of military personnel in the region have been significantly reduced. This is important for two reasons. On the one hand, this de-militarisation pushes issues of borders and territorial control down the agenda, opening space for different frames of reference that see borders in more open terms (Joenniemi 2001, 324–325). On the other hand, with fewer military personnel in the region the population of Kaliningrad is likely to become more stable and sedentary, and therefore more likely to identify and develop an attachment to their locale.

Secondly, Russia's economic crisis at the end of the 1990s (which affected Kaliningrad particularly hard) and the ineffectiveness of Kaliningrad's status as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in providing for the welfare of Kaliningraders, has fostered some disillusionment with Moscow. Whilst some people feel abandoned by Moscow, others argue that if Moscow is unable to manage Kaliningrad's economic needs then Kaliningraders should be free to do it themselves. Put more broadly, what these things have highlighted is that Kaliningrad has special interests apart from those of Moscow, a realisation that in turn is likely to stimulate local identity formation (Oldberg 2000, 282-283).

Thirdly, no doubt also important has been the increasing face-to-face interaction of Kaliningraders with foreigners, not least Germans, be they ex-residents visiting their old homeland, tourists, businessmen or politicians. These interactions appear to have had some effect on

breaking down the stereotypes of threatening otherness that were dominant in the region immediately after 1991. In turn, of course, Kaliningraders are now freer than at any time in the past to visit their neighbouring countries. This has resulted in a situation where many Kaliningraders, particularly the young, are likely to have had more direct experience of the West than they will have had of the Russian homeland. Notably, Kaliningraders now often speak about going 'to Russia' or of their relatives 'in Russia', terms that imply a certain social distance to Russia proper, in contrast to the more 'European' Kaliningraders (Oldberg 2000, 275, 281–282).

Changing attitudes towards the region's historical legacy as Königsberg have paralleled all this. A renewed interest in the German history of Kaliningrad is apparent. One part of this has been a focus on the Hanseatic legacy. Given the previous isolated status of Kaliningrad this is interesting as the Hansa points towards, and provides historical justification, for a more globalised/regionalised future for Kaliningrad in which Kaliningrad can act as a nodal link between the West and Russia. Immanuel Kant has also been resurrected as Kaliningrad's/Königsberg's most favourite son, whilst there has also been some discussion that Kaliningrad could revert to its previous name (Oldberg 2000, 276). At an architectural level, there has also been a return to favour of Prussian/German styles. Sezneva argues that this represents an intentional attempt to assert a distinctive identity for Kaliningrad by making a break from the Soviet heritage associated with Moscow rule, whilst concomitantly pre-empting any attempts by its Western neighbours at isolating the region (Sezneva 2001). The new identity being forged, therefore, is not one of making a choice between Europe and Russia, but of Kaliningrad carving out its own space as a margin, an 'in-between'. In adapting to the new structural realities facing it, it seems that Kaliningraders no longer are so threatened by their history and instead see it as an opportunity to orient themselves to the future.

In other words, whereas in the past 'their history' only extended back to the Soviet annexation of Königsberg after the war and its renaming as Kaliningrad in 1946, now the history of Königsberg, back to its foundation in 1255, appears to have been appropriated as also

a part of Kaliningraders' identity. Indeed, if anything it is now the Soviet past that is in danger of being forgotten. This fact has been most clearly symbolised in discussions over what to do with the unfinished House of Soviets, also known as the 'Monster'. Plans exist that call for its demolition and for it to be replaced by a trade centre and a park museum that would include a copy of the original castle, the foundations upon which the House of Soviets was built (Oldberg 2000, 276). This discussion raises important questions about the Soviet past more generally and about how Kaliningraders can best approach today's world. Whilst the Soviet past might presently resonate badly for some, there would be a clear irony if in moving away from that period the same policies of historical negation were also used as by Stalin. In fact, it might be that just as the pre-Kaliningrad German history can be used in opening for the future, taking due account of the Soviet period might also have the same effects, further emphasising Kaliningrad's resources as a margin and preventing its peripheralisation as just yet another part of German medieval Europe.

This also brings us to the final sections of this paper. As we argued at the start of the paper, in order to assert and secure a position as a margin it is not always enough that a discourse of marginality be told from within the region in question. It is also important that the centres with regard to which marginality is aspired can also be mobilised to view a marginal status as valuable to them as well. In the case of Kaliningrad it is important that they are able to convince Moscow and the EU that the development of a distinct identity and subjectivity for Kaliningrad is also in their interest. In this respect, negating and forgetting Kaliningrad's Soviet past might be taken as a negative sign by Moscow and as presaging the region's cessation from Russia. This is because it is precisely the Soviet past and the legacy of the Great Patriotic War that provides Moscow with a link to Kaliningrad at all. It would also conflict badly with dominant Russian understandings that depict today's Russian Federation as simply the successor state of both the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire (Trenin 2002, 82). In this regard, it might be best for Kaliningraders to be sensitive to these concerns if they hope to encourage Moscow to recognise them as a legitimate and distinct subject in European affairs. The following sections turn to these questions more explicitly, asking the extent to

which Moscow and Brussels have either hindered or promoted the emergence of Kaliningrad as a margin in EU-Russian relations.

*Kaliningrad in a Russian Perspective*

The leeway allowed for Kaliningrad by Russia during the post-Cold War years has remained limited. Russia is still very modern in its -essence. This is to say that as a political project it is based on rigid state-centric interpretations, which as a result provide scant space for regionalisation and local endeavours. This state of affairs is already reflected in that Kaliningrad, a region inherited from the Soviet period, administratively has the position of being a Russian oblast. As Igor Leshukov argues, it was deliberately left as "a sole Russian region" instead of providing it with any distinct status (Leshukov 2000, 129). This standardisation has subsequently turned out to be one of the main obstacles to furnishing the area with a particular standing, a position usually reserved for the 'national republics'. In contrast to the oblasts, these latter "are able to invoke the sovereignty clause and take a tough line with Moscow" (Leshukov 2000, 129). In principle, therefore, the Federal centre has treated Kaliningrad as simply one region among many, although it has been conceded that the oblast's geographic isolation warrants some special attention.

In general, therefore, the discourse on the oblast reflects a tension between seeing Kaliningrad as being strongly embedded in Russian-ness and yet simultaneously being provided with some European features. On the one hand, therefore, there is considerable optimism and willingness evident in Moscow towards opening up Kaliningrad. On the other hand, however, xenophobic fears of 'losing' the region are also very apparent. As noted above, whilst the concept of "a Baltic Sea Hong Kong"<sup>13</sup> is part of the visionary discourse, the region is also attached, in highly symbolic and emotional terms, to the memories of the 'Great Patriotic War', with Kaliningrad being seen as compensation for Russia's considerable sacrifices. As described by Ramûnas Januškauskas, it is widely seen as Russia's last

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13 The concept was initially launched in 1993 by Yuri Matochkin, the first Governor of the region. See, (Oldberg 2002, 27).

reward for victory, and notably, “Its symbolic and actual significance increased after Russia lost its former satellites and dependencies” (Janušauskas 2001, 236).

Importantly, this ‘all-Russian’ framing, one of either/or, tends to be rather insensitive to the needs of Kaliningrad itself. When viewed in this frame, in order for the Soviet/Russian past to preserve its meaning the oblast is purported as something to be defended, in particular against alternative (more open) depictions, but also more concretely against potentially offensive ‘foreign’ forces. The enlargement of NATO and the various German, Polish and Lithuanian voices advocating a ‘return’ of the region have fuelled such fears. Whilst, these worries have lost much of their edge over time, recent rumours, like those claiming that Germany hopes to take over the oblast in return for bailing out the region economically, can still attract attention and temporarily dominate the debate. It is suspected, in this defensive and sovereignty-gearred part of the debate, that there will be efforts of settling Kaliningrad’s geographic discontinuity, not by changing the meaning or function of the existing borders, but by re-drawing them physically in a fashion that is inevitably confrontational in questioning Russia’s ‘self’ and its togetherness. The debate has, for this part, and especially during the early-mid-1990s, followed a very modern logic of tight territorial control and integrity. There is a distinct division into we/them, with the ‘europeanisation’ of Kaliningrad – as pointed out by Vasily Valuev – increasingly seen as the risk that Moscow “loses” the region (Valuev 2002).

More recent debates, however, tend to follow a different logic, in the sense that it is above all the nature – as opposed to the location – of the oblast’s borders that are at stake. In this instance, it is recognised that, with the fall of the Soviet Union, Kaliningrad’s borders have become international borders, whilst the forthcoming EU enlargement and extension of European integration will, to a large extent, determine the region’s future. From this perspective, it is understood that tight and impenetrable borders would obstruct co-operation and prevent the oblast from utilising its location, which potentially allows easy access to the Baltic states, Central and Eastern Europe, as well as to Western Europe and the rest of Russia.

Therefore, in addition to perceiving Kaliningrad as a military centre, Moscow has also explored ideas of developing it as an economic bridge. In order to avoid isolation and to take stock of the oblast's location as Russia's westernmost region, early on reform-oriented politicians developed a special scheme for the region. In 1991, a Free Economic Zone (FEZ) was set up in Kaliningrad to attract foreign trade and investment. In other words, it was recognised that with the end of the Cold War Kaliningrad had landed in an extraordinary position, one that called for special policies and treatment if the region was to improve its compatibility with the surrounding political and economic environment. In this respect, it was understood that Kaliningrad was not an ordinary part of Russia and any solution to its difficulties, therefore, could not simply draw on the dominant discourse of the need to preserve Russia as a homogeneous politico-economic space. Thus, through the FEZ some prerogatives were waived and barriers lowered in the sphere of foreign trade and investment. More particularly, Kaliningrad was granted customs and tax exemptions in foreign trade, as well as five years tax credit. This treatment strengthened the oblast's image as a zone with privileges and fairly open borders, and also added to a growing depiction of Kaliningrad alongside St. Petersburg as Russia's other window to Europe.<sup>14</sup>

However, the FEZ did not work as intended. Among other things, the oblast rather quickly became dependent on food imports from neighbouring countries. There were also pressures to do away with the privileges of Kaliningrad in order to restore homogeneity and to ensure that similar rules were applicable all over Russia (see Dewar 2000b, 186–199). Despite this, though, the scheme survived, if albeit under a new name, with it now designated a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). Among other reasons, the scheme was saved because various Federal authorities – such as the foreign ministry, ministry of finance, ministry of economics and customs committee – have quite divergent views. However, calls to end the scheme continue to be voiced. On the one hand, there are pressures to standardise Russian approaches to economic space, in particular emanating from international financial

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14 For an overview of the FEZ see, (Oldberg 2002, 25-37; Joenniemi, Dewar and Fairlie 2000, 12–15).

institutions such as the IMF and the talks on WTO membership. On the other hand, however, there are also those who think that a poor (and isolated) Kaliningrad may be better than a prosperous one (on this see Dewar 1999). This argument appears to rest on the supposition that an economically successful Kaliningrad (i.e., one that is linked to the EU more than to the mainland) could fuel separatist tendencies. In the view of some that influence Federal policy, it is better to be poor Russians than rich and independence-minded Kaliningraders. In this respect, peripherality is considered safe whereas increasing Kaliningrad's marginality could have unexpected consequences.

The impact of such resistance to reforms and to the utilisation of the few advantages that Kaliningrad may harbour has not been decisive, but such attitudes exist and have been influential on occasions. The continued longing for a well-bordered, i.e., isolationist alternative, explains in part the various vacillations and reversals that have accompanied the efforts to carve out a special place for Kaliningrad in the economic sphere. Thus, whilst steps have been taken in the direction of more openness and of facing up to the increased external influences, the measures utilised have been controversial and sometimes accompanied by backlashes.

Moscow has occasionally been accused of neglect and of having failed to develop a policy on Kaliningrad at all, although this is something of an overstatement. Therefore, as observed by a group of Polish analysts, it is true that earlier Moscow paid insufficient attention to the problems of the region, and that they lacked any clear vision for the region's development. However, this has changed with Russia endeavouring to devise various Kaliningrad-specific programmes and in general to define its interests vis-à-vis Kaliningrad (Cichocki, Pelczynska-Nałęcz and Wilk 2001, 53–63). Notably, an interesting perspective was opened up at the EU-Russia Summit in October 1999. At this meeting, and in response to the Union's Common Strategy on Russia (CSR), Russia presented Kaliningrad as a 'pilot region' within the framework of Euro-Russian co-operation in the 21st century (For and analysis see Borko 2000, 59–74). As such, the oblast was singled out as a rather special case, one that could spearhead development towards

an increasingly debordered and post-sovereign political landscape in Northern Europe. In fact, the oblast was turned into a joint concern with the EU, and a special agreement on Kaliningrad was called for. Moreover, the Russian Prime Minister entered into an agreement with his Lithuanian counterpart in June 1999, in order to prepare proposals aimed at facilitating Kaliningrad's engagement in the activities and programmes being developed under the EU's Northern Dimension. Later, Russia and Lithuania jointly presented to the EU Commission a list of potential projects to be included in the ND Action Plan (the so-called 'Nida initiative') (On the initiative see Usackas, 2000, 143–150). In March 2001 the Russian government also held a session on Kaliningrad, the aim of which was the development of a long-term concept for the region. Clearly, the Federal centre now devotes much more attention to Kaliningrad than it used to and increasingly understands that the oblast has special needs. In particular, it has been understood that with the advent of the NATO and EU enlargements, Russia has to have an integrated policy of its own in order to cope with the challenges these processes are and have raised. Various measures are needed in order to ensure a stable political setting, to smooth relations between the region and the centre, to counter the various economic and social ills of the region and to seek accommodation with the EU.

The various divisive frameworks and ways of conceptualizing the Kaliningrad 'puzzle' seem, in general, to have declined in importance. There is less security-related talk of a 'hard' kind and the one pertaining to 'soft' forms of security invites for co-operative endeavours rather than divides in any categorical manner. Ideas pertaining to Kaliningrad as a geopolitical asset and, more particularly, a 'Trojan horse', are still present in the debate<sup>15</sup>, although concepts such as the one put forward by Foreign Minister Ivanov, on Kaliningrad as a potential 'Eurobridge', appear more representative of the recent debate (Ivanov 2002, 11–13). The concept resonates, it seems, with President Putin's line of discussing the oblast in the context of themes such as freedom of movement and human rights, with Kaliningrad being seen as an

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15 See for example the analysis of the debate presented by Holtom (2001). As to the concept of a 'Trojan horse', Holtom refers to an article carried by the *Guardian*, October 5, 2001.

integral part of policies conducive to trans-boundary co-operation, regionalisation and other moves facilitating Russia's integration into European structures. The very concept of 'Eurobridge' singles out Kaliningrad as a special site harbouring a position of in-between. The very perspective tends to legitimise contacts with the rest of Europe in referring to openness, contacts and positive encounters, rather than division and compartmentation.

Notably, and as indicated above, Kaliningrad itself has been able to yield some impact on the policies pursued, particularly during the governorships of Matochkin, and now more recently Jegorov. A special body dealing with the region was established in 1996, although - as stated by Alexander Songal - "it has never properly fulfilled its role" (Songal 2000, 104). However, amongst other things, the oblast has been able to open trade missions in Vilnius and Gdansk, whilst the city of Kaliningrad for a time had an informal representation in Brussels. The governor of the region was also granted rights in the mid-1990s to deal directly with Polish and Lithuanian governments on issues pertaining to sub-regional cooperation (Fairlie and Sergounin 2001, 165). Moreover, Kaliningrad is also a part of the Baltica (together with Danish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish and Swedish regions), Saule (Lithuanian, Latvian, Swedish and Russian regions) and Niemen (together with Lithuanian and Belorussian areas) euroregions. The region is hence showing signs of being able to link up with its nearby environs, as is also demonstrated by Kaliningrad city's active participation in the work of the Union of Baltic Cities (UBC).

At the same time, the oblast has, however, remained economically weak. It is highly dependent on support from the Federation and burdened by its position as a military outpost. The autonomy granted to the region, therefore, has remained modest, and even that has often been mismanaged. The local struggles for power, partly emanating from within Russia's general political structures, have also undermined belief in the region's own ability to shoulder responsibility.

These negative images pertained particularly to the period of Gorbunov, whilst more recently improvements appear to have taken place. The fact that Kaliningrad is increasingly discussed in the context of

European integration has also added to the subjectivity of local actors. For example, in 2001 the oblast's Duma held hearings, that included listening to the opinion of foreign experts, in order to stake out a development plan. In line with these hearings, scholars from Kaliningrad University, Andrei Klemeshev, Sergei Kozlov and Gennady Fyodorov, prepared a kind of strategy and development plan based on Europeanisation for the future of Kaliningrad (Klemeshev, Kozlov and Fyodorov 2002, 136). Their plan indicates that local voices have grown stronger and become more nuanced. Not only do the scholars take into account the concerns of the Federal centre, they also enjoy local support, however, as yet their competence and the plan devised has not paid instant dividend.

Some processes also seem to work against increased local influence. With the EU and NATO enlargements approaching, the relevant processes increasingly have a top-down type of quality. These tend to furnish Kaliningrad with the position of an item on the more general EU-Russia agenda with little room for local influence. Notably, Kaliningrad's position also appears to have been aggravated by Putin's policies of centralisation and the decision, taken in May 2000, to establish seven 'federal districts' headed by the President's appointed representatives. For its part, and despite local attempts to be granted a district of its own, Kaliningrad was placed into the northwestern district with its centre in St. Petersburg. The head of the new district, Viktor Cherkosov, nominated a deputy to be located in Kaliningrad. In general, Cherkosov is seen as representing the views and interests of the federal centre, or as trying to become a power centre himself. The previous feature is, for example, evidenced by his effort of transferring the management of the Special Economic Zone from the regional administration to the federal government, and the latter by a number of clashes he has had with Kaliningrad's Governor, Jegorov. In general, therefore, it seems that currently the EU-Russia constellation, as well as the internal administrative reforms inside in Russia, work against Kaliningrad. They undermine its ability to move away from a position of peripherality to the more empowered position of a margin, although there are, simultaneously, other processes at work improving Kaliningrad's abilities to influence the larger issues (For this latter evaluation see Valuev 2002).

*The EU and Kaliningrad*

Like Russia, it has clearly begun to dawn upon the EU that Kaliningrad constitutes a rather special item on the joint EU-Russia agenda, although this conclusion did not mature at once. Indeed, and rather to the contrary, for years the EU tried to treat Kaliningrad as not too dissimilar from other Russian regions. In this respect, although Kaliningrad was seen as having special features in terms of its geographical detachment from the Russian mainland, it was, however, thought that this unique position of an exclave was chiefly of concern for Russia itself, not the EU. Moreover, getting involved appeared to be too sensitive. On the one hand, it was understood that the issues to be tackled could potentially entangle the Union in intra-Russian affairs, stir up negotiations on enlargement, and in general upset various crucial boundaries such as the one between the Union's internal and external affairs. On the other hand, opening up the issue of Kaliningrad, it was feared, would also give Russia the opportunity to interfere in intra-EU relations, particularly in the context of negotiations on enlargement with Lithuania and Poland.

Over time, however, it has become clear that Kaliningrad requires special reflection. In addition to being an exclave outside Russia, Kaliningrad is also on its way – with Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish memberships – of turning into an enclave inside the Union. As a result, the Union has found itself in the position of having to take a stand on a number of issues that also have consequences for intra-Russian relations such as energy transfers, transport and travel between mainland Russia and Kaliningrad. In particular, the Union's border practices will influence the future of the oblast adding, in the worst case, to its already considerable isolation (Dewar 2000a, 84–87). As such, a variety of economic, social and cultural gaps are likely to emerge. With Poland and the Baltic countries being on their way of gaining a structured relationship with – and eventually within – the Union, Kaliningrad's neighbouring countries are on their way towards ultimate forms of integration – including monetary union. In contrast, Russia and Kaliningrad can at most hope for a free trade arrangement.

More particularly, the EU requires that all accession countries adopt the Single Market regulations and standards as laid down in the

acquis communautaire. Consequently, the adoption of these by the various applicants – primarily Lithuania and Poland – will have a significant impact on Kaliningrad, a region dependent on primary materials for exports and critically dependent on imports (Dewar 2000a, 92). Although there has been some flexibility in the implementation of the EU's regulations, the outcome in the longer run is unavoidably one of the EU and Russia becoming entangled. The distinction between a clear cut; and outside (no an between).

Initially, and as stated above, the EU searched for a solution by trying to avoid singling out Kaliningrad in any particular manner. The Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA), which came into force in 1997 and the Common Strategy of the EU towards Russia, adopted in 1999, are both based on such an undifferentiated departure. By contrast, the EU's Northern Dimension initiative (ND) rests on different thinking. The ND, which began as a Finnish proposal in 1997, constitutes the first EU move that singled out Northwestern Russia, including Kaliningrad, as having unique importance for cross-border relations with the EU. The initiative is premised on the idea that special policies are required in Northern Europe. A specific and targeted approach has been envisaged for this region. The overall concept embedded in the ND amounts to a proposal for a regional development policy, one premised on spatial rather than territorial approaches. In 2000 the EU placed, obviously with Russia's approval, Kaliningrad on the ND's agenda in the context of issuing a Northern Dimension Action Plan. While the PCA is basically vertical in its approach, the ND stands for a horizontal and multi-pillar one. Due to its generally undefined character and openness the ND offers an opportunity to think about Europe and EU-Russia relations from another perspective. Instead of drawing lines, the ND aspires to avoid the image of a closed and unattainable 'club' with fixed external borders and a deep distinction between members and non-members. However, although the ND Action Plan devoted some attention to Kaliningrad, the tone was rather cautious. Therefore, whilst it stated that Kaliningrad represented a challenge for enhanced regional co-operation and development, it added that "Kaliningrad's capacity to take advantage of the opportunities presented by enlargement would require significant internal adjustment, e.g., in the fields of customs

and border controls, fight against organised crime and corruption, structural reform, public administration and human resources” (see Council of the European Union 2000).

Basically the EU has favoured the PCA as a framework, and particularly as to Kaliningrad the ND has been left in the shadows. Even so, it should be noted that the EU organised, in co-operation with Denmark, a conference in May 2000 on Kaliningrad in the context of the ND, although the dialogue did not bring the debate further, not to speak of any concrete results. However, it did constitute one of the few occasions that has provided Kaliningrad, as part of the Russian delegation, with an opportunity of airing a number of concerns and tabling some recommendations (see Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2000). The PCA framework is, in contrast to the more multilevel ND, one of Brussels-Moscow talks and Kaliningrad is in no way present. The PCA facilitates tackling questions pertaining to regions such as Kaliningrad bilaterally rather than multilaterally and in a multilevel context. Being placed on the PCA-agenda yields Kaliningrad very little subjectivity.

It is, however, increasingly clear that Kaliningrad is related to two centres and that these are trying to find a mutually acceptable approach. In May 2002, in Sverdlosk, the parties held a special meeting on Kaliningrad in the context of an EU-Russia Co-operation Committee, and as a follow-up, Kaliningrad was a major theme at an EU-Russia Summit in Moscow at the end of April 2002.

A break-through of sorts took place already in 2001 with the EU Commission issuing a communiqué on Kaliningrad. The Commission pointed out that the Union’s eastern enlargement, although beneficial in general in contributing to stability and prosperity, also brings with it certain problems. The EU declared itself prepared to carry the consequent responsibilities. The areas singled out as needing attention were mainly those of movement of goods, people, and the supply of energy. A number of suggestions were made in order to tackle the issues that warrant attention in the case of Kaliningrad (Commission of the European Communities 2001). The Union has also established a TACIS office, as well as an information office in Kaliningrad. The

oblast was thus singled out for special attention, although it was left to Russia to shoulder the main part of the responsibilities and to make concrete suggestions for possible solutions. Yet the Union's recognition that enlargement might, in the case of Kaliningrad, also have some adverse effects, and that the Union recognises its responsibility within such a context, stands out as a major step forward.

Russia has, in turn, tabled a number of proposals. In April 2002 Prime Minister Mikhail Kasianov handed to the Commission a memorandum on transit of Russian citizens through the Lithuanian and Polish territories. In addition to the establishment of two transit corridors for crossing Lithuanian territory, a visa-free regime for transit passengers was proposed. These proposals were subsequently on the table at the EU-Russia Summit in Moscow at the end of May 2002. Russia insisted on flexibility and a special arrangement, whereas the EU made it plain that it would not relax its insistence on introducing EU visas for Russians travelling to and from Kaliningrad via Lithuania or Poland. In response, President Putin complained that Brussels had ignored Moscow's suggestions for solving the dispute: "They are making proposals to us which essentially mean only one thing: [that] the right of Russians to free communication with relatives inside Russia will depend on the decision of other states" (qtd. in *Guardian* May 30 2002).

It hence appears that after months of talks and hard bargaining, the issue of transit – as well as the more principal questions that hover in the background – remains unsettled. It has turned into a bone of contention that hampers progress in EU-Russia relations more generally. The Union accepts that the oblast requires special attention but is bent on settling the pending issues largely in the context of its ordinary policies, above all the Schengen visa regime, whereas Russia insists on derogations and measures beyond the ordinary. The idea of corridors aims, it seems, at restoring territorial continuity in a rather modern fashion. It is above all Brussels and Moscow talking, whereas Kaliningrad has been deprived of any voice of its own. Yet it appears clear that Moscow and Brussels, in the end, will have to settle for policies that take into account and accommodate Kaliningrad's position at the crossroads of Russia and the EU. The question to be tackled in the case of the Union consists of what the ordinary policies are: do they

consist of a Schengen-type of border-drawing or originate with the often repeated claim that the EU is not out to implement new borders and obstacles for free trade or the movement of people and capital?

Strangely enough, in the recent talks it seems to be Russia that has often advocated de-bordering, non-sovereign solutions and freedom of movement, whereas the EU stands out as the party that is bent on hampering free movement, even inside Russia – that is, between Kaliningrad and mainland Russia. It hence appears that the EU has to compromise, although Russia also needs to suggest arrangements that are less problematic as seen from the Union's point of view and which also take into account that the 'corridor' proposals entail some bordering as well. In this respect, the idea of corridors appears to be designed to preserve the bond between mainland Russia and Kaliningrad, but not necessarily as also designed to strengthen the oblast's ties with the Union. In the end, however, the solution will in all probability be one that brings out Kaliningrad's position as an overlapping case, both in a paradigmatic and more practical sense. It pertains to the degree of differentiation both inside Russia and the EU, and to whether the two parties can accept that a little part of Russia has a different relationship to the EU and European integration than Russia at large (Emerson 2001, 18).

### Conclusions

The aim of this paper has been to try to illustrate and account for how it is that since the end of the Cold War Kaliningrad has moved towards a position of subjectivity and constitutive power in European politics, vis-à-vis Moscow and Brussels. We began by elaborating Noel Parker's distinction between peripheries and margins. Taking these concepts as ideal types, we argued that whilst peripheries may be defined as the largely subordinate and voiceless fringes of a single entity, margins are self-conscious (and often 'contested') spaces in-between two or more centres that as a result are possessed of a certain amount of influence, power and subjectivity. The paper has attempted to push this theory further with the underlying goal being to try to account for the emergence of a margin. In brief we identified three variables, each of which we argued would have an important impact on whether a particular entity will be able to move away from a subordinate

position of peripherality to the more empowered position of a margin. These variables were: the presence or absence of agency and a distinct identity within the margin; the structure of the international and regional environment; and the constraining and enabling effects of the attitudes of the relevant centres towards the margin.

During the Cold War period it was shown that Kaliningrad clearly occupied a position of peripherality, being heavily subordinate to Moscow. This was clear in a number of respects, but particularly illustrative was Kaliningrad's position as a military outpost and the way in which its German historical heritage was erased and replaced by standardised representations of Soviet space and ideology. The conflict structure of the international system was important in this development, since it promoted rather fixed and exclusionary thinking that demanded the strict control of borders and of territory, allowing little room for overlapping spaces or multiple and fluid identities. This structure obviously contributed to Moscow's attitude towards the region, which went out of its way to ensure that any distinctiveness that Kaliningrad may have inherited from its former incarnation as Königsberg was forgotten. Any ideas of Kaliningrad as occupying a space 'in-between' were simply anathema to Moscow. For these and other reasons, therefore, during the Cold War Kaliningraders lacked any sense of a distinct identity or subjectivity for the region, instead viewing Kaliningrad as simply one further extension of Soviet space.

With the end of the Cold War, however, Kaliningrad has been thrust into a radically different position. On the one hand, Kaliningrad now finds itself geographically separated from the Motherland, bordered by two newly independent states and soon to find itself subsumed within the EU's geographical borders. Occupying such a unique location, and with the attendant issues and problems which EU enlargement will bring to Kaliningrad, has provided an important spur for Kaliningraders to begin developing a self-consciousness. On the other hand, this has also been supported as the conflict driven frames of the Cold War have been challenged by those of globalisation, regionalisation and localisation, each of which open room for thinking of borders as sites of interaction, rather than of exclusion, and contribute to the developing post-modernisation of political space in

Europe. The question has therefore been whether Kaliningraders have been able to seize these opportunities to carve out a distinct space for themselves and to move away from their previously subordinate position of peripherality to the more empowered position of a margin.

Despite the favourable structural conditions, with less bordering and being linked to two centres instead of just one, the ability of Kaliningrad to forge and capitalise on a marginal status for itself has so far been limited. In the first place, this has been because of the pre-existing lack of a distinct identity for the region. Lacking this identity, and continuing to see themselves as simply one further and unexceptional part of Russia, Kaliningraders have lacked the discursive resources or motivation to tell their own stories or to take responsibility for their position. Instead, and particularly during Gorbenko's time as governor, responsibility was rather passed to Moscow. Particularly important here has been a continued sensitivity to the history of the region and an awareness of Russia's limited historical claim on Kaliningrad.

Secondly, however, the emergence of a marginal status for Kaliningrad has also been thwarted by the often-negative attitudes of Moscow and Brussels to this idea. Given its internal de-bordering, the EU's attitude has been especially interesting, with its emphasis on the sanctity of the Schengen visa regime illustrating a rather modernist and exclusionary desire to define those outside the EU and to keep them out. To a considerable extent, however, this has also reflected the EU's desire not to antagonise Russia, as a result of which the EU has placed an emphasis on dealing with Russia's border regions through the bilateral policy instruments of the PCA and CSR. This has left limited fora in which Kaliningraders have been able to develop a sense of subjectivity and to have a voice in European affairs. In a similar vein, throughout much of the 1990s Moscow also acted to sideline Kaliningrad, thereby perpetuating its peripherality. Important here have been fears that granting greater freedoms to the border regions of Russia may ultimately lead to Russia's final implosion.

In recent years, however, things have begun to change a little and both the EU and Russia show signs of opening up to a greater plurality. Russia, in particular, appears to have concluded that Russia as a whole

might actually have something to gain by playing up a position for Kaliningrad as a margin situated between the EU and Russia. These changes have clearly opened space and provided added incentives for Kaliningraders to begin to develop a distinct sense of subjectivity and identity for themselves. At the same time, however, the more open attitudes of the centres is probably also at least partially a response to a growing sense of activism already apparent in Kaliningrad earlier in the 1990s and which also had a somewhat muted heritage during the Soviet period. Central to this has been a reclamation of Kaliningrad's German history, which is increasingly being utilised to establish a position for Russian Kaliningrad as a unique and overlapping space between the EU and Russia.

Put theoretically, however, what the case study of Kaliningrad shows is the way the three variables of identity and agency within the margin, the structure of the system, and the attitudes of the centres, are intricately connected. As a result, capitalising on marginality appears to be a very complicated process. Thus, even when structural factors – in the form of de-bordering and linkages to two centres – are such as to provide space for marginality and perhaps even encourage it, it remains far from certain that a margin will be constituted. Of crucial importance is the attitude of the centres to such a position. Most important, however, is the presence or absence of a marginal identity of an in-between within the region.

The issue of marginality, however, also opens for broader questions. In particular, it does not resonate well with the geopolitical views that seem to dominate Russia's comprehension of itself as well as its views of foreign policy. Likewise, the EU – despite often being seen as post-modern in essence and in its policies of governance – has difficulties in applying policies of de-bordering and regionalisation in the context of a Russian entity. The two centres are therefore likely to try to stick to rather modern solutions in sorting out their relations and in agreeing upon the logics to be applied in their interaction. To allow Kaliningrad to slip out of the processes that link it with peripherality, is a challenge to both of them. However, as envisaged by Viacheslav Morozov, precisely because of the more general difficulties that they encounter, they might allow Kaliningrad to increasingly assume features of a third

space, one in-between the EU and Russia (Morozov 2001, 26, 36). With NATO enlargement becoming less of a problem, the Baltic Sea region provides a promising environment for experimentation. After all, one of Russia's worst fears consists of being isolated from 'Europe'. Michael Emerson, in turn, argues convincingly that sooner or later the EU has to allow for overlapping borderlands and borderland regionalism to develop also vis-à-vis Russia. Solutions in-between non-membership and membership have to be explored and back-doors opened (Emerson 2001, 53). Kaliningrad, in unavoidably raising issues of connectivity, is an obvious case for such creative solutions.

In recent years, Russia's Kaliningrad exclave situated on the Baltic coast between Lithuania and Poland, has been the focus of growing academic and political debate. At issue has been to understand what the effects of European Union (EU) enlargement to its neighbours will have, not just on Kaliningrad, but also on the character of EU-Russian relations more generally. In much of this debate, however, the actual influence of Kaliningraders on this process tends to get ignored and the region rather ends up depicted as an object of Brussels-Moscow negotiations. In contrast, this paper argues that Kaliningrad's developing position in-between Russia and the EU actually provides it with a certain amount of constitutive power. Developing the work of Noel Parker, the paper draws a distinction between the relative constitutive power of the geopolitical positions of 'peripheries' and 'margins'. Taking a historical perspective, it is argued that Kaliningrad's Cold War peripherality appears to be being replaced by a more marginal position. However, the extent to which this will occur depends on several variables, the most important of which is whether a distinctive identity of Kaliningrad and Kaliningraders will emerge.

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The *BaltSeaNet* is an EU-Research Training Network financed by the Fifth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. The program encourages research teams from Member States and Associated Countries to work together on trans-national and interdisciplinary projects. *BaltSeaNet* investigates the interrelationship of the concepts “Baltic Sea Region” and “Northern Dimension of Europe” and examines the preconditions and prospects for a further expansion of regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea area.

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