Introduction

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In the context of globalization, the concept of world or global cities has been a feature of the discussion over the last two to three decades, the hypothesis of the world city having first been proposed by John Friedmann in 1986, with a landmark study by Saskia Sassen in 1991.[1] The discourse has had an overriding focus on global economics. For this reason, Moscow received comparatively less attention than the major cities of western and far eastern economies (London, New York, and Tokyo being the exemplars in Sassen's work), an approach that may have been understandable while the Soviet Union still existed. Even since the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, focus on Moscow, and indeed other postsocialist cities of central and eastern Europe, in general studies on the global city has remained less sustained, with a peak of interest in the early 2000s when it could be said that Russia was emerging from its period of transition into greater economic stability.[2] During the first half of this decade notable studies specifically about Moscow were undertaken by Isolde Brade and Robert Rudolph, as well as by Vladimir Kolossov and John O'Loughlin.[3]

I am grateful to Mark D. Steinberg, the authors of the articles, the anonymous reviewers of the manuscripts, and the editorial team at *Slavic Review* for all their efforts in bringing this thematic cluster to fruition. The articles featured here were first presented at an international conference, "Moscow: A Global City," held in November 2010 at the University of Leeds. This conference marked the inception of a research theme "Russia(n) in the Global Context" for the newly founded interdisciplinary Leeds Russian Centre. All the papers presented at the conference and the discussion thereof, as well as the views expressed at the subsequent roundtable debate, "Putin's Russia and Globalization," in March 2012, have had a part to play in developing my understanding of this rich subject, and I am grateful to all the participants for their enlightening contributions. I am particularly indebted to Vlad Strukov, co-organizer of the "Moscow: A Global City" conference and co-founder of the Leeds Russian Centre, for his support and inspiration, and to Helena Goscilo, whose visit to Leeds in 2010 funded by the Leverhulme Trust, ignited this project.

1. John Friedmann, "The World City Hypothesis," *Development and Change* 17, no. 1 (January 1986): 69–83; Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton, 1991).

2. Peter J. Taylor, *World City Network: A Global Urban Analysis* (London, 2004). According to Taylor, Moscow is mentioned as a global city in only four out of fifteen significant studies of global city theory. Taylor's book contains interesting quantitative data on Moscow regarding its ranking in terms of various networks of connectivity, such as banking, media, and nongovernmental organizations.

3. Isolde Brade and Robert Rudolf, "Moscow, The Global City? The Position of the Russian Capital within the European System of Metropolitan Areas," *Area* 36, no. 1 (March 2004): 69–80; Vladimir Kolossov and John O'Loughlin, "How Moscow Is Becoming a Capitalist Mega-City," *International Social Science Journal* 56, no. 181 (September 2004): 413–27.

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As Russia embarks upon a new era under the renewed leadership of Vladimir Putin, the time is ripe to revisit the question of Moscow as a global city. This thematic cluster of articles seeks to depart from the dominant economics-oriented approach and focus instead on cultural issues. In this way we aim to problematize the applicability of global city theory to the Russian context and highlight its shortcomings, calling instead for the development of alternative models. Indeed, this is the reason for the question mark in the cluster title: not only do we attempt to judge Moscow by the established noneconomic criteria for being deemed a global city, but by considering the issues raised in these articles, we also allude to the problems of the paradigm exposed by considering the case for Moscow at all.

The global city concept is rooted in theories of global capitalism. Economics-based studies of global cities that refer to Moscow, including those by Brade and Rudolph and Kolossov and O'Loughlin, do not attempt to interrogate the relevance of their approach to the post-Soviet context. This is understandable, given the way Moscow projects itself as "a dynamic, vigorously capitalist city" in the process of developing "a Western-style central business district," and indeed it may not be the place of economists to challenge the paradigm.[4] Some commentators have nevertheless begun to critique the most prevalent discourse on globalization. John Eade summarizes the attitude: "Sceptics contend that the emergence of global markets where capital and information flow freely and instantaneously across time zones and geopolitical space is related to the continuing dominance of the United States or Western industrial nations."[5] An example of how global cities research can unwittingly use quasi-imperialist language can be found in Kolossov and O'Loughlin's statement that "Moscow is *now integrated* into the European (and by extension) world system of cities."[6] This attitude suggests a kind of "othering" of Russia: the "other" is judged by the western values that inform globalization theory. The tendency toward homogeneity that manifests itself in the drive toward a global economy, with its attendant imperialist overtones, finds itself in tension with the multifarious differences across global culture: as some analysts have noted, globalization requires an interplay between the global and the local.[7] A further critique of the role played by global cities research in globalization discourse is that it neglects historical and cultural considerations, such as the part played by religion or ideology in different societies.[8] The local

4. Brade and Rudolph, "Moscow, the Global City?" 69, 74. The pioneers of global city theory may not have intended for the predominant focus to be limited to economics. John Friedmann and Goetz Wolff initially described the "world city approach" as "in the first instance, a methodology, a point of departure, an initial hypothesis. It is a way of asking questions and of bringing footloose facts into relation." See John Friedmann and Goetz Wolff, "World City Formation: An Agenda for Research and Action," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 6, no. 3 (September 1982): 320.

5. John Eade, *Living the Global City: Globalization as a Local Process* (London, 1997), 2.

6. Kolossov and O'Loughlin, "How Moscow Is Becoming a Capitalist Mega-City," 414. Emphasis added.

7. Eade, *Living the Global City*, 3–4.

8. Anthony D. King, "World Cities: Global? Postcolonial? Postimperial? Or Just the Result of Happenstance? Some Cultural Comments," in Neil Brenner and Roger Keil, eds., *The Global Cities Reader* (Abingdon, Eng., 2006), 320.

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context of Moscow's history as part of the former Soviet Union and questions of national identity in the post-Soviet era, the new role played by the Russian Orthodox Church, for example, come to the fore when discussing Moscow as a global city. Moscow has always held a special significance in Russian consciousness, not only as a political, historical, and cultural site of great importance, but also as a talisman of Russia's messianic role in the global spiritual arena. These issues suggest that a cultural approach to the study of global cities would mitigate the shortcomings of the economics-oriented focus. Neil Brenner and Roger Keil assert that "culture is an integral part of the formation of world and global cities," including in the term *culture* its full spectrum of meanings as production, practice, symbolic system, sociological identity, and so on.[9] Yet even here there is a danger of establishing a quasi-imperialist model, as Brenner and Keil concede: "The global city must be viewed as a project of cultural hegemony in that it creates an ideological and material domain that is based upon the domination of western cultural formations. Indeed, in many ways, global cities research has itself been permeated by a form of cultural imperialism insofar as it has been grounded predominantly upon western cultural forms and intellectual paradigms."[10]

One way to advance the global cities project, then, might be through interesting intersections between theoretical and methodological discourses relating to globalization and those concerning the study of post-Soviet Russia. Some scholars suggest that the way to leaven the staple economics-based dough of global cities research is through an admixture of postcolonial theory and methodology. Anthony King, for example, argues: "A postcolonial critique is essentially concerned with questions of agency, representation and especially, the representation of cultures under the asymmetry of global political and social conditions."[11] Here we can find a resonance with the recent trend in Russian studies of considering the applicability or adaptability of postcolonial paradigms to post-Soviet Russia, as seen in the works of David Moore, Vitaly Chernetsky, Julie Buckler, and others, a trend that not only proposes that postcommunist Russia is experiencing a form of postcolonialism, but that also has the effect of challenging the hitherto occidentocentric focus of postcolonial studies.[12]

Moscow itself presents the analyst with a range of conflicting tendencies that feed into the debate about western privileging in scholarly modes of inquiry. Given the Putin administration's apparent intention to present Russia

9. Neil Brenner and Roger Keil, "Introduction to Part Six," in Brenner and Keil, eds., *Global Cities Reader*, 307.

10. Ibid., 309.

11. King, "World Cities," 319.

12. See, for example, David Chioni Moore, "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique," *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 116, no. 1 (January 2001): 111–28; Jon Kyst, "Russia and the Problem of Internal Colonization," *Ulbandus: The Slavic Review of Columbia University* 7 (2003): 26–31; Vitaly Chernetsky, *Mapping Postcommunist Cultures: Russia and Ukraine in the Context of Globalization* (Montreal, 2007); Walter D. Mignolo and Madina Tlostanova, "The Logic of Coloniality and the Limits of Postcoloniality," in Revathi Krishnaswamy and John C. Hawley, eds., *The Postcolonial and the Global* (Minneapolis, 2008), 109–23; Julie A. Buckler, "What Comes after 'Post-Soviet' in Russian Studies?" *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 124, no. 1 (January 2009): 251–63.

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as a new global power and the rebranding of Moscow as a consumer space in the postcommunist free market, it is unsurprising that western portrayals of Russia are based increasingly on Moscow, and yet the divergence between the capital and the provinces is becoming extreme. Moscow's anomalous status in Russian society is problematized by the perpetuation in the national consciousness of such notions of Moscow as the third Rome or the new Jerusalem (themselves both proto-global cities, one might say). The Russian capital can be taken as a focal point for matters pertaining to post-Soviet Russian identity in general, where the notion of Moscow as a global city highlights a wider issue of how and where Russia sees itself in relation to the globalized world. Depending on one's perspective, post-Soviet Russia, as Edith Clowes has written, finds itself both a center and a periphery, at once an "other" and an entity given to impose "otherness" on its neighbors.[13] She asserts, "in distinction to Soviet identity, which was *temporally* defined—linked to a vision of the Soviet state at the vanguard of history—the post-Soviet debate about Russian identity has been couched in *spatial* metaphors of territory and geography."[14] Moscow stands as the ultimate example of this perspective, as its inhabitants and its social and political structures look both inward and outward as they struggle for literal and figurative space.

The articles gathered here consider many of the concerns raised above. Francesca Stella discusses the interface between globalization and cosmopolitanism in her exploration of the importance of cultural diversity in marking a city as global. She uses the example of Pride events as a "putative cosmopolitan object," indicating the problem of western cultural imperialism in cultural globalization: globalization facilitates the international proliferation of these objects, but variations in their local use and interpretation abound.[15] The conflicting perspectives within the Moscow LGBT community on the role to be played by Pride events as contrasted with other means of marking out queer space, asserts Stella, emphasize the unique characteristics of the Russian context in its struggle to achieve the cultural diversity befitting a global city.

Mark Griffiths turns to the way Moscow has been represented in recent fiction, focusing on the literary manipulation of space and time, interconnected concepts whose integral association with globalization has been a "prime concern among commentators."[16] Griffiths relates the literary temporal and spatial interplay to the symbolic and metaphorical implications of the tension between center and periphery, both within Moscow's rings and between Moscow and what lies beyond. In his discussion of the journey of Tatiana Tolstaia's and Dmitrii Glukhovskii's protagonists from periphery to center, he draws attention to the problems of concentric isolation and the avoidance of dialogue with the "other," thus opening the field of discussion to questions of who views whom as "other." His assertion is that the texts he examines pre-

13. Edith W. Clowes, *Russia on the Edge: Imagined Geographies and Post-Soviet Identity* (Ithaca, 2011), 5–6. Clowes is another scholar who has observed the resonances between postcommunism and postcolonialism.

14. Ibid., xi. Emphasis in the original

15. Gavin Kendall, Ian Woodward, and Zlatko Skrbiš, *The Sociology of Cosmopolitanism: Globalization, Identity, Culture and Government* (Basingstoke, Eng., 2009), 124–25.

16. Eade, *Living the Global City,* 3.

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sent Moscow as a synecdoche for Russia, so that his article has a part to play in the debate concerning not only whether western models have any purchase in the context of Moscow but also whether models applied to Moscow can have a broader relevance for Russia. Stella also touches upon the center-periphery divide as she contrasts the experience of lesbian women in Ul'ianovsk with those in the capital.

Vadim Rossman discusses issues of center and periphery as he highlights the problems faced by Moscow compared to other global cities: problems that lead to representations of Moscow as a "parasitic city" or a "country within a country." The Russian capital's problems with overcrowding and an overconcentration of power are leading Russians to look beyond Moscow for a more appropriate capital space. This search presents interesting opportunities for Russia to redefine its position in relation to the center-periphery axis of the globalized world. Rossman shows how the debate over capital city relocation feeds into issues of Russian national identity and the question of whether Russia should orient its politics more to the east or to the west.

Altogether we find, then, that the examination of Moscow as a global city from the broader cultural rather than the narrower economic perspective has ramifications for the field of globalization studies as a whole. This reorientation can provide a foundation for beginning to interrogate the dominance of the western orientation in theories of globality and for developing concepts of competing globalities. At the same time this examination can shed light on the problems facing Moscow as it articulates its relations on varying levels of the local and the global. Above all, the idea of whether Moscow is or is not a global city should be a key part of the timely reexamination of the broader matter that has preoccupied Russia since the inception of the modern era, namely, that of Russia in the world.

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