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## The Russian World—Changing Meanings and Strategies

Valery Tishkov

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## Foreword

In *The Russian World: Changing Strategies and Meanings*, Valery Tishkov lays out a framework for understanding the ways in which those connected to the Russian language and culture relate to one another and to Russia. He asserts that Russia and the Russian language remain a defining influence in the lives of millions of émigrés to the West and citizens of post-Soviet countries, even where local nationalist agendas seek to downplay and underestimate the prevalence of Russian. These people are the members of the “Russian world.” They include those who “preserve ties of culture and identity with Russia, many of whom in fact have Russian citizenship and consider themselves first and foremost Russian citizens, even if they live outside of Russia,” but also include all Russian speakers whose connection to Russian language and culture remains a prominent component in their identity.

Tishkov, writing for an English-speaking audience, explains how and why Russian intellectuals began to press the government of the Russian Federation to embrace the idea that there was a “Russian world” and to support its members. Through colorful personal anecdotes as well as historical analysis, Tishkov also explores the character of the earlier waves of emigration from Russia to the West and the identity of descendants of Russian-speaking emigrants, offering an explanation as to why some continued to feel a connection to Russia and others did not.

Although many of the issues that confront the Russian-speaking world affect other diasporas as well, Tishkov claims a unique character for the Russian world—its connection to the legacy of a supranational state with many different ethnicities and languages. The history of the Soviet period, in which he sees the promulgation of the Russian language as a tool of modernization, makes it more difficult to classify and measure “native” and “non-native” speakers among those in the post-Soviet states who are also fluent in their national language.

In the most provocative sections of his paper, Tishkov argues that conventional estimates of the prevalence and social importance of Russian in post-Soviet countries such as Georgia, Latvia, and some Central Asian states are distorted by skewed self-reporting, willful suppression of Russian by the governments,

and other biases. For this reason he believes that Russian should become an official language in several former Soviet republics, including Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Latvia, due to the high proportion of Russian speakers there.

The subjects Tishkov touches upon speak to the continuing search for the meaning of “Russianness” in the post-Soviet context. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union left millions of ethnic Russians in the “near abroad,” a Russian term for those countries formerly Soviet republics, identifying and making sense of Russia’s new borders was the central concern of Russian intellectuals and scholars seeking to define their nation. For millions of people living in new countries, a quest to seek an authentic national identity led to a struggle between the influence of titular cultures and language and Russian. As a result, the changing status and perception of the Russian language in the newly independent states reflect ongoing processes of national consolidation and self-understanding. Tishkov’s analysis helps to shed light on how Russians are navigating these challenging questions.

*Martha Brill Olcott*

*Gregory Dubinsky*

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## Introduction

Gorbachev's liberalization brought the opening of Russia to the outside world and with it interest in and contact with the Russian<sup>1</sup> diaspora.<sup>2</sup> After the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the problem of the diaspora evolved quickly, when it was transformed into a political and even a humanitarian challenge.

Unlike the earlier diaspora, most of this new community had not emigrated from Russia, but rather were displaced from Russia because international borders had shifted and the Russian state had shrunk. As early as the beginning of the 1990s, these people came to be called "Russian fellow countrymen" (*rossiiskie sootchestvenniki*), or "countrymen abroad" (*zarubezhnye sootchestvenniki*), terms that were problematic from a legal standpoint, as "countrymen" are usually seen as bearers of identical passports.

Nevertheless, it is more or less clear who is referred to here—people who preserve ties of culture and identity with Russia, many of whom in fact have Russian citizenship and consider themselves to be first and foremost Russian citizens, even if they live outside of Russia on a temporary or permanent basis. They belong to a "Russian world" (*Ruskii mir*), a term only recently in use in Russian social science discourse.<sup>3</sup> The term most frequently refers to the world of Russians living outside of Russia, in the Russian diaspora, and has a historical and cultural-linguistic character, something akin to "fellow countrymen abroad."

The last few years have seen the publication of many directories, collections of documents, studies, and journalistic pieces devoted to the subject of Russians abroad,<sup>4</sup> and there have been numerous conferences on the subject.<sup>5</sup> The Internet has an entire network of Russian resource sites (a Google search on "russkoye zarubezhiye" [Russians abroad]<sup>6</sup> returns 2 million links, as does a search on "Ruskiye v Amerike" [Russians in America]). The problems of the so-called new Russian diaspora—or more precisely the situation of Russians living in the newly independent states (NIS) and the fate of Russian language and culture there—are also of great interest to scholars and politicians. There have been many scholarly books published on the subject,<sup>7</sup> and hundreds, even thousands of articles. As for political statements and various speculative pronouncements, these exist in enormous quantity. There is no doubt that we are dealing with a phenomenon that has a long history but which today has acquired a different configuration and meaning, having become a part of new communities networked together, as well as a part of state politics and international relations.

I have written about the problems of the diaspora and the Russian populations in the former Soviet countries in various earlier works,<sup>8</sup> but given newly published materials on the issue and sparked in part by President Vladimir Putin's declaration of 2007 as the "Year of the Russian Language," I decided to prepare the current article that analyzes the scholarly understandings and political connotations of the "Russian world" doctrine. It does so by laying out the history of the Russian diaspora and the prospects for the "Russian world." It also evaluates Russia's relations with the Russian world and seeks to offer policy recommendations for its politicians and governors.

## The Russian World as Humanitarian Challenge and Political Project

A group of intellectuals from Russia were pioneers in setting the elaboration of "the Russian world" as a philosophical project, including most prominently Gleb Pavlovskiy, Petr Shchedrovitskiy, Sergey Chernyshev, Yefim Ostrovskiy, and Maksim Shevchenko. Some of these men had ties to the Ukraine and Crimea and seemed more keenly aware of the problems of state collapse and the need to help those now living beyond the borders of the Russian Federation who primarily identified themselves with Russia and Russian culture.

In the beginning of the 1990s Gleb Pavlovskiy raised the problem of the "Russian revival" in his correspondence from Odessa with Chernyshev:

There are difficulties being Russian. Speaking Russian, even calling one's self Russian, is difficult, and this difficulty is growing all the time, threatening to become a daily fact, and it is impossible to live without naming it, and without naming one's self. The destruction of the USSR, the drowning of "Soviet" in the River Lethe, has not returned his former rights to the Russian. That word today resonates not so much with identity as with concern about identity. There is nothing simplistic here, nothing but challenges, in the name of lost worthiness. This loss has become a fact, and it more fully distinguishes Russians and their older name—distinguishes, but does not draw them closer....<sup>9</sup>

There is no doubt that for Russian intellectuals from Odessa, such as Pavlovskiy, or from other parts of the former USSR no longer within Russia's borders, the problem of Russian self-identity (both legal and ethnic) was much more significant and pressing.

Some people, like Professor Yuri Lotman of Tartu University,<sup>10</sup> tried to take on a new self-identity, identifying with the Estonians (in the Soviet era themselves the minority), even becoming one of them. But such efforts were few and mostly unsuccessful.

Moving to Russia became the most acceptable lifestyle choice for many. Some of these people, like Konstantin Zatulin,<sup>11</sup> became prominent politicians and political spokesmen for the Russian-speaking populations in the FSU (former Soviet Union). Some created formal and informal groups, such as think tanks, that have had a significant influence on politics, primarily by providing

the upper echelons of Russian state power with a steady supply of experts. Some of their suggestions became Russian state objectives, and others eventually state policy. This includes the plans for the “Russian world,” which took over ten years to become a formal policy. The history of this project merits analysis.

In 1993 the Russian Institute and *Russkiy Zhurnal* were founded in Moscow, headed (as they are today) by Gleb Pavlovskiy, but it was not until 2000, when Shchedrovitskiy and Sergei Gradirovskiy began the network project *Russkiy Mir* (Russian World) through the Internet portal *Russkiy Arkhipelag*. The materials that they have assembled there allow us to see how the “Russian world” evolved.<sup>12</sup>

According to Petr Shchedrovitskiy, “the idea arose in the period between 1993 and 1997, gradually crystallizing from a pre-understanding, an amorphous sense of the necessary form, to the completed name.” Shchedrovitskiy laid out what he termed the “geo-cultural blueprint” of the “Russian world” in the following way: “the social, cultural, and general human world is a unity of will and imagination. If nothing stands behind the idea of the Russian World except words, if there are no actions, if there is no component of the will, then of course there will be no Russian World. Precisely as would have happened had not tens, then hundreds, then thousands of people begun to form a Greater Europe, then it too would of course not have come about.”

In this sense the Russian world is a “networked structure of large and small communities that think in and speak the Russian language.”<sup>13</sup> “Admitting the existence of a Russian world allows us to speak of ‘Russian capital,’ an aggregate of cultural, intellectual, human, and organizational potentials, which express themselves in the linguistic thought processes and communicative (humanistic) resources of the Russian language. The energy of will of various ethno-cultural groups that think and speak in Russian permits their potential to be realized, turning this into a series of images of the future.”<sup>14</sup> The Russian world is not an aggressive world, but rather a progressive one, not trying to expand its territory, but rather being present in the cultural space, in the consciousness of people scattered across the globe. “To create a new image for Russia, the country that never was, means to take part in the ongoing re-division of the world, to make a Velvet Revanche after our country’s defeat in the Third World War, the Cold War,”<sup>15</sup> Shchedrovitskiy wrote in 1999.

I am omitting several complex arguments made by this famous “methodologist,” who was attracted to the writings of the “great scholar Lev Gumilev,”<sup>16</sup> particularly his idea of “passionarity” (*passionarnost*) in the actions of groups of humans, or ethnoses,<sup>17</sup> as well as the possible complementarity of their behavior. I cannot, however, fail to cite one clarification that P. Shchedrovitskiy offered in his interview that bore the weighty title, “Who and What Stand Behind the Doctrine of the Russian World?”:

Behind the doctrine of the Russian World there stands a fundamental proposition about the *complementarity of our culture* to world development. That is, I affirm, because of the specifics of language, the basic ability of various languages to

express or not express various aspects of thought and content, the solution of global problems of development require various languages and cultures; and, in this sense, various ways of thinking (which bring with them various ways of acting). These are necessary because when we encounter global problems, we would then be able to establish the cooperation and communication of cultures. The doctrine I am espousing is based on the proposition that the twenty-first century will be an age of multicultural dialogue.<sup>18</sup>

And, since this will be a dialogue and a competition among cultural systems, what might Russia offer after the Cold War? “Is Russia’s foreign policy secure in a human and technological way?” Yefim Ostrovskiy and Petr Shchedrovitskiy ask in the article “Russia, the Country that Wasn’t.”

In a simpler form, this “securing” is called the creation of Russia’s image, which is described as “not a luxury for the rich” but rather “an irreplaceable instrument of foreign policy for the new generation . . . a necessary condition for Russia’s existence in the world of nations in the twenty-first century.”<sup>19</sup>

The concern over Russia’s unrealized modernization (before the Putin presidency) preoccupied many Russian experts, including the authors of the Russian world. However, they saw the recipe for the country’s return to health differently than did, for example, the nationalist-isolationists or the imperial revanchists.

The state that arose on the territory of the Russian Federation at the start of the 1990s was not an adequate form for the inclusion of Russian society in the world’s historical process. In the place of the more-or-less competitive scientific and engineering community that was responsible for two-thirds of the world’s inventions and discoveries, there was created a completely non-competitive pseudo-oligarchic class and a society of petty shopkeepers, who were a feeding ground for extremist parties.<sup>20</sup>

In the view of the authors, the existing social degradation was offset by the large global Russian diaspora. More than half of the world’s Russians live outside of Russia, including an entire range of world-class professional communities, such as computer programmers, who are recruited in large numbers from among Russian emigrants. “Thus it is already possible today to speak of the formation of a sort of ‘hammock,’ in which the Russian Federation is, as it were, suspended in a net of connections and relationships that are supported from outside the country.”<sup>21</sup>

The authors were also attracted to theories that argued how one great battle in the world must be followed by another, believing that after three world wars (the Cold War being the third) there will be a fourth—the battle for the legacy of the USSR and the Eastern Bloc. This war will not be for new territories, but rather for the expansion of ties between the people and those states that inhabit the World of Worlds. “It is being decided today whether our country will enter the twenty-first century as a Great Power or whether its territory and resources (material and intellectual) will enter the century as simply one of the stakes

that goes to the winner ... to create Russia's image today means to create a new system of connections between Russians—the Russian World in the context of geo-economics and world cultural policies.”<sup>22</sup>

The authors and participants of this project, which at the beginning was entirely intellectual, explained that they were not speaking of a “Russian geopolitical world” in the form of the CIS, nor about a “Eurasian continental bloc” that Alexander Dugin<sup>23</sup> and his supporters advocate. Neither were they speaking about some other military–strategic alliance meant to guarantee Russia's security and position in the post-Soviet space. Nor does the project have as its goal the isolationist one of “returning Russia to its uniqueness as a civilization” (which was the “Russian Islands” project of Vadim Tsymburskiy<sup>24</sup>) or some trivial integration of our country with western civilization, becoming part of the cultural–historical and political core.

But then what were they talking about? According to P. Shchedritskiy, they were talking about “replacing the vanishing subjects of world development, national states and, through a technical knockout, new ones will emerge, among which the world's diasporas, large transregional unities, or strategic alliances of countries, world-cities (the infrastructural knots of the world's geo-economic net) and anthropomorphic structures (aggregated groups and associations using networked forms of organization for their activities and cultural policies for active participation in the world's processes).”<sup>25</sup>

All of this metaphoric journalism had an influence on many of the young people who were drawn into working on *Russkiy Zhurnal's* projects, as well as on some politicians and more traditional scholars. The idea that it was not national governments but rather diasporas, as networked communities, that would now be the major world players gained currency in various articles and books and also in some quasi-official Foreign Ministry and state programs<sup>26</sup> that were focused on “countrymen abroad,” as ethnic Russians living outside of the country were termed.

The idea of a kind of assigned role, or “mission of the Russian world” proved to be inspiring against the background of primitive nationalist and isolationist constructs, and is an idea that still has emotional and ethical significance, and helps shape policy goals and their realization.

For example, in an interview article entitled “The Mission of the Russian World,” Boris Kruming-Sukharev, co-chairman of the International Association “Russkaya Kultura” and head of that organization's center in Estonia, explained that the creation of the Russian world was intended to “carry a mission, to widen the habitat for the distribution of the Russian language and for the preservation of the Russian people, by using their common activity, their numbers, and their quality.”<sup>27</sup>

Those outside of Russia who subscribe to the idea of a “Russian world” are more likely to support an economic and cultural partnership with Russia. The project's authors called for a “geo-economic direction,” getting the

diaspora of Russian-speaking peoples to guarantee Russia's "inclusion" into the technological and financial reservoirs of the West. This would strengthen Russia's position in the global economy and in the world more generally. As Petr Shchedrovitskiy wrote:

The more world problems that are expressed and, perhaps, solved within the framework of the Russian language, the more in demand the cultural and human resources of the Russian world will become. The paradox of today's situation is that any country which pretends to the status of world power tries to satisfy not only the interests of its own citizens, but also tries to work in the interest of citizens of other states and countries. The greater the number of citizens of other states who have need of Russia, the more stable is Russia's position in the world. The foundation of its stability and necessity informing Russian statehood can and must be sought within the confines of the Russian World, in policies of the constructive development of its world networks.<sup>28</sup>

Equally important to the western orientation of the concept was the idea that there was a "new abroad" for the Russian state to draw on. Writing in 2003, Sergei Gradiovski formulated this idea in the following:

The Russian World, when taken in the geo-cultural framework that we are offering, is directed at the integration of our state with the *donor countries* for the flow of immigration into Russia (and not with the countries that receive emigrants from Russia), in other words, with a potential or actual Third World. In this sense the Russian Geopolitical World that we project is related to post-imperial formations in Europe, such as the British Commonwealth, the group of Ibero-American states "nourished" by Spain, the society of Francophone states and other analogous formations.<sup>29</sup>

This vision of the project as a kind of "white man's burden" in relation to former colonies was also present from the beginning, based on two not-entirely correct suppositions—that the USSR had been an empire, while the new countries (the former Soviet colonies) are like developing countries—that is, the so-called Third World.

In fact, the modernized Soviet periphery, from the Baltic states to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, can in no way be regarded as third world—there is a social and cultural chasm between them and Afghanistan or the nations of Africa. The examples, however, of the Francophone world and their experiences are more useful in the given instance.

There was also a discussion about what the borders of the "Russian world" would be and on the criteria for inclusion; in other words, what made for self-identification with the "Russian world."

In the opinion of some of the authors of the concept, "the Russian language cannot and should not be the sole boundary of the Russian Geo-cultural World." Spanish-speaking Mexico is offered as an example of a place that is part of more than one cultural space, because migration flows draw it into the cultural space of the English-speaking United States, as North American "Latinos" encourage

bilingualism, to enable integration. Similarly, they argue, the Russian world could also attract people who do not speak Russian and who are not Orthodox, but who maintain other kinds of affiliations to Russia or Russians. The “Russian world” is not simply a union of a Russian people divided by state boundaries.

What makes the whole “Russian world” project interesting is that it has been set against the realities of the modern world and Russia’s policy priorities. In fact, the metaphor of the “Russian world” was embodied in a political project during Vladimir Putin’s presidency, though its realization suffered from the same dramatic metamorphoses that the “Russian world” itself did.

In October 2001, at the First Congress of Foreign Countrymen in Moscow, President Putin announced the task of consolidating and structuring “a unified Russian world” to serve as the most important economic, political, and intellectual resource of Russia, and proposed making this one of the priorities of state policy.

However, the very next year, the president’s administration proposed a citizenship law adopted by the State Duma<sup>30</sup> that eliminated many of the hopes Russian “foreign countrymen” had had for special connections to and support from Russia. That law removed all preferences or special circumstances for offering Russian citizenship to foreign citizens of the former USSR and to people who had kept their old Soviet passports and had not received citizenship in any of the successor states of the USSR.

The law compounded restrictions that had not long before been introduced by the law “On the State Policy of the Russian Federation Regarding Foreign Countrymen.”<sup>31</sup> The latter offered an ethnically selective principle for defining “countrymen,” with the hidden xenophobic principle of giving preference only to those who “do not have their own state outside of the boundaries of the Russian Federation” (that is, “countrymen” who are not Jews, Ukrainians, Armenians, Georgians, and so forth).

Those seeking to propagandize the idea of a “Russian world” fought against these changes. At that 2001 congress an International Council of Foreign Countrymen had been established, under the honorary chairmanship of Moscow mayor Yuri M. Luzhkov. In October 2003, this council organized an international forum, “The Foreign Diaspora—Russia’s Intellectual Resource,” in which representatives of 58 countries took part. The participants adopted an appeal to President Putin in which scientists, cultural activists, social activists, and educators from the “Russian abroad” announced their readiness to “facilitate the creation of a positive image for the new Russia” and to work out the “conceptual underpinnings of a Russian World uniting the Russian diaspora.”

The most important point in this appeal, however, was the request to “constructively re-work” the two laws mentioned above. The law on citizenship was eventually amended, but the amendments did not change the unfriendly inclination of that act in regard to former Russian fellow citizens.<sup>32</sup> The forum also adopted resolutions about the activity of the international council and its

regional associations, about supporting education in the Russian language and for Russian-speaking people, about publishing and TV broadcasting, and even one about conducting a gathering of pre-revolutionary Russian nobility from the Russian abroad.<sup>33</sup>

The Second Congress of Foreign Countrymen took place in 2005, but now without any euphoria since immigration into Russia from the FSU states had in effect been closed off.

In 2007 new interest in the theme was provoked by a series of circumstances, first among them the union of the Russian Orthodox Church Overseas with the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and the declaration by the Russian Federation's president that 2007 was to be the "Year of the Russian Language."

In his annual address to the federal assembly in 2007 President Putin once again turned to the idea of the "Russian world," saying:

Historically, our country was formed as a union of many peoples and cultures. The foundation of the spirituality of the Russian people has from time immemorial been the idea of a common world, common for people of various nationalities and confessions. This year, the Year of the Russian Language, gives reason once again to remember that Russian is a language of the historical brotherhood of peoples, a language of true international communication. The language is not just the repository of an entire layer of truly world-class achievements, but is also a living space for a multimillion-fold "Russian world," which, of course, is significantly wider than Russia itself. Thus, as the common heritage of many peoples, the Russian language will never become a language of hatred or enmity, of xenophobia or isolationism.<sup>34</sup>

President Putin on June 23, 2007 ordered the creation of the "Russian World Fund" ... "in order to popularize the Russian language as a cultural asset of Russia and an important element of Russian and world culture, as well as to support programs teaching Russian language abroad." The fund was accredited in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Science. Vyacheslav A. Nikonov was appointed executive director. The first European Russian forum was held on October 1–2 in Brussels, with the theme, "Russophone Society in Europe and its Role in EU–Russian Relations." This was followed by an international conference organized by the Russian Academy of Sciences on October 22–23 on the theme, "Russian Language in the CIS and Baltic Countries,"<sup>35</sup> then by a general gathering of the Academy of Sciences on December 19 that considered the topic, "Russian Language in the Modern World."<sup>36</sup>

### **Factors and Dynamics of the "Russian World"**

Any conversation about the Russian world has to begin with the people of Russia. They created the largest territorial state in the world and are among the ten most populous states of the world. The Russian state has many exemplary accomplishments, and its contribution to world civilization and world culture

is more than remarkable. It is not every state and people that is able to give birth to a phenomenon of global proportions, something that might be called a “world”—that is, a trans-national and trans-continental community that is united by its attachments to a single state and by its loyalty to that state’s culture. Along with Russia, such worlds belong only to Spain, France, and China, and perhaps also Great Britain and Ireland.

A “world” or diaspora is not simply the sum of the emigrants who have left the territory of a historical state in various epochs. That is an approximate but not precisely identical phenomenon. Obviously, without mass emigration there can be no appearance of a culturally related population beyond the boundaries of the state. Simply by itself, however, a large number of emigrants do not guarantee the appearance of a related external world. There can be a great many emigrants, as for example those from India, whose external emigration is the largest in the world. However, the racial, linguistic, and caste differences at the moment of departure and their quick assimilation in the case of those from India has not created a phenomenon that might be termed an “Indian world” similar to the “Huaqiao world” (of overseas Chinese) or “Russian world” (of emigrants from Russia).

Why is it more correct to say that people from Russia (not just Russian people) gave birth to the Russian world (not the world of people from Russia), although the emigration from Russia and those countries which at one time were part of Russia has as multiethnic a character as do the peoples of Russian themselves?

One major reason is that ethnicity often loses its particularity in the diaspora. Emigrants from a particular country are perceived by the receiving society to be a homogeneous mass (culturally identical). For some time emigrants from Russia were called and continue to be called Russians, as an adjectival form based on the name of their country of origin, and nothing more. As a rule, the emigrants themselves follow this simplified understanding, although there are many situations and reasons by which they might reject “Russianness” and declare that they are Jews, Gypsies, Chechens, Cherkess, Finno-Ugrics, and so forth.

Let us say that for the French or Americans it may be more significant that someone in their country comes from Russia and speaks Russian than the fact that he might be a Chuvash or an Ossetin. In the broader world the latter categories are more remote. Emigrants themselves often agree with this, since it is more difficult for them to explain that Russia has Chuvash and Ossetins and many other various nationalities living within it. This simplified understanding of emigrants from other countries is the norm—people in Russia also see emigrants from China as Chinese, from Spain as Spaniards, and Great Britain as English. Within Russia the ethnic differences among citizens remains more significant. “Overseas we are all Russians, but at home we are all different” is one of the common sentiments of the countrymen, reflecting a deeply primordial understanding of ethnicity.

The shared Russian language is another reason why the diaspora becomes a Russian diaspora, and not a simple emigration or gathering of all who have left the country. Language becomes the primary cultural differentiating characteristic by which they recognize and build their unity in the external world.

As a rule, those who have lost that trait lose their allegiance to the Russian world. Tatars from Lithuania, Cherkess from Jordan, and Adygei from Kosovo are not a part of the “Russian world.” The Russian Federation law on government support for “countrymen” does consider them part of the historical group of “countrymen” from Russia now living abroad, and as such they qualify for assistance should they opt to resettle in Russia.

Descendants of Russians or Jews who left Russia before or just after the 1917 Revolution and who are now assimilated into the linguistic and social environment of where they live, are also not part of the Russian world in the full sense of the term, even if the desire to engage in charitable acts, try to reform Russia, and in some cases more cynically earn some easy money, may have led them to “remember” their Russianness. We saw a great many examples of this in the beginning of the 1990s. One of these descendants, who barely spoke Russian—Boris Jordan—for a time headed the TV channel NTV, and still has substantial business interests in Russia. Many of the “returnees” are not just acting out of deeply practical reasons, but have also created deep emotional and cultural attachments.

The “Russian world” also includes those who left the country, regardless of how long ago, those who preserved their Orthodox faith, their knowledge of Russian, and also, in varying degrees, loyalty and allegiance to Russia. Russian Dukhobors in Canada or Lipovans in Romania, both groups who emigrated from Imperial Russia long ago, remain a part of the “Russian world,” even though their environment did not make it easy for them to retain their Russian identity, particularly their connection to the Russian language. Former residents of the USSR who emigrated to Europe and America in the last two decades who continue to play the famous TV game KVN (Klub veselykh i nakhodchivyykh—The Happy and Clever Club) in Russian are a part of the Russian world, even if they are not ethnic Russians, but Armenians, Georgians, Ukrainians, and their native roots are found today not only in Russia, but also in the new independent states. By formal citizenship and political loyalty they might belong more to Ukraine, Georgia, or Armenia, but in the linguistic and cultural sense they preserve a strong orientation toward Russia and Russian culture.

There are also many other details that I have observed in *émigré* life, among New Yorkers (especially in Brighton Beach), in San Francisco, and in Los Angeles (especially in university areas and around IT companies) where those from the former USSR live. Their personal communications, sources of information, the books they read, their daily lives, and their interests are to a great extent processed through the Russian language and revolve around Russia as a kind of cultural magnet (the most frequent expression is “this is like in Russia” or “this isn’t like in Russia”).

In particular the Russian language and Russian-language Soviet and post-Soviet culture serve as the historical memory that unites people and constitutes that world. The connection with Russia, in the sense of loyalty and attraction, remains the most important characteristic of the Russian world, but the connection can be mutable and take contradictory meanings and directions. There is a sense of connection and a demonstrated attitude toward Russia, whether it is among the descendants of Russian emigrants who have preserved Fort Ross in California or the battlers against “the Kremlin’s regime” who live as political emigrants in London. Thus the Russian language, Russian-language culture, and a demonstrable interest in the Motherland are what create the criteria for membership in the “Russian world.”

Taking the criterion of Russian language, what kinds of numbers are we speaking of today? According to data from the Summer Linguistic Institute, Russian is the native language of 147–150 million people, and another 113–120 million are fluent in it as a second language. The total of those who know and use Russian is about 260–280 million people.<sup>37</sup>

Thus, for example, in Russia and Belarus about 97 percent of the population can speak Russian; in the Baltics and Ukraine, about 80 percent; in Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, and Georgia, about 70 percent. In terms of the overall number of speakers, Russian is the fifth most-spoken language in the world. For a number of historical reasons, the scale of its distribution has not been growing, but rather shrinking over the past two decades. Between 1991 and 1997 several thousand Russian schools were closed in the new abroad, while the number of people studying Russian dropped by more than 2 million. Nevertheless, school instruction in Russian (apart from in Russia, where 97 percent of students study it) continues in the majority of the post-Soviet states—75 percent in Belarus; 41 percent in Kazakhstan; 25 percent in Ukraine; 23 percent in Kyrgyzstan; 21 percent in Moldova; 7 percent in Azerbaijan; 5 percent in Georgia; and 2 percent in Armenia.

The distributive geography of Russian outside of Russia is extremely broad. In addition to the new former Soviet states, there are Russian speakers living in Europe (about 3 million), the United States (about 3 million), and Israel (750,000). According to the 2000 census in the United States, Russian was the first domestic language for 706,000 people.<sup>38</sup> During the 1990s the Russian-speaking population of the United States nearly tripled. However, not all of these people are ethnic Russians. What then does Russian ethnicity mean as a distinguishing characteristic, when the “Russian world” includes about 25 million ethnic Russians in post-Soviet states and a few million others further abroad?

The further back in time one goes, and the greater distance from Russia the emigrants’ new home is, the less useful ethnicity becomes as the distinguishing characteristic of the “Russian world.” Russians (also known as Great Russians) were an obvious minority and remain so in the farther parts of the “Russian

world.” Thus, for example, in the United States only 25 percent of Russian speakers are ethnic Russians. In Europe, two-thirds of the Russian speakers are Russian Germans, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Ukrainians, and other non-Russian emigrants from the USSR and the post-Soviet states. For example, more than a million Russian Germans (known also as Volga Germans), who are native Russian speakers, moved to Germany from Kazakhstan and Russia in the 1990s. In European countries, questions of discerning ethnic origin are even more complex. In Finland there are 33,400 Russian speakers, of whom 5,000 are the descendants of old émigrés who either moved to or remained in Finland when it was split off from imperial Russia. The rest are post-Soviet emigrants. Who are they—Russians? Karelians? Belarussians? Most likely these are primarily Russian people, since Finland abuts Russia’s European north. This is not the case in all countries, however. In other Scandinavian countries, Great Britain, France, Poland, and the Czech Republic there are now hundreds, even thousands of Russian-speaking emigrants from Russia, representing numerous ethnic communities. There are no reliable statistics on this. Thus, non-Russians for whom Russian is the native or main language of communication can be ascribed to the Russian world.

But what can we make of people’s individual identification with the Russian world? Can all Russians and Russian-speaking people be considered part of the Russian world (if they don’t consider themselves so)? In Latvia or Estonia, some ethnic Russians joined human chains of people demanding independence, and in recent years some local Russian supported moving the Monument to the Soviet Soldier in Tallinn,<sup>39</sup> and others were in favor of closing Russian schools in Riga.

It is a difficult question deciding whether or not such people are part of the “Russian world.” Russian ethnic identification might draw such people to the Russian world in spite of their political and ideological identities, and their citizenship, since they have not been given a fully equal place in Estonian or Latvian society. To achieve this they have to stop being Russian and become Estonian or Latvian. However, Russian youths who study Estonian but have not forgotten Russian can scarcely be considered to be part of the “Russian world” when they do their national military service as part of NATO’s forces. Certainly they would never be considered as such by the authors of the “Russia world” project.

A well-known Russian philosopher, Alexander Tsipko, noted in his sketch about Odessa that there was a “tendency to leave the Russian world but to preserve the Russian language, as the Russian cultural legacy is personal and collective capital.” Tsipko himself was from Russian Odessa, knew it in the 1960s through the 1980s, and has observed that Odessa today is moving from the Russian world toward embracing Ukrainian statehood and the West.<sup>40</sup> It is impossible to ignore this new dynamic in the Russian world. If we do, we risk alienating those whom we consider to be part of the Russian people and whom we would like to identify with the “Russian world.” Russian ethnicity plays

much the same role for the later (Soviet and post-Soviet) waves of emigration and for the new diaspora that did not emigrate as Orthodoxy did for earlier (pre-Soviet) waves of emigration. Even Russian ethnicity may not always be an indisputable proof of belonging to the Russian world.

For post-Soviet émigrés and for those who did not move anywhere but had the borders of their own motherland “emigrate” away from them, the dominant factor in identification with the “Russian world” is language, as well as ethnic and other lingering ties to Russia. Identification with the “Russian world” is greatest for those in the former Soviet states who experience discrimination and/or the diminished status of Russians or of “Russian-speakers” in favor of the “titular” ethno-nationalities. In these instances religion plays a lesser role, though one that continues to grow. For all the variety that has been noted, the situational and mythological quality of the “Russian world” is a reality that shows itself in a wide variety of instances, most of them significant for Russia and of value to Russians.

## The Old Russian World

For the past 150 years there has been a substantial emigration from Russia, although not all of those who left Russia formed a diaspora. In pre-reform Russia there was an intensive and widespread colonization and primarily a religious emigration (of Russian Old Believers). Although the settlers of the eighteenth through the first half of the nineteenth century almost always remained within the ever-widening boundaries of Russia, some of them settled in Dobruzhe, which was incorporated into Romania and Bulgaria in 1878, and in Bukovina, which in 1774 became part of Austria. Even earlier, in the 1770s and 1780s, more than 200,000 Crimean Tatars moved into Ottoman territory. In the beginning of the nineteenth century there were 275,000 Tatars and Nogai who lived in the European part of Turkey (Rumelii).<sup>41</sup> In 1771 about 200,000 Kalmyks moved to Djungaria (Kalmyks offer an example of multiple diaspora identities—for many of them their homeland is the country they left, and even several countries at once, depending on the situation and on the individual or group choices).<sup>42</sup>

The migration of populations increased significantly during the reforms of the mid-nineteenth century. More than 500,000 people left Russia between the 1860s and the 1880s, mostly Poles, Jews, and Germans going to neighboring European states and a smaller number going to countries in the Americas. What was notable about this wave of emigration was that it did not lead to the formation of a lasting Russian diaspora. The reason in this case was that many of those leaving had been a diaspora in Russia and were thus moving to what they viewed as their true historical motherland (Poland, Germany, or Israel [Palestine]). This made it impossible for them to hold a lingering identification with Russia. The descendants of these first emigrants from the Russian Empire whom I have interviewed live in many countries of the world, but they identify

with Poland, Israel, and now, with the Baltic countries, Ukraine, or Belorussia, and have no sense of being in diaspora.

In addition, for a large number of those leaving Russia at that time, this emigration was not ideological, but rather one wholly based on economic survival. The number of intellectual elites and ethnic activists among them was not sufficient to instill in the emigrants a sense of being part of a diaspora. Without intellectuals as producers of subjective ideas there is no diaspora; there is simply a migrant population. It may be that the antimonarchical sentiments of the early Russian migrations also played a contributing role, but this question requires further study. Most likely, such sentiments were of secondary importance to what was largely an illiterate population drawn into resettlement.

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century there was a sharp increase in emigration from Russia. About 1.1 million people left, mostly for the United States and Canada but other destinations as well. One unusual group was the “*mukhazhiry*,” people who lived primarily in the western part of the North Caucasus and who left during the war in the Caucasus. They resettled in various parts of the Ottoman Empire, primarily in the Middle East. Today the descendants of these emigrants, according to various sources, number about 3 million people in Turkey alone.<sup>43</sup> These people were the foundation of the Cherkess diaspora,<sup>44</sup> which formed before their territory in the northern Caucasus became part of Russia. The activity of the Cherkess diaspora in the several countries in which it exists—including associations, political groups, printing houses, and kinsmen networks—has always been focused on preserving their language and culture, without positive reference to Russia.<sup>45</sup>

The contributions of the donor nation (in this case Russia) to preserving the diaspora after the initial ejection of the population were minimal. It was not possible to write about the *mukhazhiry* in Soviet times, let alone have contact with them. The motherland disappeared from the ideological complex of the diaspora for a long time for many and, for some, forever. The Caucasus was somewhere over there, beyond the iron curtain, and provided scant nourishment for the diaspora other than a mission for some individuals to fight the USSR and communism. For example, Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov,<sup>46</sup> a Chechen political scientist and popular writer who lived in West Germany, held a concept of the motherland so vague that his history of the deportation of the Chechens and Ingush was based on the conviction that the Vainakh<sup>47</sup> disappeared in the genocidal furnace of Stalinist repression.

Bereft of any connection to its motherland, the Cherkess diaspora had virtually disappeared as such—its population generally assimilating into host country—only to be reawakened by the situation in the USSR and then Russia. Those living outside of Russia were sometimes faster to become politicized by the changing environment than those still living in their ancestral lands, and those in the diaspora were able to help devise a whole range of new collective and group strategies.

The presence of fellow countrymen (or tribesmen) abroad helped the former Soviet people to master the outside world that had suddenly opened before them. The diaspora also became a source for facilitating new forms of activity such as entrepreneurship. Members of the “rich diaspora” might help set up businesses or at least help organize shopping tours in Turkey, Jordan, the United States, and other countries. Finally there was the hope (mostly in vain) that large numbers of emigrants and their descendants would return to their historical homelands, creating a favorable demographic balance that would strengthen the hand of titular nationalities<sup>48</sup> that wanted to form “national” governments during the “parade of sovereignties.”<sup>49</sup>

The Abkhaz were the first to try to add foreign fellow countrymen to bolster their numbers. The Kazakhs, the Chechens, and the Cherkess (Adygeis) then followed. For example, the war in the former Yugoslavia made appealing the image of Russia’s Adygei region<sup>50</sup> as a homeland for the Adygeis who felt unable to remain in Kosovo or emigrate to more attractive countries. The Republic of Adygei adopted a special law on the repatriation of Adygeis that resulted in the resettling of only twenty families from Kosovo. This example suggests that historically remote migrations with physical and cultural isolation from the motherland rarely create lasting diasporas despite the efforts of those in the motherland.

A similar situation might have occurred with the primarily eastern Slavic emigration from Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, had it not received a powerful replenishment later. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, emigration from Russia increased—before World War I about 2.5 million people left Russia, settling primarily in countries in the New World. During the approximately 100 years from the beginning of mass external migration up to 1917, about 4.5 million people left the Russian Empire. Can all these emigrants (or, more precisely, their descendants) from pre-revolutionary Russia be considered a diaspora or part of the Russian world? My answer is, of course not.

First, in terms of territory the majority of emigrants from the Russian empire during that period left from Poland, Finland, Lithuania, western Belarus, and western Ukraine (Volynia). Thus to a significant degree Russia laid down the material for the diasporas from other countries, which gained international recognition only later. Although many of the emigrants were comfortable with Russian culture and even considered Russian their native tongue, one could scarcely consider, for example, Adolf Hitler’s comrade-in-arms Alfred Rosenberg—who came from Lithuania and who spoke Russian better than he did German—to be a representative of the Russian emigration. That said, political speculation by historians does permit constructions of that sort. American historian Michael Kellogg claims that Hitler’s supporters from the Baltic republics and from anti-Bolshevik emigrés served as “Russian roots of Nazism” in Germany.<sup>51</sup>

The ethnic composition of this emigration also influenced its ability to become a Russian diaspora. Of the 3.3 million pre-revolutionary emigrants from

Russia to the United States, 41.5 percent were Jewish. Of the 1.6 million emigrants in the first decade of the twentieth century, 44 percent were Jewish, 27 percent were Polish, 9 percent were Lithuanians, 8 percent were Finns, 6 percent were Germans, and 5 percent were Russian.<sup>52</sup> Pogroms and campaigns of discrimination against Jews in Russia, as well as poverty, conditioned among them a deep and long abiding negative image of the motherland, some of which persists today. The successful integration of these emigrants into American society (not without problems and discrimination well through the middle of the twentieth century) helped promote the forgetting of “Russianness,” imputing either as a territory or as an ethnic community. The many descendants of this emigration whom I have met in the United States, Canada, and Mexico (several dozen of them among my colleagues and fellow social scientists alone!) have almost entirely failed to preserve or feel ties to Russia. That means they are not part of a diaspora. This holds true as well for Poles, Finns, Lithuanians, and Germans.

Of the 4.5 million emigrants from pre-Revolutionary Russia, only about 500,000 were considered “ethnic Russians,” but these also included Ukrainians, Belarusians, and some Jews. The 1920 U.S. Census counted 392,000 “Russians” and 56,000 “Ukrainians,” but these are clearly exaggerated figures since among them were people from other ethnic groups, particularly Jews. The article on “Russians” in the *Harvard Encyclopedia of Ethnic Groups* warns that in the censuses of 1910, 1920, and 1930 that category included not just Great Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarussians, but also Russian Jews, Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians, and Carpathian Rus from Gallicia, who considered Russian their native tongue.<sup>53</sup> The Canadian census of 1921 similarly counted almost 100,000 “Russians,” although this category included almost all eastern Slavs and Jews who had come from Russia. And what percentage of the descendants of these as many as 500,000 Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians feel a personal connection to Russia is difficult to say exactly, but it likely constitutes a very small fraction.

### **Traditional Diaspora and Difficult Circumstances**

The history of the contemporary Russian diaspora more rightly begins with the migrations after 1917. During the period 1918–1922 there was a political emigration of those who did not accept Soviet power or had lost the civil war, the so-called “White Emigration” of about 1.5 to 2 million people, the overwhelming majority of whom were ethnic Russians. They were not only the constituents of a diaspora, but lived as a diaspora, seeking to preserve Russian language and culture and oftentimes the Orthodox faith. This migration led to the birth of the “Russian world.”

The “White Emigration” shows that while migration is primarily socio-economic in nature, there generally exists a political dimension to diaspora formation.

There were many from the elite among these emigrants, and they felt a greater sense of loss for their motherland (and their property). This was in contrast to the laboring emigrants “in rough-cut sheepskin coats” (as earlier Slavic immigrants to Canada were sometimes termed). The “White Emigration” produced a parallel cultural stream, which now has partially been returned to Russia.

In the past two decades the descendants of this wave of emigration have shown the most sympathy for and political interest in Russia. Even greater than the nostalgia of those in the diaspora is what some in Russia seek to make of it, defining the culture of the diaspora as a lost norm and its language as “pure” Russian. The Russian (ethnic or national) diaspora has been reborn, rich with the attention and apologetic generosity of contemporaries in the historical homeland. Before our very eyes historians have constructed a myth about the “Golden Age” of the Russian emigration, which may be at odds with its actual history.

The White Emigration continued to bolster its ranks with new members. During World War II there were almost 9 million prisoners and forced laborers, of whom only about 5.5 million returned to the USSR. Many were killed or died of their wounds or of disease. At least 300,000 so-called displaced persons (DPs) remained in Europe or moved to the United States or other countries. This group shared cultural and political values with the White Emigration, allowing a merging of these two streams, as both were interested in preserving the use of the Russian language and were willing to have only minimal contact with the motherland maintained even into the Khrushchev years.<sup>54</sup>

My American informant Semyen Klimson was taken from Belarus as a young man by the Germans and then remained in the west after the war. He married Valentina, the daughter of a White emigrant (a relative of General Krasnov<sup>55</sup> and the theosophist Madame Blavatskaya<sup>56</sup>). During our last meeting at their home in Virginia in the summer of 1998, Valentina Vladimirovna [Klimson] confessed that her French education (she grew up in France) made her feel more like a Frenchwoman, but she remains Russian and keeps up the language “just for Semyen, who stayed Russian.”

The small but politically vocal emigration from the USSR to Israel, the United States, Germany, and Greece in the 1960–1980s was even more ideological. From 1951 to 1991 about 1.8 million people left the country (the most was in 1990–1991, about 400,000), of whom nearly 1 million were Jews (two-thirds went to Israel and one-third to the United States), 550,000 were Germans, and about 100,000 each were Armenians and Greeks. The emigration continued in subsequent years, but at a somewhat reduced rate. The most recent wave of emigration from Russia to the West has been the most mosaic of the diasporas, varied both in reasons for emigrating and in conglomerate identity. Tourist visits, study at foreign universities, and temporary residence (including for the privileged in their own homes in London or Paris) replaces the need for emigration in many cases.

## Diaspora, Identity, and Ethnic Agglomerations

People leaving Russia have formed the Russian national diaspora and also created basic ethnic agglomerations in two countries (the United States and Israel) that form the these countries' core populations. Jewish migration has always been a significant part of the exodus from Russia, but at the end of the twentieth century Jews formed the majority of all who left the USSR and the Russian Federation. Formally the Jews and Germans from Russia were reuniting with or returning to their historical homelands, but in essence this was an exodus of people who were culturally Russian. They left for various reasons—economic, ideological, professional, and personal. Jewish émigrés from previous waves had generally adapted successfully to their new societies, many of them losing the Russian language and any emotional connection to Russia. The descendants of the fourth prime minister of Israel, Odessa-born Golda Meir,<sup>57</sup> could hardly be numbered among the representatives of the “Russian world,” the same as the scores of American professors of Russian–Jewish origin whose grandparents had emigrated from Russia.

Not all Jews “returned” or “rejoined” their “historic homeland, however, and not all Jews rejected Russia. With perestroika<sup>58</sup> and the opening up of the USSR, people who left the country were not forced to reject it. One can learn Hebrew without forgetting Russian, and it is no longer necessary to break off contact with friends and relatives in Russia. The ubiquity of Russian-language culture, print media, and TV in Israel is second only to Hebrew and far exceeds Arabic.<sup>59</sup>

The recent Jewish emigrants from Russia to the United States were more quickly acculturated than their Israeli counterparts. This part of world Jewry might also be conditionally ascribed to the Russian world, especially if this affiliation is not understood as exclusive. Today, it is possible for people to simultaneously participate in several cultures and to consider themselves part of several cultural–civilization communities.

Many of the Germans who moved from Russia and Kazakhstan to Germany over the past 20 years also have ties to the “Russian world.” The local Germans consider them to be Russians, as many do themselves. Perhaps only their children, once they have learned how to speak German without an accent and have forgotten Russian, will cease to link themselves to Russia and will thus leave the “Russian world.” Such situations highlight how the “Russian world” is not just a statistical group of people who have migrated from Russia. Rather, it is a form of cultural behavior and identity.

If one were to exclude from the total number of historical emigrants from Russia and their descendants all those who are completely assimilated and cannot speak Russian—all those who consider themselves to be French, Argentine, Mexican, or Jordanian and have no sense of connection to Russia—even so the number of “overseas countrymen” would remain large and difficult to define through “objective” traits. Membership in a diaspora depends upon self-identity and reflects emotional choice.

Here is a personal example. I was acquainted with the late George Ignatieff,<sup>60</sup> the famous Canadian diplomat and rector of Trinity College at the University of Toronto. He not only considered himself Canadian but, precisely, a “Russian–Canadian” (which was what Nikita Khrushchev had taken him to be when they met at the UN and when Ignatieff went to the USSR in 1955 as part of the official Canadian delegation). There is no question that Count Ignatieff should be considered to be part of the Russian diaspora.

Almost 20 years later I met his son, Michael Ignatieff,<sup>61</sup> a well known journalist and writer, who did not know a single word of Russian, and considered himself part of the Canadian diaspora in England, stating that, “For me, being a Canadian,” he said, “is simply one of those privileges that I received as a birth-right.” To categorize the younger Ignatieff as a member of the Russian diaspora would have been an obvious usurpation of his right to choose how to live his own life. In 1987 he wrote a marvelous book called *The Russian Album*,<sup>62</sup> about his journey to a childhood to which he could no longer return and his connections to family heirlooms.

For a reader in Russia the book is a historical and cultural document created by a member of the Russian diaspora despite the fact that Michael himself would not grant this. However, during a meeting with him in his bohemian apartment in old London in January 1997, he did not look like a representative of the Russian diaspora, unlike his father, whom I had seen in Toronto. However, Michael wrote the following curious words about him: “At the same time he always kept himself apart from the Russian emigration, with its fractional intrigues and antediluvian politics. When I was a child he always seemed more Canadian than Russian to me. Even today he remains a more patriotic and sentimental Canadian than I am myself. For him Canada was the country that gave him a new life.”<sup>63</sup> In London Michael told me that he was first of all an Englishman because his mother was English. However, in 2006, when he decided to run for prime minister of Canada as a Liberal Party candidate, he emphasized his “Canadianness” as his sole and unquestioned identity. Which of the two Ignatieffs was part of the diaspora, and which of them belonged to the “Russian world?” There is no clear answer. Identity drift of an individual or a group can be situational and, in any event, dynamic. A great deal depends upon instrumental (or personal) calculations and also on the economic and political influences of the country of exodus and that of emigration.

## The Far Russian World of Today

The collapse of the USSR did not result in a mass emigration from Russia to more developed countries in the West. Nonetheless, the post-1991 exodus was large enough, especially in the first half of the 1990s. According to Russian figures, for the entire period from 1989 to 1999, 1.046 million people left Russia and the “near-abroad”<sup>64</sup> countries, with 97 percent of that migration to the United States, Canada, Israel, Germany, and Finland.<sup>65</sup> This part of the

emigration also includes the fairly numerous Russian groups that were formed by emigrants from Russia and other post-Soviet states to Central Europe (especially to the Czech Republic and Poland).

In all respects, Russians in America are the most powerful and notable Russian diaspora or part of the “Russian world” as well the most significant for Russia. Russian Americans (Russian-speaking emigrants from the former USSR) constitute slightly over 10 percent of the total foreign-born population in the United States with an average age of 32.5 years—a young and dynamic part of the overall population. Their main areas of concentration are the New York Tri-State area (24 percent), California (16 percent), Illinois (16 percent), Pennsylvania (10 percent), Massachusetts (8 percent), and Florida (7 percent). The average income of Russian Americans is \$50,000 per year; 53 percent have BA degrees or higher; 57 percent own their own home (as compared to 41 percent of the total foreign-born population); 67.5 percent work in managerial, technical, professional, and other high-qualification jobs (as compared to 45 percent of the total foreign-born population). The number of large businesses owned by Russian Americans is increasing: some 300 businesses and other enterprises in Denver and 700 in the San Francisco region.<sup>66</sup>

In 1999–2000 Galina Komarova of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences conducted a study of the Russian residents of the greater Boston area—about 20,000 people in 2000. One of her conclusions was that the Russian-speaking community in this urban conglomerate is sustaining itself by creating niche labor jobs and communications due to its continued use of the Russian language.<sup>67</sup>

The situation of the modern Russian-language diaspora in the far abroad (primarily Europe and North America) differs from that of its predecessors in terms of its attitude toward both language and politics. Russian remains the domestic language for several million emigrants from the former Soviet Union, who now live—and the majority of whom will continue to live—in the West. Russian is also used at work by those who have business or professional interests in Russia or who are in groups in which there is a high concentration of Russian speakers. Thus, for example, in the Washington office of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace’s Russia and Eurasia Program, directed by former U.S. Ambassador to Russia James F. Collins, at least half of the staff are either fully bilingual or are native speakers of Russian.

Ethnicity, language, citizenship, and professional interests frequently form a complex conglomerate (“conglomerate identity”). An example of this is Carnegie staff assistant Diara Ziyaeva, an Uzbek national from Tashkent and member of a professorial family. Her father is an Uzbek and grandmother is a descendant of Armenians from Turkey. Ziyaeva is fully bilingual in Uzbek and Russian. She graduated from a high school whose primary language of instruction was Russian but took courses in Uzbek while at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy. In 1999 she was part of a high school exchange that brought her to the United States, where she learned her fluent English.

When asked about Russian and the Russian-speaking community in America, Ziyaeva said, “People watch Russian TV here as much as they do American TV. Russian movies are also popular—the films of Balabanov,<sup>68</sup> Mikhalkov,<sup>69</sup> and some others. People are aware of Russian literature, but people today generally read less. We watch the news in Russian or get it from the Internet.

The end of the Cold War and Russia’s new face have uncoupled the Russian language and Russian culture from many negative connotations and emotions, although this process is being decidedly slowed by certain aspects of contemporary Russian politics and the continued view in Western society that Russia is the main enemy of democracy and stability. For all its contradictions and the mutability of the political situation, the “Russian world” of the far abroad will not be reduced, in contrast to that of the near abroad, which will be discussed below. Democratic guarantees for ethno-cultural diversity and the high social and cultural status of the bearers of Russian-language culture will preserve the “Russian world” in Western countries.

## Post-Soviet Diasporas in the Russian World

What happened to the “new Russian world” that appeared after 1991? The collapse of the USSR gave the non-titular peoples (mostly Russians and Russian speakers) three possible life strategy choices—assimilation into the titular language and culture; emigration to Russia; and fighting for equal status in their new societies. The majority of specialists and professionals only looked at the first two possibilities—the most unnatural from the viewpoint of rational human choices and the most difficult to realize.

My position remains as it was in the beginning of the 1990s. I favor parity of status and a two-community state in a number of the newly independent states, as well as the guarantee of cultural and linguistic rights for national minorities (including fellow countrymen from Russia) in those states where status parity is practically impossible. At the same time, I separate the question of the non-titular population or national minorities and the question of the status of the Russian language, as a significant portion of the titular population as well as many ethnic minorities often are also native speakers of Russian.

The events of the past fifteen years have substantially changed the position of Russians and the status of the Russian language in the post-Soviet states, and as a result I have modified my position somewhat. Until quite recently it seemed to me that the assimilation of Russians in the new states would be impossible in the presence of a Russian ethnic nucleus next door to Russia, especially given the global status of Russian as a language of modernization and one that contributed to the professional successes of many former Soviet citizens. I have now come to realize that the assimilation of Russians, including linguistic assimilation, is possible, albeit it is still not widespread. However, the main cultural process after the formation of the new states has been the de-Russification of the titular nationality, including the move from Russian to (titular) national

or state languages. This is a linguistic “desiccation” of the Russian world. Will the post-Soviet states repeat the pattern of what happened when England and France left their colonies, and the Anglophone and Francophone worlds were preserved? Or will there be a variant of the post-imperial situation in the former Austro–Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, when neither German, Hungarian, nor Turkish became anything like a *lingua franca*, while the new national cultures left almost nothing in their cultural baggage from the previous imperial states?

In the instance of the far abroad and their old worlds, I use the term “new Russian world” not for a geographic space, but rather for an imagined (constructed) socio-cultural community that is made up of not just Russians. Representatives of other ethnic groups can be ascribed to the Russian world by language and by a demonstrable connection to Russia, its language, and its culture. The “Russian world” in the near abroad includes not only the Russian Dukhobors who live in the Bogdanovsk region of Georgia, but also the Karabakh Armenians who do not speak Armenian. The Russian world includes a significant part of the Russian-speaking Belarussians, Ukrainians, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Orthodox and Russian-speaking Gagauz in Moldova, Russian-speaking Tatars in Lithuania, “Siberian” Latvians, Central Asian Koreans, and some other

**Table 1. Russian Population in the CIS and Baltic Countries, 1999–2004<sup>70</sup>**

	1989, in thousands	Post-Soviet count	Year	Loss
RUSSIA	119865.9	115868.5	2002	-3.3%
UKRAINE	11356	8334.0	2001	-26.6%
KAZAKHSTAN	6228	4479.6	1999	-28.1%
UZBEKISTAN	1653	1362.0	Estimate	-17.6%
BELARUS	1342	1141.7	1999	-14.9%
LATVIA	906	703.2	2000	-22.4%
KYRGYZSTAN	917	603.2	1999	-34.2%
ESTONIA	475	351.2	2000	-26.1%
LITHUANIA	344	219.8	2000	-36.1%
MOLDOVA	562	198.1	2004	-64.8%
TURKMENISTAN	334	156.8	Estimate	-53.1%
AZERBAIJAN	392	141.7	1999	-63.9%
TAJKISTAN	388	68.2	2000	-82.4%
GEORGIA	341	67.7	2002	-80.1%
ARMENIA	52	15.0	2001	-71.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>145155.9</b>	<b>133710.7</b>		-7.9%
EXCLUDING RUSSIA	25290.0	17842.2		-29.4%

groups. However, the demographic and socio-cultural foundation of the new Russian world (of the near abroad) is composed of ethnic Russians—in fact, to a much greater degree than is true in the Russian world of the far abroad, where everyone who speaks Russian is considered Russian.

Let's look at the demographic foundation of the Russian world, the numbers of ethnic Russians who live in the CIS and Baltic countries, as compared to the Soviet census of 1989 (table 1). The changes over the past thirteen years tell a great deal.

We can see that the overall number of Russians in the Russian world of the near abroad after 1989 was reduced by almost 7.5 million people (29.4 percent), although about 2.5–3.5 million of them moved to Russia and about 0.5 million emigrated to the far abroad.<sup>71</sup>

Where did this approximately 3.5 million people disappear to? Most of them are from Ukraine (from which about 0.5 million people moved to Russia while the number of Russians there was reduced by 3 million) and Kazakhstan (from which about 1 million left, while the number of Russians dropped by 2 million). If the census data is interpreted simply as data about the mechanistic movements of population (birth, death, migration), then in Ukraine in the 1990s there was something like a “terrible famine” of Russians in which no fewer than 2.5 million disappeared, since of the 3 million that vanished, only 0.5 million can be ascribed to a natural drop in population, which was about the same among Russians as it was among Ukrainians.

However, that is not the case. No one starved to death in Ukraine in the 1990s. The reduction in the number of Russians took place first as a result of a change of identity on the part of some citizens from Russian to Ukrainian (primarily people of mixed heritage or from mixed families). This was not assimilation in its classic form, since those who registered as Ukrainians considered this identity to be a more comfortable and politically beneficial state in independent Ukraine, but they did not lose their knowledge of Russian, and they remained people of double or mixed identity. There was an analogous census shift in the Ukraine between the censuses of 1926 and 1937, save that it went from Ukrainians to Russians, thus complicating the problem of figuring out how many Ukrainians died during the period of collectivization<sup>72</sup> and famine in the 1930s.<sup>73</sup>

The explanation in Kazakhstan is a different one, for it is much harder for a Russian to register as a Kazakh for a whole host of reasons—ethno-linguistic, religious, and even phenotype differences are often too great. However, the 1999 census took place in Kazakhstan during a time of heated nationalism and the expectation that Kazakhs would prove to be the decisive ethnic majority there. According to informants, the census was conducted with little enthusiasm by the census-takers among the population of the country's big cities, which led to an underestimate primarily of the Russian population, which is more urban than the Kazakhs. However, the massive emigration of Russians has already

stopped, in part due to generally positive economic conditions. Those Russians who remain are trying to solidify their rights and their status, even though the greatest irony is that Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev uses Russian in most of his most important public addresses. In Kazakhstan, as in a few other post-Soviet states, Russian has gained the ill-defined status as the “language of international communication.”

## Russian Language and the Russian-Speaking Population of the CIS and Baltic States

In the USSR Russian was the language of the state and party bureaucracies, of education, the press, the army, science, and high culture. Even more important, it was the language for communication between peoples of various nationalities. It was the native language (in the sense of primary language for knowledge and communication or as the first language learned in childhood) not just for ethnic Russians, but also for tens of millions of non-Russians. In the last Soviet census (1989) just before the collapse of the USSR, about 19 million people of other nationalities in addition to Russians named Russian as their native language, while 69 million people indicated that they were fluent in Russian as a second language. In fact, the Soviet censuses under-reported the number of non-ethnic Russians who spoke Russian as a native language, as the question of native language required no explanation of the degree of linguistic competence. Many people claimed their native language to be the language of their nationality, even if they were not fluent in that language. Thus millions of Russian-speaking Soviet people claimed Belarusian, Ukrainian, Moldovan, Kyrgyz, and other languages to be their native language, even if they did not use or even know the language.

I did field work in Ust–Ordynsk Autonomous Okrug in Irkutsk oblast in 1989 (soon after the census was taken), where I asked local Russian-speaking Buryats (Mongols) what language they had indicated on the census as their native tongue. Almost all responded that they had chosen “Buryat,” even if they were unable to speak a word of Buryat. “If you put down Buryat as your nationality, it somehow doesn’t seem right to call Russian your native language,” was what I was commonly told.

It is possible to suppose that if the real figures for the distribution and use of Russian by those who lived in the union republics were known, it would have been much more difficult to put into place such wide-ranging restrictions against the use of Russian in public life and in official documents that were introduced in a number of countries. About half of the populations of Ukraine, Latvia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic,<sup>74</sup> and a third of the population of Moldova, Estonia, and Georgia (if you include Abkhazia and South Ossetia) were deprived of the right for their language to have official status. With the aim of distancing themselves from Russia and to push Russian speakers away

from power and other resources, these states put this usurpation of linguistic rights into effect with international support.

Following the collapse of the USSR, for the first time in history large numbers of Russians and other Russian speakers found themselves becoming stateless peoples, even though most were living where they had always lived and some were even living where they had been born. In Latvia close to half the population fell into this category; and in the capital Riga a majority—and a third of the population in Estonia. The primary goal of this policy of exclusion—to cause the migration of Russians back to Russia—has not been achieved. The overwhelming majority of Russians stayed in the Baltic countries and many are going through a process of integration into new state communities and national cultures (Latvian and Estonian). They are unique in the “Russian world,” as they must battle to achieve equal status and to preserve their cultural identity in the face of the most powerful and thorough attempt at assimilation that Russians have ever faced.

The situation varies from country to country in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), but it is nowhere of benefit to Russians or Russian speakers, even though Russian is the official language of the CIS and Russia has tried in every possible way to influence the language policy of the CIS member states, doing what it could to support the Russian-language cultural and information space.

In the USSR in 1989 about 20 million people did not speak Russian, mostly people living in Central Asia and Azerbaijan. Eighteen years later there has been a sharp drop in the number of people who know Russian in this region, as well as the prevalence of the language’s use (Table 2).

It is clear that Russian maintains a powerful presence despite its reduced status, as Russian is effectively a state language only in Belarus and an official language only in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (in the latter, the departure of President Askar Akaev meant that status was essentially revoked). In Belarus 97 percent of the population speaks or can speak Russian; in the Baltic countries and Ukraine around 80 percent can do so; and in Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, and Armenia around 70 percent can speak Russian. The total number of those who consider Russian to be their native language is 26.4 million, 63.6 million are fluent, and 37.7 million claim a less-than-fluent knowledge of the language. This is nearly half the 1989 figure. As indicated above, many of those who do not speak Russian live in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, but their numbers have increased in Georgia and in Ukraine as well. In these two countries it may be that people did not wish to show that they know Russian for political reasons. Yet the linguistic situation can change rather quickly, and in the course of a generation a people can gain or lose one language or another. When I visited Tbilisi in 2000, my Georgian colleague, the ethnographer Liya Milikishvili, told me that her children already had trouble with Russian and that her colleagues would undertake collaborative projects on Georgian ethnography only if their texts could be done in Georgian.

There has been a huge and rapid drop in education in Russian and in the teaching of the Russian language, and a sharp reduction of the Russian-language information space. In the 1990s alone about 20,000 Russian schools were closed in the new abroad, and the number of students who studied in Russian was reduced by more than 2 million. The tempo has slowed somewhat in recent years. Today, apart from Russia (where 97 percent of the students study in Russian), school instruction continues in Russian in the majority of the post-Soviet states—in Belarus 75 percent; in Kazakhstan 41 percent; in Ukraine 25 percent; in Kyrgyzstan 23 percent; in Moldova 21 percent; in Azerbaijan seven percent; in Georgia five percent; and in Armenia two percent.<sup>75</sup>

A very informative study on Russian-language usage was done in October 2007, by *Eurasian Monitoring* and *Nasledie Evrazii*, using the polling service *Tsirkon* and their local partners.<sup>76</sup> The study has data for 12 countries (Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan were not included), with 15,000 respondents (1,000-2,000 people per country).

One of the important indicators of the presence of the language in a society and its real status is data on the language used at home. Figure 1 shows that in about half the countries (Latvia, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, and also Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) Russian has in fact ceased to be a language that people use at home.

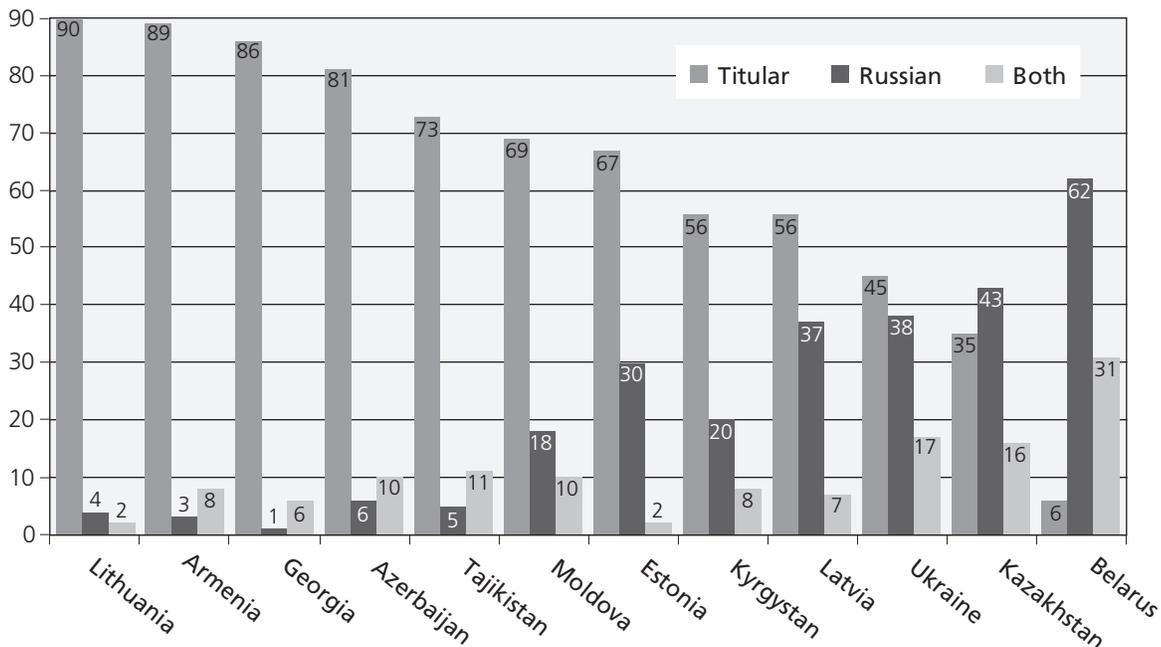
**Table 2. Russian Language Competence 2004** (millions)<sup>77</sup>

Country	Status of Russian	Population	Russian as native	Fluent	Not Fluent
ARMENIA	Foreign language	3.2	0.015	1.0	1.0
AZERBAIJAN	Foreign language	8.2	0.25	2.0	2.7
BELARUS	State language	10.2	3.2	8.0	0.2
ESTONIA	Foreign language	1.3	0.47	0.5	0.3
GEORGIA	Foreign language	4.5	0.13	1.7	1.8
KAZAKHSTAN	Official language	15.1	4.2	10.0	2.8
KYRGYZSTAN	Official language	5.0	0.6	1.5	1.5
LATVIA	Foreign language	2.3	0.96	1.3	0.3
LITHUANIA	Foreign language	3.4	0.25	0.5	0.5
MOLDOVA	Language of interethnic communication	3.4	0.45	1.9	0.5
TAJKISTAN	Language of interethnic communication	6.3	0.09	1.0	3.3
TURKMENISTAN	Language of interethnic communication (Foreign)	4.8	0.15	0.1	3.8
UKRAINE	Language of national minority	48.0	14.4	29.0	8.0
UZBEKISTAN	Language of interethnic communication	25.0	1.2	5.0	10.0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>140.7</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>63.6</b>	<b>37.7</b>

My only doubt, as an ethnographer who believes in observation as much as in sociological surveys, concerns Georgia. It is hard for me to believe that Georgian families use Russian only one-fifth or one-sixth as often as in Azerbaijan or Tajikistan. It is possible that this reflects the political preference of respondents to not admit any cultural ties to what many there see as Georgia's chief international protagonist.

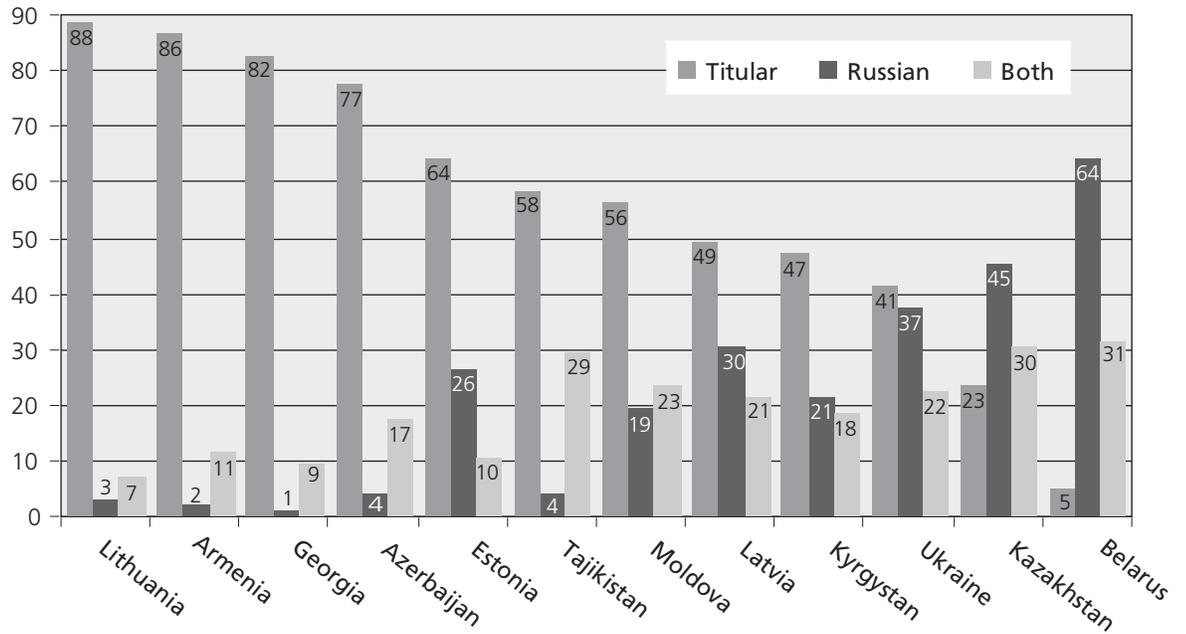
On the other hand, in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, the majority, or at least half, of the population speaks Russian as a primary or secondary language at home, while a minority speaks only in the titular language. In Moldova, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, and Latvia, from 20 percent to 40 percent of the population speak Russian at home.

FIGURE 1. What Language Do You Use At Home & In The Family?



The data on the language spoken outside of the family in social situations is quite similar (figure 2). Russian is almost never used when speaking with friends and acquaintances outside of work in the Caucasus, Lithuania, and Tajikistan. Again, it is difficult to believe that only one percent of the population of Georgia uses Russian for communication outside of the home—it is enough simply to be on the streets and in public places in Tbilisi and to hear people there to see that this is not the case. On the whole, the picture presented by this data is accurate, as there is a high degree of Russian language usage in about half of the CIS and in the Baltic countries. In Ukraine, Russian usage is virtually the same as Ukrainian usage, while in Belarus the entire population uses Russian outside the home.

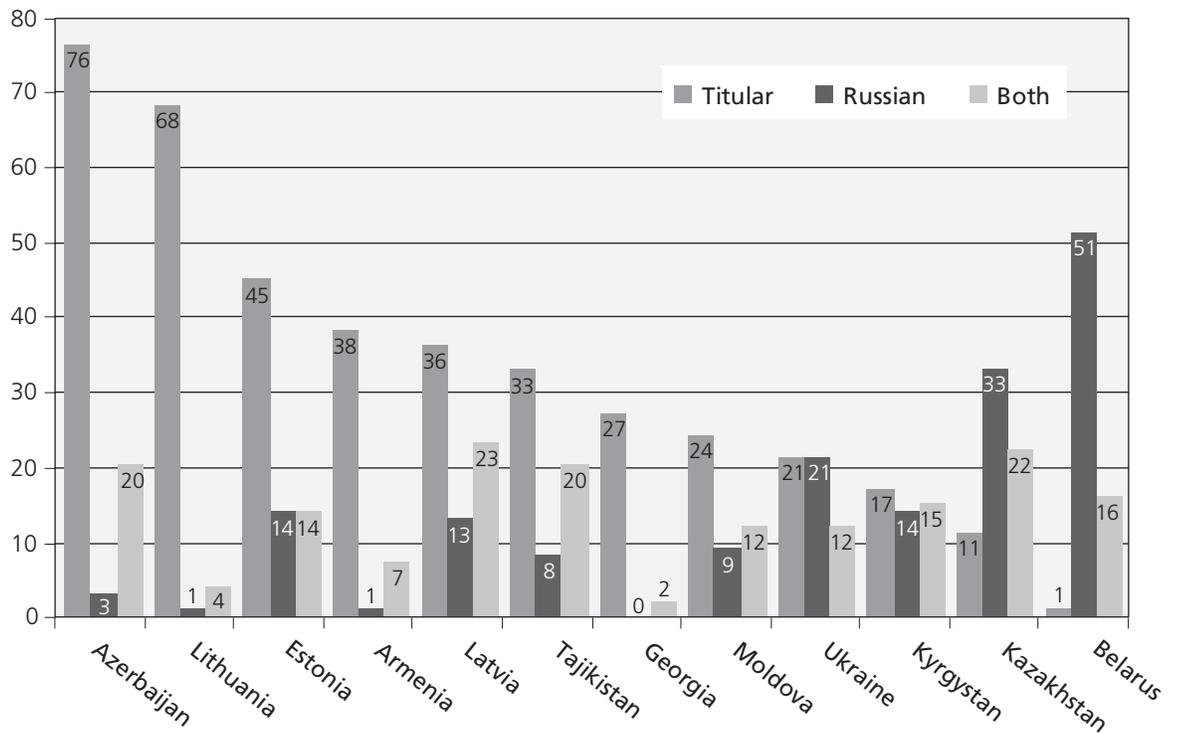
FIGURE 2. What Language Do You Use With Friends & Acquaintances Outside of Work?



The greatest decline in Russian language usage is found in state institutions, in education, in business, and in the professional world (figure 3).

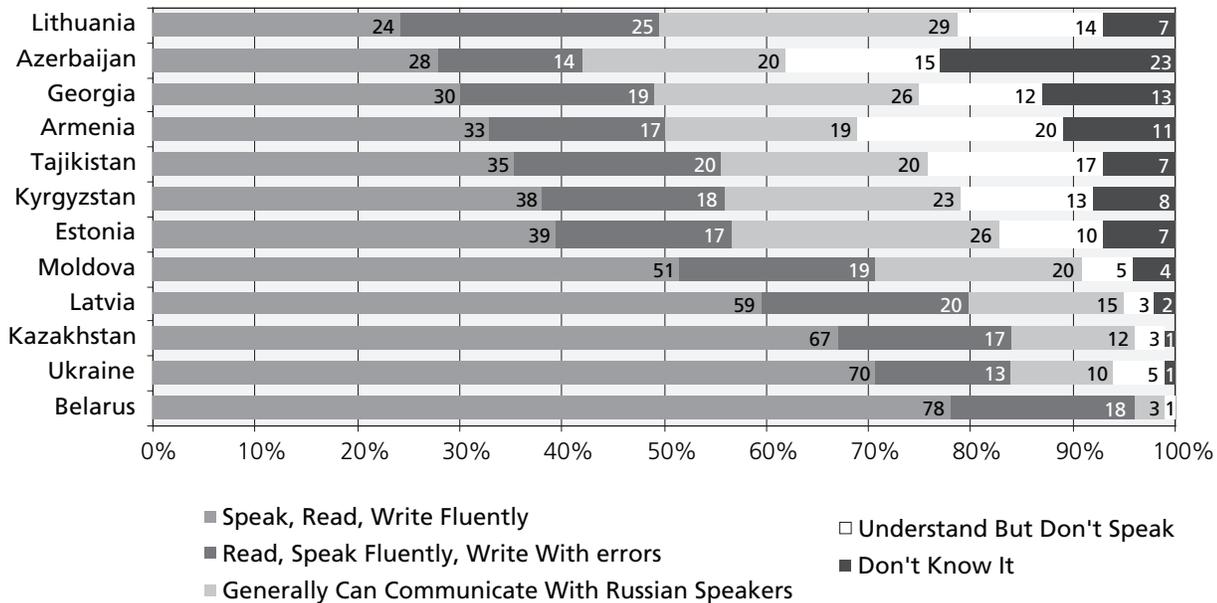
Russian is still used about as frequently as the titular language at work and school in Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, and more frequently than the titular language in Kazakhstan and Belarus.

FIGURE 3. What Language Do You Usually Speak At Work Or Where You Study?



Finally, the respondents were asked how fluent they were in Russian (figure 4). In Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Moldova, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia, Georgia, and Lithuania, from 50 to 84 percent of the population claim active fluency in Russian, while in Belarus the level is the same as in Russia—96 percent.

FIGURE 4. **How Fluent Are You In Russian?**



The data on the use of Russian-language information were particularly convincing (figure 5). People claim to read the Russian press or Russian books at about the same level of frequency as they use Russian in speaking at home and at work, and Russian-language television is the unconditional leader among their sources of information.

This data suggests that the Russian language is increasingly beginning to be connected not to the colonial past but to an opportunity for modernization. The anti-Russian component of post-Soviet nationalisms has noticeably weakened, but it has far from disappeared; however, it continues to serve as one of the primary components of ideology and socio-political practices in the new national societies.

But what is the language situation within the ethnic Russian population in the newly independent states? According to data<sup>78</sup> about the degree of fluency in the state language among Russians living outside of Russia (figure 6), Russian-speaking residents are learning titular languages, albeit oftentimes slowly and less frequently in countries where there is a different religion and languages that share nothing in common with Russian (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan).<sup>79</sup>

A higher percent of Russians have learned Armenian than any other national language, because there are so few Russians in Armenia and they have no other choice in order to live there. It is not surprising that more than 70 percent of Russians are fluent in Belarusian and Ukrainian because of the closeness of these East Slavic languages. In the Baltic countries Russians are learning the national languages most rapidly and without loss of Russian.

FIGURE 5. Use of Russian-Language Information

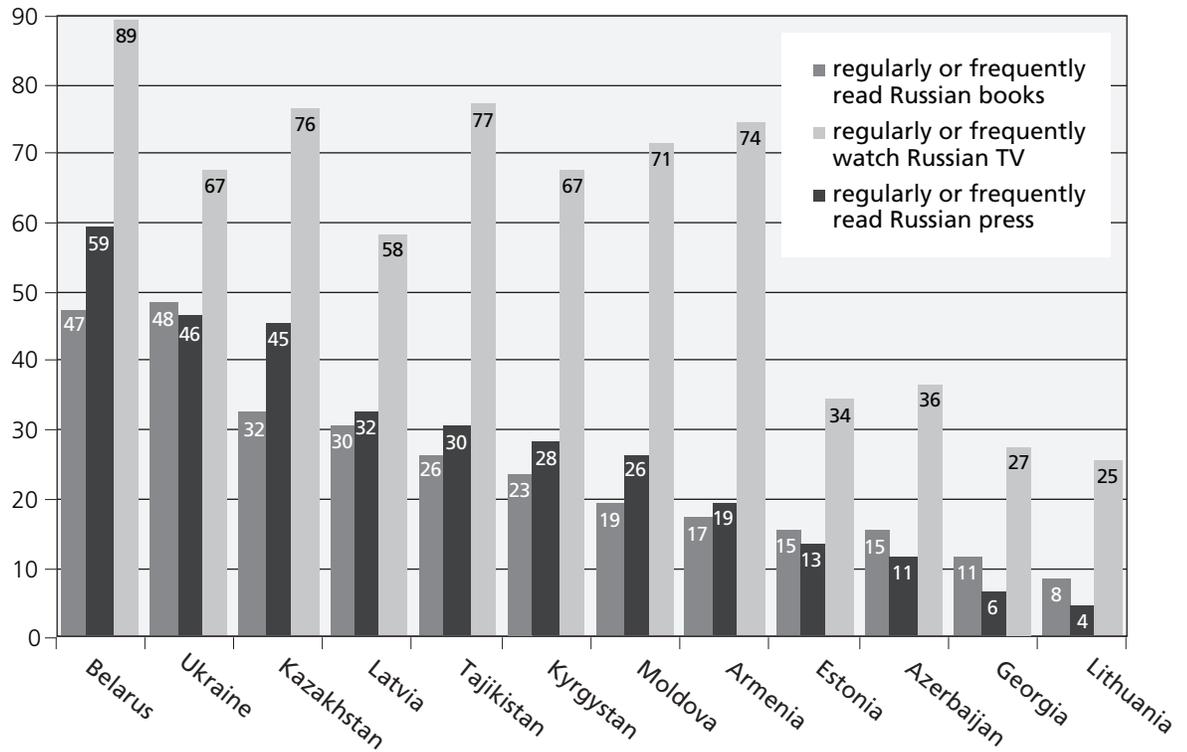
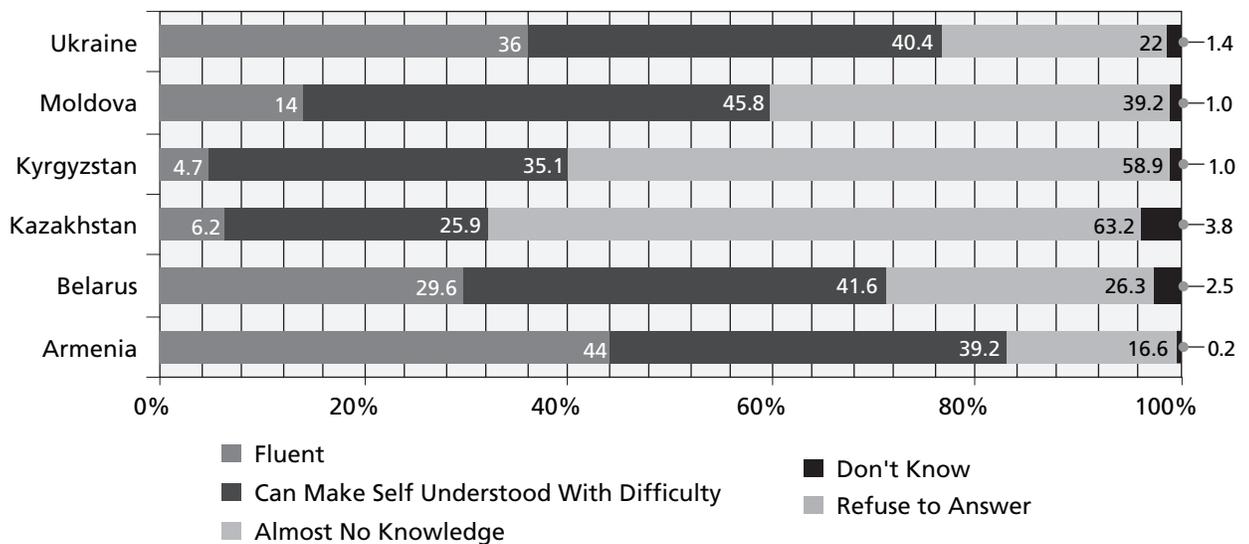


FIGURE 6. How Fluent Are You in the Titular Language? (as % of respondents)



Those surveyed overwhelmingly reported that they continued to use Russian in the spheres of education and labor (figure 7), albeit in reduced numbers as compared to the Soviet era. In countries where Russians are able to do so, they are less interested in learning the national language.

The data on languages that the children and grandchildren of the Russians are using in their studies is also illuminating (figure 8). The children and grandchildren of half of the ethnic Russians in Ukraine are being educated in Ukrainian, and education patterns in the Baltic countries suggest that within the next ten or fifteen years there will be little or no Russian language instruction. Mass linguistic assimilation of Russians or at least a significant bilingualism may become the reality of the new Russian world.

Today no one in Great Britain can dictate the norms of the English language for the United States or Canada, where linguistic peculiarities specific to each country have emerged in the English spoken there. There are variants of Spanish in the Latin American countries, and there is a separate French language in Canada.

FIGURE 7. **What Language Do You Use at Work, in Your Studies?** (as % of respondents who work or are at school)

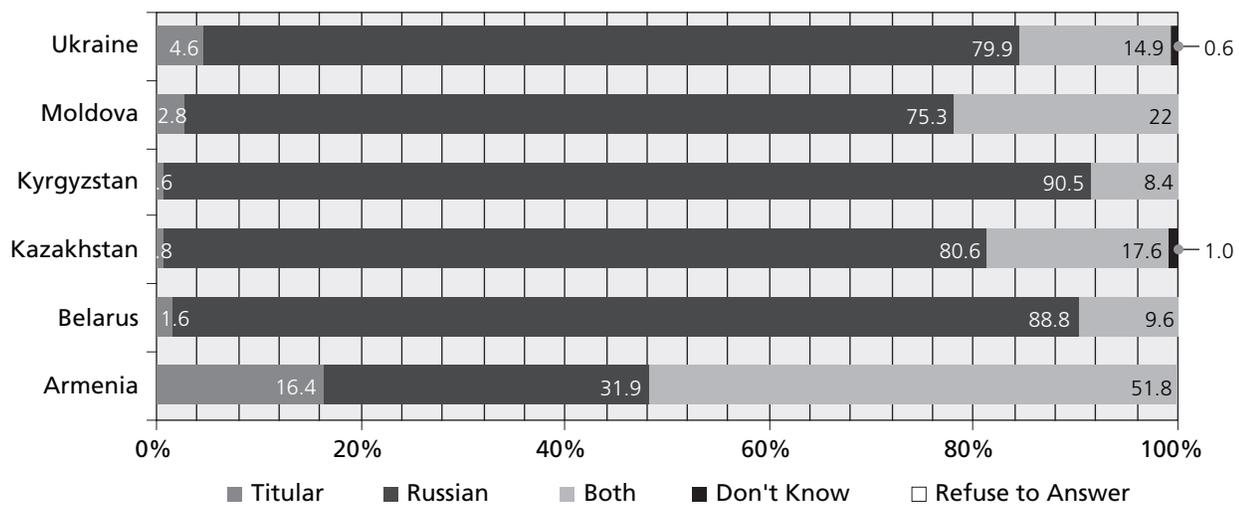
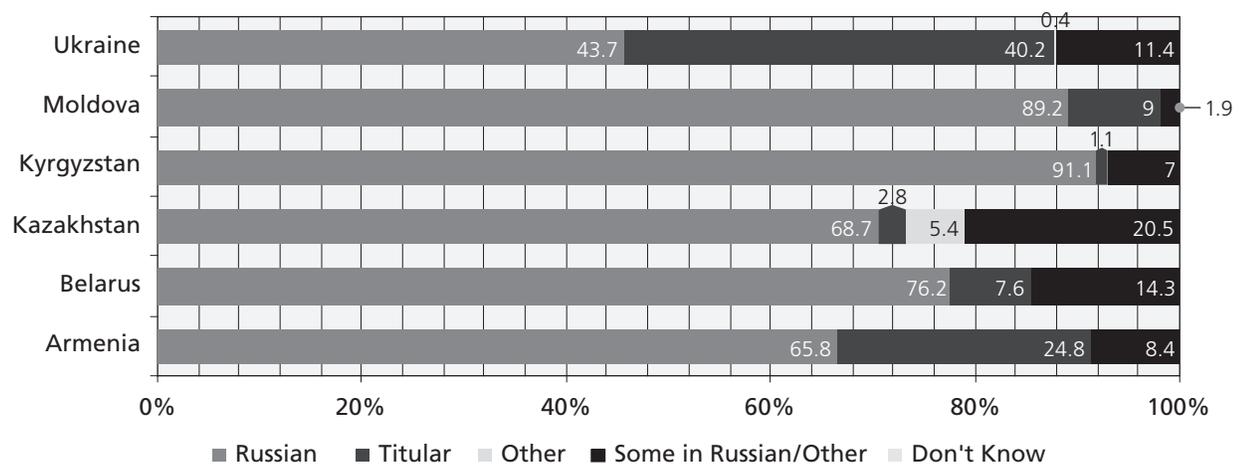


FIGURE 8. **What Language Do You Use at Work, in Your Studies?** (as % of respondents who work or are at school)



Something similar could happen with Russian. As Ukrainian philologist Y. V. Dorofeyev has written, the Russian language has two possible futures in Ukraine, one as a dialect of Ukrainian and the other as a national variant of Russian:

The first is unlikely, though it can not be excluded entirely. The second possibility for the development of Russian is independent development as a result of which it becomes the Ukrainian variant of Russian. This possibility is more likely and more promising, so we consider it necessary to direct the attention of linguists to those tendencies which even today speak of the possibility of the formation of national variations of Russian in the future.<sup>80</sup>

In Lithuania the influence of the Lithuanian language on Russian is already noticeable, creating a national variant of Russian. V. Y. Mikhilchenko, of the Language Institute of the Academy of Sciences, writes of Lithuania:

Some language communities, such for example as the Russians, have lost the help of language normalizers, since there are no institutions or people who argue against the use of local borrowings or their modification to fit Russian linguistic norms. In connection with this there is a danger of the loss of a given linguistic community of the Russian literary language and its replacement by another form of the language, local popular variants of Russian.<sup>81</sup>

These kinds of variations are to be expected because of the way that linguistic laws work, as “in the modern world national variants of languages form not because two groups who speak one language live far apart from one another, but because of the intensive communication of various ethnic groups, and even more so from the entire aggregated conditions of the independent lives of national and state societies of people who initially spoke one language.”<sup>82</sup>

Unlike the hierarchical relations between the literary language and a dialect, all of the national variants of a language must in theory have equal status, although the original Russian language will be acknowledged and continue to exist. This seems certain to create difficulties. For example, in Great Britain the opinion still exists that national variants of English are “spoiled” languages, while the French call the French spoken in Canada by the dismissive name “joualle” (hick). In Russia, scientific and political circles, including linguists, stick strictly to the linguistic norm of using “*na Ukraine*,”<sup>83</sup> not wishing to recognize the parallel norm of “*v Ukraine*.” Russian linguists also demonstrate their rigidity with regard to other new usages of Russian linguistic norms in the new states, such as the renaming of peoples and states (Kyrgyz instead of Kirghiz, and Kyrgyzstan instead of Kirghizstan<sup>84</sup>), interpreting these as violations of the norms of the Russian language.

So what is the optimal strategy for linguistic policy in regards to Russian in the post-Soviet states? It seems to me that most of these countries will preserve Russian in their cultural arsenal in a national varietal form (Ukrainian Russian, Kazakhstan Russian, Moldovan Russian, etc.), which will develop along parallel

tracks. At the same time the interaction of Russia and the other newly independent states will guarantee common, supranational tendencies towards linguistic normalization and the leveling of differences between linguistic variants without their complete confluence.<sup>85</sup> In this situation, Russia cannot act as the sole owner of the Russian language, but it was and remains the source country and base for Russian-language cultural production. Russia must be ready to fulfill this cultural and politically useful mission.

## Return of the Russian Language

Despite its relative loss of position, some specialists argue convincingly that Russian will retain its status as one of the so-called “world” or “top” languages. The peak of Russian language usage came in 1990, when 350 million people spoke the language to some degree or another, in more than 100 countries.<sup>86</sup> Then Russian lost its status as the first foreign language of instruction in many of the world’s schools, and teaching of the language stopped entirely in many others (Bulgaria, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Cuba, and Vietnam). In 2000 the number of people fluent in Russian had shrunk to 320 million, with half these losses coming in the post-Soviet states.<sup>87</sup>

The retreat of Russian from the world arena was connected to the collapse of the USSR and the fall in Russia’s international status and the reduction of its foreign policy activities (the foreign Houses of Friendship were closed, as were cultural centers and free language classes at embassies). The number of foreign students studying in Russia dropped sharply. The place of Russian in some regions and spheres was, as a rule, taken by English, which at the end of the twentieth century was pushing out not only Russian, but also other languages.<sup>88</sup>

The situation began to change in favor of Russian again in the last decade. One of the first countries that brought Russian back into the school system was Poland. In the last few years there has been intensive trade between Poland and Russia, as well as between Poland and the border areas with Belarus, where the populace speaks Russian. Economic factors proved to be stronger than political considerations not just in Poland, but also in other countries of Eastern Europe, where Russia has established economic and trade connections. The large countries of Asia—China, Vietnam, India, Turkey—have been drawn into border and small-lot trade and shopping tourism. Hundreds of thousands of traders and migrant workers from China, Vietnam, and Turkey have learned Russian in recent years. The shrinking of Russian has also abated in Western European countries, and there has been a growth in interest in the study of the Russian language in the United States and Japan.

In the past ten years, countries like Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, and the Czech Republic have seen enormous flows of Russian-speaking tourists from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and other countries of the CIS. Tens of thousands of workers in tourism firms,

merchandising and sales, and service industries have begun to master Russian, which to a great degree defines the new wave of Russian's spread in the world. As T. B. Kryuchkova has written:

Of course, the maids, waiters, and bartenders don't study Russian in universities or in the Pushkin Institute of Russian Language, but they master the language to the degree necessary for their communicative needs that do not go into the official statistics of course numbers or other means. However, they use Russian as an intermediary language, perhaps more intensively than do people who may have studied Russian in high school or college because of fashion, left-wing views, or academic interest.<sup>89</sup>

Besides economic factors, which have displaced ideological ones, a powerful resource for the spread and habituation of Russian in Europe has been the new Russian-speaking emigration. The principal difference between the most recent wave of emigration and previous ones is that they preserve the language and their ties with Russia. Migrants from other countries who are not ethnic Russians also contribute to the support of the Russian language. These migrants characteristically have multiple or conglomerate identities, but the uniting factor for them is the Russian language.<sup>90</sup>

In the past ten to fifteen years, Germany has become a country with significant Russian-speaking enclaves. Knowledge of Russian is in demand there and is even given some priority in the labor market. In 2000 there were fifteen newspapers in the country published in Russian, and there are Russian-language radio and TV stations. Many Russian-speaking emigrants try to ensure that their children are bilingual. There are some schools in Germany where all subjects are taught in both German and Russian. There are social organizations such as "The Berlin Society of Russian-Speaking Parents and Teachers."<sup>91</sup> In France the demand for Russian instruction has grown strongly among new emigrants, people in mixed marriages, and those coming from the former Soviet republics as well as the descendants of the older emigrants. In 2006 the "Union of Russophones in France" was established, with its activities focusing on supporting Russian language and culture among immigrants from the former USSR and Russia.

Language diversity in Europe is supported by a number of non-Anglophone countries, and Russian is increasingly mentioned among the languages that require support and distribution in international structures, since a large number of inhabitants of Europe use Russian to communicate, particularly the new and potential members of the European community. Russian is called a language of the accomplishments of world civilization, and efforts are required to overcome the negative stereotypes associated both with Russia and with the language itself.<sup>92</sup> The important role played by the spread in Europe of the ideology of linguistic and cultural diversity must be noted, as it works in favor of Russian.

Russian has a real chance to maintain and enlarge its world presence and its role in world culture, economics, and politics. To this end Russia has established a whole range of programs and projects to foster Russian and to

support the interests and needs of Russian-speaking people living abroad. The state organization Roszarubezhtsent<sup>93</sup> is much more active, as is the International Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature (MAPRYaL).<sup>94</sup> Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also actively trying to maintain Russian's position as a world language in various international organizations, including a new initiative to make Russian one of the working languages of the World Food Organization.

In Moscow in May 2007 then-Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev announced that "our country today has sufficient resources and possibility to strengthen the status of Russian in the world, and to solve the problems that Russian-speaking citizens of countries in the near and far abroad encounter."<sup>95</sup>

There are indeed Russian state resources that could be added to those already mentioned, since the British Council today spends €750 million to advance English overseas, while the Goethe Institute spends €250 million to support German. Almost that same amount is spent by France, Canada, and Belgium for Francophone programs. In 2006, €8.5 million was allotted from the Russian budget to support Russian abroad. This figure was increased several-fold in 2008, and the activities of the Russian World Fund will be financially well supported.

However, there are absolutely no resources that would suffice "to solve the problems that Russian-speaking citizens of countries in the near and far abroad encounter," nor are there sufficient legal and other possibilities. These problems must be resolved first of all by those governments whose taxpayers are Russian-speaking citizens and non-citizens, as well as by those who live in the post-Soviet states themselves.

## **Crises of the New Russian World**

Let us examine more closely the situation and prospects of the Russian diaspora in three newly independent states, referring mainly to language and identity issues.

### **Estonia and Latvia**

Since no mass exodus of the Russian-speaking population occurred, the state machinery of Estonia and Latvia has used a system of censuses and a policy of assimilation to try to reduce the numbers of Russians in their countries. As the former president of Latvia, Vaira Vike-Freiberg, announced, "The Russian problem in Latvia is that there are too many of them." To a certain degree this policy has succeeded, and the Latvians form the majority of the population.

There have been Russians living in what is now the territory of Latvia and Estonia for countless generations. Latvia was one of the most important centers of Old Believer Orthodoxy in the Russian Empire, while in the period of independence between the two World Wars it was an area of Russian–German–

Latvian trilingualism, and in the Soviet period it had Russian and Latvian bilingualism.<sup>96</sup> In Estonia Russian–Estonian bilingualism was widespread. In both republics, the position of the national languages was very strong—there was no linguistic assimilation toward Russian among Latvians and Estonians (the exception was the group of “Siberian” Latvians who returned from Stalinist exile). In the late Soviet period, national-language presses and television programs were developed, as were encyclopedia publications, theater, literature, and musical and vocal culture. Russian and the national languages in Soviet times functioned as if they were in parallel linguistic worlds.<sup>97</sup> In the view of authoritative scholars, the migration policy of the “center” was not aimed at “conscious Russification,” and even less so at “ethnic cleansing, colonization, or other measures of genocide” as local politicians and scholars in these countries sometimes maintain.<sup>98</sup>

The social and cultural situation changed sharply after the collapse of the USSR, and the Latvians and Estonians have been limiting the use of Russian and the Russian cultural and historic legacy. I will analyze only one theme of this battle in Estonia—the change in toponyms, or geographic names, in order to remove Russian geographical terms and other connections with Russia. This method of reconstructing a population’s identity is well known from history, since spatial terms are one of many matrices for orienting collective and individual consciousness.

In Russia itself, incidentally, there was a massive changing of names starting in 1991–1992 with the goal of removing the Soviet/communist legacy. The practice largely stopped after a lot of the population reacted negatively to removing the Soviet names—the names of the recent past.

Although as a general rule toponyms must be in Estonian, a new law on geographic names adopted in 2003 in Estonia permits exceptions “for historical and cultural reasons.” If the local authorities have chosen a non-Estonian toponym, then this must be confirmed by the Minister of Regions in accordance with the opinion of the Council on Geographic Names and also in view of the language that the majority of the population of the given place spoke in 1939.

Remember that geographic names in Estonia have changed more than once. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, many official place names were in German, and these German names were Russified. During the first period of independence, place names were changed to Estonian, but the “German” and “Russian” names were frequently used in daily life. At that time many villages in the regions bordering Russia and on the banks of Chud Lake were also Estonianized. For example, Kazapel became Kasepaa, Kikita became Kukita, Alekseyevka became Nomme, Rayusha became Taja, Tikhotka became Tiheda, Oleshnitsy became Alajoe, and so on. In many cases these were settlements that had been founded by and were inhabited by Russian peasants and where the Russian population remains the majority to this day. It is interesting that the question of the restoration of Russian toponyms did not arise, for the Russian

population felt themselves to be at home, regardless of Estonian national policy, and were little inclined to engage in social activism.

Although the law on geographic terms does not prohibit reverting to the old names of these places, in practice this has rarely happened. In its second report on fulfilling the framing conventions of the OSCE in protection of national minorities, the Estonian republic's government pointed to an additional possibility covered by law: places could be known by two official names. This could be used to preserve a place's "foreign name," or return an earlier Estonian one. These decisions can be taken by local authorities in agreement with the Minister of Regions, who must confer with the Council on Geographic Names. To the best of my knowledge, by the end of 2007, parallel names had been established for only a few historically Swedish villages in western Estonia.

The town of Kallaste unsuccessfully tried to re-establish its historical Russian name. On June 27, 2005, the town council of Kallaste decided to petition to establish a parallel historical name "Krasnye Gory." A settlement with that name had been founded in the beginning of the eighteenth century by Russian fishermen, Old Believers who had moved from Russia to Estonia. Maps of the time gave the Russian, the Germanized (Krasnogor) and the Estonian (Kallaste) names. At the end of the nineteenth century the Russian name was the official one. In 1920 the settlement became a village, now with the Estonian official name. In 1938 Kallaste received the right to call itself a town. Besides Kallaste, there was only one other Estonian village—Mustvee (Russian name Chernoye)—that grew from a "Russian" settlement. Although the town council of Kallaste decided to petition for the parallel name in June 2005, no approval has been given or decision taken about what would seem to be an obvious request.

There is another problem with Russian toponyms. In its second opinion about Estonia (February 24, 2005) the OSCE's Consultative Committee on the Framework Convention noted that the limited interest shown in the Lake Chud region for double names might be because a "parallel name" had to be written in the Latin alphabet. In the committee's view, the permission to use the Russian alphabet for double names might increase interest in the use of Russian toponyms in the region. The Estonian authorities, though, were not willing to make this change. There was no open dissatisfaction or other reaction from the Russian population, which lacks social and political organizations of its own as well as elected representatives in power.

My Russian sources say that the Russians in Estonia continue to use the Russian names in conversations among themselves. It is possible that this is enough for their current ethno-cultural needs. Those who represent the Russian world in Estonia may perhaps have more important things to worry about—but then what are they? One of these is to preserve the part of the Soviet identity that was connected with victory against fascism in World War II, which pits them against the revisionist versions of history in the Baltic countries. The local

Russians do not support pro-communist attitudes or forces, as was the case ten years ago, but they want to preserve a part of their national collective pride. They also want to preserve instruction in Russian in the educational system, a problem that is particularly acute in Latvia.

### **Ukraine**

Ethnic Ukrainian nationalism dominates in Ukraine, and the greatest part of the diaspora from Russia is ethnic Russian. One solution would be for Russia to advocate a variant of Russian identity. This is not yet on Russia's agenda. In fact, many of the most extreme Russian nationalists in Russia are people who came from Ukraine or are somehow connected with Ukraine. Russians in Ukraine are not concerned with the feelings or interests of the Hungarians or Poles living in Ukraine, nor are they interested in the ties of local Tartars and Chuvash to Russia. They are concerned about the preservation of their own Russian identity, and seek affirmation of their Russianness by Russia.

In accord with the obligations it accepted by entering the Council of Europe, Ukraine must join the Charter of Regional or Minority Languages.<sup>99</sup> The Ukrainian law “On Ratification of the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages” was signed in 1999, but was declared unconstitutional by a decision of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on June 12, 2000. The question was raised again in 2002, when Ukraine's president Leonid Kuchma presented the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages to the Upper Rada. The draft law on ratification says that the charter applies to such national minority languages as Belarusian, Bulgarian, Gagauz, Greek, Yiddish, Crimean–Tatar, Moldavian, Polish, German, Russian, Romanian, Slovakian, and Hungarian. It passed on May 15, 2003, although Deputy Justice Minister Valeria Lutkovskaya has recently brought up the possibility of Ukraine seeking to amend the law.<sup>100</sup>

The Constitution makes Ukrainian the state language. In addition, it guarantees the “free development, use, and defense of Russian and other languages of the national minorities of Ukraine.” This problem is also addressed by other legislation and laws: the Law on National Minorities in Ukraine; the Declaration of National Rights in Ukraine; and the Concept of Cultural Development of National Minorities in Ukraine. The Law on National Minorities in Ukraine gives a state guarantee of the right for national minorities to use and study their native language in state early education institutions or through national cultural societies. The state is also obligated to prepare specialists for pedagogic, cultural-educational, and other teaching institutions. A statement on government obligations is also found in Article III of the Declaration of Rights of Nationalities in Ukraine: “The Ukrainian government guarantees all nationalities and national groups the right to use their native language freely in all sphere of public life, including education, manufacturing, and the receipt and dissemination of information.”<sup>101</sup>

Thus at the legislative level, the country has created conditions to realize and defend the rights of national minorities. Ukrainian legislation in this regard does not contradict international legal norms and many international experts regard it as one of the most democratic in existence. Nevertheless, a fundamental language problem remains, creating tension in public life in the country, a problem that could become a source of open conflict and even result in a rupture.

The problem is connected to the fact that Russian has the status of a minority language, equal to all other minority languages, rather being viewed as one of the two basic languages of the majority of the country's taxpayers. Russian in Ukraine can not be compared to Gagauz,<sup>102</sup> because the great majority of Gagauz themselves are Russian-speaking citizens of the country. Their Orthodox faith and their linguistic behavior make the Gagauz part of the Russian world, at least for now, as most Gagauz are not native speakers of Ukrainian and still have cultural and spiritual ties to Russia.

Frustrated with their treatment, Russians have been pressing regional authorities to afford Russian equal status with the state language. In 1996 the Kharkov City Council decided to use Russian in document exchanges within the local government equally with the state language. That decision was contested by the procurator's office, but the city council refused to yield to the protest, following which the legality of the decision was considered in the courts. In 2001 the Supreme Court of Ukraine ruled that the city council had exceeded its authority in taking a decision on bilingualism. The city council refused to follow the court's decision and instead held a consultative referendum in the city on the official use of Russian. The citizens were asked to answer this question: "Do you agree that in Kharkov Russian must be used equally with the state language in all spheres of public life?" The poll was conducted as a vote on March 3, 2001, during which more than 533,000 people (82 percent of respondents) expressed support for using Russian alongside the state language.

In September 2002 the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast Council and the Collegium of the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast State Administration proposed holding an all-Ukrainian referendum on giving Russian the status of state language. The status of the Russian language was considered in the Lugansk Oblast Council, which on November 21, 2002 adopted an appeal to the Upper Rada of Ukraine to give Russian the status of a state language. At a session of the Crimean Parliament in 2002 the deputies called on the Upper Rada to adopt a law, "On Introducing Changes to the Constitution of Ukraine to Give Russian the Status of Second State Language."

There was subsequently an appeal by the State Duma of the Russian Federation to the Upper Rada of Ukraine. Acknowledging the official status of Russian would, in the view of the Russian parliamentarians, strengthen the age-old tradition of Russian-Ukrainian bilingualism, and would also broaden the participation of the young generation in the process of integration, and serve the further development of scientific and cultural connections between

the intelligentsia of the two countries. In their turn, the appeal said, the parliamentarians of the lower house of the Russian parliament would do all they could to facilitate the development of Ukrainian in places of heavy Ukrainian settlement in Russia, and thus guarantee the right of every citizen living in Russia to receive education in his or her native language.

As we see, the problem of the status of Russian in some regions of Ukraine has become politicized, and the way in which census data about national language is collected has exacerbated some of these tensions.<sup>103</sup> Formally, the ethnic Russian minority in Ukraine is comprised of 11,355,000 people, which by itself is already comparable to the population of some European states. In addition, the problem of the status of Russian involves the interests not only of ethnic Russians, but also those of all who claim Russian as their native language, some 17 million people in Ukraine (one-third of the population). Besides Russians, this includes Ukrainians (4,578,000, according to the census), Belarusians, Bulgars, Jews, Greeks, Gagauz, and others—that is, representatives of practically all national minorities.

Russian-speaking communities are found throughout the country. However, in nine eastern and southern oblasts—Sumskaia, Kharkovskaia, Luganskaia, Donetskaya, Dnepropetrovskaya, Zaporzhskaya, Khersonskaia, Nokolayevskaia, Odesskaya, and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea—the Russian-speaking population is in the majority. This territory holds more than 26 million people, of whom Russian speakers number 14 million, or 53 percent of the population.

Over time, support for Russian being granted an official status in Ukraine has declined somewhat. In 1995, 52 percent of respondents said “yes,” to the question “Do you think that Russian should be given official status in Ukraine?” while 33 percent said “no,” and 15 percent answered “do not know.” In 2001, the answers were 47 percent “yes,” 36 percent “no” and 16 percent “don’t know.”<sup>104</sup> This data also demonstrates the continued bilingual character of Ukraine’s population, despite difficulties in using Russian in business, scientific research, and, in part, in education.

The strictly enforced introduction of Ukrainian in traditionally Russian-speaking regions that has been carried out in recent years has deepened the polarization of Ukrainian society and could lead to inter-ethnic tension. The state language policy in Ukraine should be formed taking into account the ethno-cultural and linguistic traditions that exist in society. In accordance with international standards of resolving language problems in multi-ethnic societies, the demands of the eastern regions of Ukraine to give Russian status as a state language should be supported.

### **Uzbekistan**

In 1996, Uzbekistan was estimated to be 80 percent Uzbek, 5.5 percent Russian, 5 percent Tajik, 3 percent Kazakh, 2.5 percent Karakalpak, 1.5 percent Tartar,

and 2.5 percent other nationalities.<sup>105</sup> Russians are the second-largest ethnic group in the republic. They suffer psychological discomfort for acknowledging their transition from a position as the “national majority” (in the framework of the former USSR) to that of a “national minority” in the republic. The transition to a state language has been complicated, as it affects prospects for government service, education, and work.

The majority of the Russian population of Uzbekistan lives in the cities, constituting 36 percent of the 2.5 million people in Tashkent. There are about 80 national/cultural centers in the republic, joined into the International Cultural Center of Uzbekistan. These include the Russian Cultural Center of Uzbekistan, in Tashkent. That is also the home of the Russian City Cultural Center. Almost all 11 oblasts and the autonomous republic of Karakalpakstan have oblast-level cultural centers.

Unlike in the Baltic countries and in Ukraine, the Russian population of Uzbekistan has left the country in large numbers, most moving to Russia. Emigrants have moved in large numbers to Moskovskaya, Voronezhskaya, Saratovskaya, Tambovskaya, Samaraskaya, and Nizhegorodskaya oblasts, and to the city of Moscow. The flow of immigrants to Russia shrank in 1996–1997, but a significant flow of illegal or unregistered ethnic Uzbeks continues. Young people come to work and serve to create the material conditions for the further migration of the remaining members of their families. Others do seasonal work in Russia in the summer and fall, and then spend the winter in Uzbekistan.

Russians and Russian speakers also have moved to Kazakhstan. In 1997, for example, 12 percent of the internal migration (within the CIS) of Uzbekistan’s population went there. In the 1990s Uzbekistan lost about a million people, mostly to other states in the CIS and the Baltic countries. A significant part of those who left were the educated, and many had secondary or higher professional training. A large part of the skilled segment of the population has flowed away in the past ten years, primarily to Russia, but also to Israel, the United States, and other countries. Russians comprised about half of those who left Uzbekistan.<sup>106</sup>

The departure of the Russian population was partly for economic reasons, and partly out of concern for the future of their children. The language situation played a large part in the departure as well. The republic’s “Law on State Language,” in its new edition, was adopted in 1995.<sup>107</sup> The parliamentary and government sessions are conducted in Uzbek. Uzbek functions as the state language in practically all spheres of the republic’s life. However, Article 3 of the law states: “Citizens have the right to choose their language of inter-ethnic communication as they wish.” In cities where there is a dense Russian population, the language of inter-ethnic communication remains Russian.

Although the law does not define a place for Russian or accord it any rights, Russian in Uzbekistan is not just a language of communication between members of different nationalities. My observations and certain oblique data make

it possible to say that Russian is the main language of knowledge and communication (that is, native language) for practically all of the non-Uzbek population, and for not less than a quarter of the Uzbeks themselves, among whom bilingualism is very widespread.<sup>108</sup>

For example, among Uzbeks in Tashkent, 14 percent named Russian as their native language, as did 34 percent of Tartars, 94 percent of Koreans, and 10 percent of Kazakhs and Tajiks.<sup>109</sup> But one suspects that the figure is actually higher, as when the question was posed, “What language do you think in?” the following answers were received: all Russians think in Russian; as do 28 percent of Uzbeks; 76 percent of the Tartars, 98 percent of the Koreans; 30 percent of the Kazakhs; and 20 percent of the Tajiks.<sup>110</sup> This all means that it is not just Russians in Uzbekistan who make up the Russian-speaking population; many other nationalities, including Koreans, went entirely over to Russian two or three generations ago. The linguistic rights of this group are violated even more seriously than are those of the Russians, since they have little possibility of moving to Russia. My informant, a Russian-speaking Korean named Galina Shergay, whose parents were deported from the Far East to Uzbekistan just before World War II, moved to Moscow ten years ago to look for work and a chance to remain in Russia. Efforts to resettle her permanently have so far proven fruitless because of legal restrictions for citizens of the new states.

The Russian-speaking population of Uzbekistan is pained by the narrowing of the sphere of Russian’s use. Limiting access to the press from Russia and Russian-language publication causes dissatisfaction, as does reduction of radio and TV broadcasting in Russian (state channel 4 and private channel 30 broadcast in Russian), and the reduction of the hours for the study of Russian language and literature in the schools. Nevertheless, Russian is broadly used. It is enough to say that the great majority of resources of the Uzbek Internet are in Russian. In 2005 there were 315 general education schools in Tashkent, of which 163 conducted lessons in Uzbek, 53 in Russian, and 99 in both languages. In the country as a whole, there are 121 schools with Russian language instruction and 650 schools with mixed-language instruction, where one of the languages is Russian.<sup>111</sup> There are Russian departments and divisions in many of the country’s higher education institutions.

Unlike Kyrgyzstan or Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan is not about to give Russian the status of an official or state language, since Uzbekistan has a different ethno-demographic and political situation. In the Soviet period linguistic assimilation to Russian affected Uzbekistan less, since the majority of the republic’s population lived in the countryside, where the Russian-speaking population was more limited. In practice, however, Russian is widely used in Uzbekistan, even in the courts, as I was informed by L. Matytsina, a jurist with many years of experience. Though citing no specific examples, she argued that the lack of Uzbek language skills was grounds for refusing someone work, adding, “It also is true that Russians are in no hurry to learn the state language.” In her opinion,

discrimination against Russians exists primarily on the level of daily life. Uzbek nationalism is fairly strong in the country, and it also has powerful ideological and political support from above, beginning first and foremost with President Karimov.

In Uzbekistan displays of prejudice against Russians occur primarily in the oblasts and regions, from migrants from the kishlaks (villages) who come to the cities seeking work as there is a shortage of arable land and unemployment in the rural areas. Many of these people know little or no Russian, have had no contacts with Russians and see them primarily as rivals and as former colonizers.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and Uzbekistan's declaration of independence, Russians began being squeezed out of management positions. Under communist rule, Russians had traditionally held the number two post in any position of authority and served as a surrogate for Moscow's interests. With independence, access to the majority of places in the state sector (state administration, tax and customs services, law enforcement, and the legal organs) was made more difficult for Russians and Russian-speakers. However, at the large, technology-intensive production units, Russians were still able to retain top positions. The general directors of the flagships of Uzbek industry—the Tashkent aviation factory, the Almalyk metallurgical *kombinat*, the mining and metallurgical *kombinat* in the town of Navoi—have been Russians, where they also constitute 90 percent of the workers and the engineering and technical staff. At the same time Russians have gained wider possibilities for private large- and small-scale business enterprises. While Uzbeks predominate in trade, construction, “shuttle trading,”<sup>112</sup> and in transport businesses, Russians continue to work in “intellectual” trades—computers, Internet-technologists, repair of machine tools and other complex instruments. However, in recent times Russians have become more active in petty trade and in retail. For example, in Tashkent and other large cities the book business and trade in audio-video products and compact discs has become the prerogative of Russians.

To a certain degree Uzbekistan and the city of Tashkent are the spiritual center of the Russian and Russian-speaking population for all of Central Asia. This is the home of the Central Asian Eparchial Administration of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. Vladyka Vladimir, the metropolitan of Tashkent and Central Asia, thinks that Uzbekistan is actively developing an inter-religious dialogue between the two traditional faiths, Islam and Orthodoxy. In 1995 land was allotted in the city and construction was begun for an administrative center for the Orthodox Church's Central Asian and Tashkent eparchy, where the first seminary in the Central Asian region was opened. While before independence there were Orthodox parishes only in Tashkent and Samarkand, they have now also been opened in Bukhara, Navoi, Karsh, Syrdarya, Zarashan and Uchkuduk (the latter two heavily Russian settlements). A monastery and two convents have also opened. The eparchy has begun to publish its first newspaper, *Slovo zhizni*.<sup>113</sup> In answer to the question,

“What most disturbs the Russian and Russian-speaking population today?” Father Vladimir replied, “Religious fanaticism and extremism.”

The Russian population, just like the Uzbek population, is more concerned today about questions of security than about social and economic problems. The Russian population supports President Karimov out of fear of religious extremist groups. They voted for him in recent presidential elections partially because he is taking strict measures against the radicals. The Uzbek parliament, the Oliy Mazhlis, has 250 deputies. The Russian population is represented by 8 deputies. As a point of comparison, there are 7 Karakalpaks, 3 Kazakhs, 2 Tajiks, and one each of Ukrainians, Koreans, and Armenians. The president of the Russian Cultural Center of Uzbekistan, S. Zinin, is a parliamentary deputy and chairs the committee on science and culture.

On the whole, the prospects for the Russian-speaking population in Uzbekistan look like this: this will be a state with a steadily growing domination by the titular nationality, but the Russian presence will remain at the level of an influential but ethnically unconsolidated minority. Russia’s influence on Uzbekistan, just as on the other states of Central Asia, can only be minimal, and will come most often in the form of assisting ethnic Russians and Tartars to move to Russia, not to strengthen their positions in Uzbekistan.

## Conclusion

Diasporas can have strong vested interest influencing the policies that the country of origin adopts toward the country of residence. Diasporas also remain interested in the policies of their country of origin—is the government strengthening the security and well-being of their motherland, or is it the reverse, having a destructive effect? This question is important for diasporas because, in many cases, they continue to count on the possibility of a return to the land of their birth, if the conditions in the country to which they have moved or live worsen, or the conditions in the country they left improve. Even without the possibility of a return, there is also a symbolic interest to have a motherland that is successful and has a positive image, so that this image can help them to better support and defend their personal identity against the challenge of assimilation in the land to which they have moved.

In the past, Russia’s negative image lowered the desire of emigrants to call themselves “Russians” in their new countries. Naturally that external rejection leads to an internal collision of group and individual identities—is it worth nourishing in oneself something that it is hard to take pride in openly, something that does not help one but rather makes things harder? Such motives can prompt a diaspora to try to change the policies of their state of origin in ways they believe are good for them and for the government. Work for the well-being and positive image of the state of birth is the most common and, it would seem, entirely natural variant of a diaspora’s behavior. This is not always the case, however.

Many who have left Russia still hold fairly skeptical or even negative attitudes toward their country of origin. This is particularly true of those whose families left revolution and civil war, during the periods of the Stalinist repressions, or because of Brezhnev's persecution of dissidents. For some of these people, the trauma remains with them. But it is hard for me to understand why their attitudes are sustained when the politics of the country of origin have substantially changed, bringing democratic rule, a market economy, and allowing for voluntary entry and exit. These negative attitudes are also sustained even though the emigrant benefited from education (a kind of "start-up capital") and a rich history, culture, and language.

In part this negative image is fed by the social surroundings and the policies of the country that accepts the emigrant. For this reason the image of Russia and Russians (as a collective noun for those from Russia) remains low and is likely to remain so, in part because of the negative depiction of Russia's transformation by experts, the media, and political opposition. This attitude is also nourished in the receiving countries through the inertia of the Cold War mentality, and the continued need for a large enemy as a means of consolidating one's own society or state coalition.

For many countries Russia plays the role of just that sort of major threat or potential threat, even when the countries' presidents are friends. The diaspora notices this situation and chooses the negative variant, rather than the positive one, with regard to Russia. Sometimes the diaspora suffers because of this. More frequently it works to their advantage, as it makes people sympathetic, facilitating legal status, getting grants, or finding work, and there is no consequence for them in their country of origin. A person in the diaspora can criticize Russia and its policies in the toughest possible way, and even work for employers (like the media) who discredit Russia as an authoritarian government or a new mini-empire, and they are able still to travel to Russia and may even be greeted as a hero. Negation of Russia is fashionable, even in Russia itself. Distancing from Russia, its history, culture, and language became a base for the post-Soviet states' nation-building and for their integration into Euro-Atlantic coalitions and alliances.

In a number of countries, including those in the Baltics, the Russian-speaking population has not yet become a political base for Russia, and is unlikely to become one. It is more likely that young local Russians, once they have learned Estonian and Latvian, as well as English, will serve in the armed forces of the NATO countries, placing their civic responsibility above their ethno-cultural identity. At least, such is the world practice in diaspora behavior. The Baltic countries will not be an exception. It is also world practice though that Russians will not assimilate to become Estonians or Latvians, both much smaller linguistic and cultural communities. It is not clear to me how this dramatic contradiction will be worked out in the future, but most likely it will be decided on the basis of two communities of equal status in the populations of Estonia and Latvia.

Because of the real linguistic situation and internationally-recognized linguistic rights, Russian has grounds on which to become an official language in those countries in which a significant part of the taxpayers use it as their main language of knowledge and communication. Given international legal norms, Russia cannot drop the issue of official bilingualism for a number of the former Soviet Union states (Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Latvia, Moldova, the Kyrgyz Republic). If the equal status of Russians is not acknowledged, then Russia can support both forms of internal self-determination by culturally distinct groups—ethno-territorial through a federalization in a range of post-Soviet states, where there are more or less homogenous areas of Russian settlement, or through extra-territorial cultural autonomy, as is already practiced in a range of newly independent states.

In Estonia and Latvia, as in societies that have stronger civil societies, all-citizen principles of state building will sooner or later take hold. Local “non-natives” (that is, Russian diasporas in the broadest sense) can also build their identity on a “conglomerate” basis, such as for example, Balto-Slavism. In Ukraine and Kazakhstan, where ethno-nationalism will not slacken, and where there is the largest Russian diaspora, which will not assimilate, the Russian ethnic variant may prove preferable. Russians in Ukraine are concerned about preserving their own Russian identity, including through a policy of “Russian-ness in Russia.” That is why the Russian world in Estonia and Latvia may see “Russian-ness” as a starting point, while the Russian world in Ukraine will find “Russian-ness” or ethnic Russianism a more significant factor in their group identity and cultural affiliation.

Usually diasporic communities play the role of humanitarian and business bridges between their “historical homeland” and the countries they live in, serving at the same time as a political lobby and a cultural business card for the country from which they came. Russia only now is realizing the importance of constructing a friendly and influential Russian world as a resource for forming a positive image of the country and for resolving problems in foreign relations. How can the Russian world be made friendly for Russia and influential in the rest of the world, where its representatives live? There are a lot of questions here, and they demand more than a trivial approach to “supporting our countrymen overseas” through often provocative official statements. The concept of the Russian world and the Russian Federation’s devotion of growing resources in support of Russophonia represent innovative and promising steps to strengthen the state and its national interest. It should lead to many winners and no losers.

## Notes

- 1 Tishkov uses “rossiyskiy” here, meaning “of the Russian state,” rather than “ruskiy,” which is an ethnic marker (and is the adjective used in the title). The two terms are extremely difficult and generally clumsy to disambiguate in English [translator].
- 2 A diaspora, as defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, is “the movement, migration, or scattering of a people away from an established or ancestral homeland.”
- 3 For now we have not been able to resolve the question of the proper spelling of the expression “Russian world.” Many of the documents capitalize the “w” in world, but as the text of the presidential letter uses lower-case, we are following the second variant as it seems less grandiose.
- 4 *Russkoye zarubezhiye – dukhovnyi i kulturnii fenomen Materialy mezhdunarodnoy nauchnoy konferentsii. V 2-kh chastyakh* (Moscow, 2003).
- 5 Leaders in the study and support of the Russian diaspora include: the Library and Fund “Russians Abroad” founded by A. I. Solzhenitsyn; scientific research institutes of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAN); the RAN Scientific Council on the Russian diaspora; and special research groups and centers.
- 6 See A. V. Popov, “Russkoye zarubezhiye v Internete – Istoriya beloy Sibiri,” *Tezisy IV nauchnoy konferentsii*, Kemerovo, 2001, pp. 251–257.
- 7 These include David D. Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998); Paul Kolstoe, *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics* (London: Hurst & Co. Publishers, 1995); S. S. Savoskul, *Russkiye novogo zarubezhiya* (Moscow: Nauka, 2001).
- 8 See the chapter “Teoriya i politika diaspori” in the book V. A. Tishkov, *Rekviyem po etnosu: Issledovaniya po sotsialno-kulturnoy antropologii* (Moscow: Nauka, 2003), and also relevant chapters in the book *Etnologiya i politika*, 2004. In the series of working papers published by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology at RAN, *Issledovaniya po prikladnoy i neotlozhnoy etnologii*, in 1992 I published my two articles: “Russkiye kak menshinstvo (primer Estonii)” (document 52) and “Russkiye v Srednei Azii i Kazakhstane” (document 51).
- 9 From the correspondence between G. Pavlovskiy and S. Chernyshev, *K vozobnovleniyu Russkogo*, Moscow, 1995.
- 10 Yuri Lotman (1922–1993) was a prominent Russian critic and thinker in semiotics, publishing works on Russian literature, linguistics and semiotics, and culture. He was a professor at Tartu University in Estonia for many years. See Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Yuri Lotman,” August 14, 2003. Available at: <[http://www.vm.ee/estonia/kat\\_173/3908.html](http://www.vm.ee/estonia/kat_173/3908.html)>.

- 11 Konstantin Zatulin (1958– ) is a member of the State Duma (Russian parliament), a position to which he was elected in 2003. He successfully ran for another term in the Duma on the United Russia party list in the 2007 parliamentary elections. In January 2008, he was appointed first deputy chairman of the Duma Committee on the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) affairs. See Konstantin Zatulin, “Biography” (in Russian). Available at: <<http://www.zatulin.ru/index.php?section=bio>>.
- 12 *Russkiy Arkhipelag* [Russian World]. Available at: <[http://www.archipelag.ru/ru\\_mir](http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir)>.
- 13 Petr Shchedrovitskiy, “Russkiy mir I transnatsionalnoye russkoye,” 2000. Available at: <[http://archipelag.ru/ru\\_mir/history/history99-00/shedrovicky-transnatio/](http://archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history99-00/shedrovicky-transnatio/)>.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Yefim Ostrovskiy and Shchedrovitskiy, “Rossiya: Strana, kotoroy ne bylo,” 1999. Available at: <[http://archipelag.ru/ru\\_mir/history/history99-00/shedrovicky-possiano/](http://archipelag.ru/ru_mir/history/history99-00/shedrovicky-possiano/)>.
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- 19 Ostrovskiy and Shchedrovitskiy, “Rossiya: Strana, kotoroy ne bylo.”
- 20 Ibid.
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- 22 Ibid.
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- 30 Federal Law No. 62-FZ “On Russian Federation Citizenship,” May 31, 2002. Available at: <<http://www.legislationline.org/legislation.php?tid=11&lid=591>>.
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- 32 The law was amended on November 11, 2003, and November 2, 2004.
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- 34 Presidential address to the Federal Assembly, April 27, 2007.
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- 37 See: D. Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), R. G. Gordon Jr., (ed.), *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (15th edition). 2005 Electronic version: SIL, retrieved September 11, 2007, from <[http://ethnologue.com/show\\_language.asp?code=rus](http://ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=rus)>.
- 38 U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table PCT 10, Internet release date: February 25, 2003.
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- 40 Aleksandr Tsipko, “Interesnaya chudachka: Odessa kak zerkalo nyneshney kolonizatsii russkogo mira,” *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, September 29, 2007, p. 9.
- 41 On the formation of Russian migration groups, see S. I. Bruk and V. M. Kabuzan, “Migratsii naseleiniya: Rossiyskoye zarubezhye//Narody Rossii” in *Entsiklopediya*, V. A. Tishkov, ed., 1994.
- 42 See Elza-Blair Guchinova and David Lewis, *The Kalmyk* (Routledge, 2006).
- 43 *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, 1995, v. 8, n. 2.
- 44 The wider meaning of this term includes all Adyg language family people (proper Cherkess, Adygeis, Kabardins, Abkhazians, and Shapsugs). The proper Cherkess are an ethnic group from the northern Caucasus. According to the 2002 census, they make up 11 percent of the Karachayev-Cherkessiya Republic. See 2002 Census of the Russian Federation. Available at: <<http://www.perepis2002.ru/ct/doc/English/4-2.xls>>.
- 45 See *Adygskaya (Cherkesskaya) entsiklopediya*, M. A. Kumakhov, ed., Moscow.
- 46 See Alexander Uralov (pseud.), *The Reign of Stalin* (London: Bodley Head, 1953).
- 47 *Vainakh*, meaning “our people,” is a term that refers to the agglomerated Chechen, Ingush, and Kist peoples.
- 48 Titular nationalities were the nationalities after which Soviet republics (or republics in today’s Russian Federation) were named but who were and still are sometimes

- a minority in the territory (like Bashkirs in Republic of Bashkortostan, Adygeis in Republic of Adyghei, and Karels in the Republic of Karelia).
- 49 In June 1990, as the Soviet Union began to dissolve, the Russian Congress of People's Deputies issued a declaration of sovereignty, setting off a chain reaction of declarations among the union republics. In August 1990, Boris Yeltsin told republics within Russia to “take as much sovereignty as you can swallow,” leading a number of smaller constituent polities within Russia to upgrade their levels of autonomy. For example, from 1991 to 1992 the Adygei, Altai, and Khakassia autonomous oblasts became separate republics.
  - 50 The Adygei Autonomous Oblast existed within Krasnodar Krai from 1922 to 1991, when it was elevated to the status of a republic.
  - 51 Michael Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism: White Emigrés and the Making of National Socialism, 1917–1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
  - 52 J. Davis, *The Russian Immigrant* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), p. 8; S. K. Patkanov, *Itozi statistiki immigratsii v Soyedinennnye Shtaty Ameriki iz Rossii za desyatiletie 1900–1909*, StP, 1911, p. 26, 58; E. L. Nitoburg, “Russkiye trudovyie immigranty v SShA (konets XIXv–1917 g.): adaptatsiya i sudby,” *Otechestvennaya istoriya*, 2002, n. 5.
  - 53 *The Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 885.
  - 54 Nikita Khrushchev was leader of the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1964. Under his reign, the personality cult of Joseph Stalin was dismantled and Stalinist repression and censorship were partially reversed.
  - 55 Petr Krasnov (1869–1947) was a leader in the White counter-revolutionary movement that fought against the Bolsheviks. He sought an alliance with Germany for later military efforts as ataman of the Cossacks against the Soviets.
  - 56 Madame H. P. Blavatskaya (1831–1891) was a founder of the Theosophical Society, an organization dedicated to researching the occult and Eastern religions.
  - 57 Golda Meir (1898–1978) lived in Russia for eight years before she left with her family for the United States. In 1921, she emigrated to Palestine with her husband. Meir became prime minister of Israel in 1969.
  - 58 Perestroika, or “restructuring,” refers to the policies (announced in 1986) that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev pursued to reinvigorate the economy of the Soviet Union by gradually opening it to the forces of the market. In 1987, he oversaw the passing of a new law on enterprises that reduced the power of centralized government ministries over economic production. The 1988 Law on Cooperatives permitted private ownership of businesses. A hodge-podge of reforms continued until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.
  - 59 See the study by Israeli anthropologists M. N. Elenevskaya, and L. L. Fialkova, *Russkaya ulitsa v evreiskoi strane. Issledovanie fol'klora migrantov 1990-kh godov v Izraile*. In 2 parts (Moscow: Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, 2005).
  - 60 George Ignatieff (1913–1989) was an acclaimed Canadian diplomat whose ambassadorships included posts in Yugoslavia, NATO, and the United Nations. After his time in the government, Ignatieff served as chancellor of the University of Toronto. He was born in Saint Petersburg, Russia, to a noble Russian family and fled to Canada in 1918.

- 61 Michael Ignatieff (1947–) is a Canadian writer, historian, and politician who has held teaching positions at Harvard, Cambridge, and Oxford, among other universities. He was elected to Canada’s parliament in 2006.
- 62 Michael Ignatieff, *The Russian Album* (New York: Random House, 1987). Russian translation cited, with a rich historical annotation by poet Andrey Voznesenskiy: *Russkiy albom: Semeynaya khronikass* (St. Petersburg, 1996).
- 63 Translated from the Russian version cited above, 10.
- 64 The “near abroad” (*blizhneye zarubezh’ye*) is the Russian term that refers to those countries (other than Russia) that were formerly part of the Soviet Union, especially those with large numbers of ethnic Russians or Russian speakers.
- 65 *Demoscope Weekly*, December 16–31, 2007.
- 66 American Association for Russian Language, Culture, and Education, “Statistics.” Available at: <<http://www.aarce.org/rus/population.asp>>.
- 67 G. A. Komarova, *Russkiy Boston* (Moscow 2003).
- 68 Aleksei Balabanov (1959–) is a Russian filmmaker best known for the 1997 crime movie *Brat* [Brother].
- 69 Nikita Mikhalkov (1945–) is a Russian filmmaker and actor, born into a well-known artistic family. He attracted international attention with *A Slave of Love* (1976). His most famous work is *Burnt by the Sun* (1994), which received the Grand Prix at the Cannes film festival and an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.
- 70 The chart is based on accumulated census data as well as other official national statistics.
- 71 V. A. Tishkov, Z. A. Zayonchkovskaya, G. S. Vitkovskaya, *Migratsiya v stranakh byvshego SSSR*.
- 72 During the early 1930s, Soviet authorities pushed a massive collectivization drive in the Ukrainian republic, and within short order large swaths of agriculture were collectivized. Disruption caused by these policies, along with the targeting of those showing resistance, contributed to widespread starvation and famine in Ukraine.
- 73 V. A. Tishkov, “Demograficheskiye golodomory,” *Rodina*, 2007, n. 7.
- 74 Russian became an official language of Kyrgyzstan in May 2000 and retains its status.
- 75 Compiled by MID RF from various national statistical bases.
- 76 Eurasia Monitor, “*Russkiy yazyk v novykh nezavisimyykh gosudarstvakh*,” 2007. Available at: <<http://www.fundeh.org/projects/23/publications/2/>>.
- 77 This table is based on various official statistics for the period since 2000; the data was gathered by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID).
- 78 Data provided from a large-scale study in six CIS states done by the Institute for Diaspora and Integration (formerly the Institute of CIS Countries) in 2007.
- 79 Language instruction for foreigners in the national languages in these countries is often also deficient.
- 80 V. Y. Dorofeyev, “Russkiy yazyk v Ukraine: dialect ili variant?” in *Russkiy yazyk v stranakh SNG i Baltii*, p. 312.

- 81 V. Y. Mikhhalchenko, “Funktsionirovaniye i vzaimodeystviye litovskogo i russkogo yazykov,” in *Russkiy yazyk v stranakh SNG i Baltii*, p. 363. See also N. Avina, “Yazyk russkoy diaspory v sovremennoy Litve,” in *Otechestvennye zapiski*, 2005, n. 2 (23).
- 82 Dorofeyev, op. cit., p. 314.
- 83 This same point is illustrated in English by the difference between “Ukraine” and “the Ukraine.”
- 84 The “k+y” combination is a fundamental taboo in Russian.
- 85 See A. I. Domashnev, “Kontsepsiya natsionalnogo varianta yazyka v trudakh akaed-mika G. V. Stepanova,” *Filologicheskiye issledovaniya: pamyatka akademika Georgiya Vladimirovicha Stepanova* (Moscow, 1990), pp. 4–7.
- 86 T. B. Kryuchkova, “Sokhranit li russkiy pozitsii mirobogo yazyka v XXI veke?” in *Russkiy yazyk v stranakh SNG i Baltii*, p. 103.
- 87 D. Dalby, “The Linguashpere: A New Window on the World’s Languages,” *The Linguist*, August 2000.
- 88 See Doklad MID RF, “Russkiy yazyk v mire” (Moscow: 2003).
- 89 T. B. Kryuchkova, op. cit., pp. 106–107.
- 90 V. L. Skopina-Paradias, “Adaptatsiya russkoyazychnykh immigrantov v Gretsii i Izraile,” in *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom*, 2007, n. 1. See also: M. A. Bunin, “Russkiye? Russkogovoryaschiye? Russofony? O russkom yazyke emigratsii vo Frantsii,” *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom*, 2004, n. 1; I. V. Zhukovskiy, “Govoryat li po-russki v Yevrope?” *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom*, 2006, n. 4; E. V. Krutilina, “Russkaya shkola v Milane,” *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom*, 2004, n. 3; G. Y. Nikiporets, “Russkiy yazyk v Yaponii: Problemy i perspektivy,” *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom*, 2004, n. 1; V. Sokolov, “Prepodavaniye russkogo yazyka kak inostrannogo vo Frantsii,” *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom*, 2004, n. 2.
- 91 R. Belchikova, “Russkiy yazyk v Germanii,” *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom*, 2007, n. 1.
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- 93 The Russian Abroad Center. Available at: <<http://www.rusintercenter.ru/?lang=ru&menu=73>>.
- 94 Available at: <<http://www.mapryal.org/english/>>.
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- 102 According to the 2001 Ukrainian census, there are 31,900 Gagauz in Ukraine. Available at: <<http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/>>.
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