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## **OLD AND NEW HOMES OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE IN EUROPE**

In a world in which transnational networking has become the norm, and communication choices are made in real time, and often under pressure, ease of interaction wins. Based on the critical study of documents, interviews, participant observations, and linguistic landscape analysis, this study discusses the situation with the Russian language in some Slavic countries (e.g., Slovenia, Bulgaria, Montenegro) and Greece. Loyalty to their country of origin, or just affinity with its culture increases solidarity of the people speaking the same language independently of whether they have a good command or use it with difficulty. Multidirectional tendencies in education can either lower or raise the level of teaching and language use. A multitude of new language-contact situations have emerged, thus giving rise to the centrifugal tendencies in the development of Russian.

*Key words: Russian language, pluricentric language, Russian-speaking diaspora, Yugoslavia, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Greece*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Historians, sociologists and writers of fiction have devoted many a book to social and economic upheavals and human dramas accompanying the collapse of empires. What remains on the periphery of scholars' purview is changes in the languages that these events trigger and which may themselves cause political and social conflicts. The disintegration of the Soviet Union, sometimes referred to as the "last empire"<sup>1</sup> was no exception in this respect. Most of the newly-formed states rejected the dominance of the Russian language in the public domain which had been the cornerstone of the Soviet language policy since the 1930s. These changes were documented in legal acts. In each of the 15 internationally-recognized states and six self-proclaimed separatist polities formed on the territory of the former Soviet Union (FSU), a clause about language is included in the constitution. In all the recognized states, except Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Russian lost the status of an official language.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in some countries, e.g., in Estonia, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan, various amendments to the language laws were made later to further elevate the prestige of the titular language and reinforce its role in the political, economic and social life of the country<sup>3</sup>. In Ukraine and Moldova, legislators are currently working on new initiatives determining functions of the titular and minority languages. No wonder that young states put so much emphasis on determining the status and functions of the languages spoken by the population. Language legislation is a core component of a nation's political development, reflecting the aspirations of the elites. At the same time, a new political reality is shaped by the enforcement of language legislation<sup>4</sup>. Whether Russian is dubbed as a minority language,

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1 See e.g., FRANCINE HIRSCH, *Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2005); JOHN L.H. KEEP, *A History of the Soviet Union, 1945–1991: Last of the Empires* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

2 The newly-formed states have preserved the term "state language" which was used in the Soviet legal acts; cf. Д.А. КАТУНИН, «Государственный и официальный язык в конституциях стран бывшего СССР», *Вестник Томского государственного университета. Филологические науки*, no 4 (2009): 20–9..

3 Т.В. КУДОЯРОВА, «Русский язык в современной образовательной среде Туркменистана», *Вестник РУДН. Серия: Вопросы образования: языки и специальность*, №. 3 (2010): 70–4; [assembly.kz/en/news/meeting-round-table-introducing-changes-and-amendments-law-republic-kazakhstan-assembly-people](http://assembly.kz/en/news/meeting-round-table-introducing-changes-and-amendments-law-republic-kazakhstan-assembly-people) (Accessed: June 4, 2020).

4 PRIIT JÄRVE, "Two Waves of Language Laws in the Baltic States: Changes of Rationale?", *Journal of Baltic Studies*, no. 7 (2002): 78.

a language of international communication, or not mentioned at all in the language laws of the new states,<sup>5</sup> clearly, its functions have been curtailed, its prestige has dropped and motivation to learn it has decreased, at least in some sections of the population. The change proved to be dramatic for the Russian-speaking populations since in the majority, they were monolingual. Building their life anew, Russian speakers had to face the dilemma of becoming proficient in the titular languages or leaving their native places and joining millions of post-Soviet migrants. Today, almost thirty years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union we witness a paradoxical situation: the total number of proficient speakers of Russian has dropped and is estimated to be around 265 million,<sup>6</sup> but the geography of Russian-language use has greatly expanded, with Russian-speaking enclaves found on all continents.

## II. RUSSIAN AND ITS VARIATIONS IN THE METROPOLIS

Although for a long time Russian was perceived as a monocentric language par excellence, and use of the standard literary language was essential for securing a good place on the social ladder, it is hardly conceivable that the language spoken in huge territories would be completely unified. Indeed, Russian linguists have been documenting dialects and sub-dialects of the Russian empire since the mid-18th century. In the Soviet period dialectologists continued fieldwork and analysis of the data, including experiments in the repertoire of dialectological methods.<sup>7</sup> In the 1940s and 1950s, atlases of Russian dialects were prepared.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, Russian as it was spoken in the Soviet Republics was not researched. Yet its local varieties began to develop already in the times of the Russian Empire and this process intensified in the Soviet period. Learning Russian

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5 Д. А. КАТУНИН, «Государственный и официальный язык в конституциях стран бывшего СССР».

6 А.Л. АРЕФЬЕВ, *Русский язык на рубеже XX–XXI веков* (Москва: Центр социального прогнозирования и маркетинга, 2012).

7 В.В. ИВАНОВ, «Диалектология», в *Лингвистический энциклопедический словарь*, ред. В.Н. Ярцева (Москва: Советская энциклопедия, 1990) [tapemark.narod.ru/les/133b.html](http://tapemark.narod.ru/les/133b.html) (Дата обращения: 4 июня 2020 г.).

8 Р.И. АВАНЕСОВ, *Атлас русских народных говоров центральных областей к востоку от Москвы* (Москва: Академия наук СССР, 1957); Р.И. АВАНЕСОВ, С.В. БРОМЛЕЙ, *Диалектологический атлас русского языка. Центр европейской части СССР* (Москва: Наука, 1986).

at school was compulsory, but not everyone managed to master high-level literacy in Russian, learn its standard grammar, or distinguish between its functional styles. National varieties were influenced by indigenous languages of the republics and differed from the dominant standard variety on many counts. The border regions of Russia and her neighbors were also interesting zones of deviations from standard Russian. As a result of wars and political conflicts, there would be an exchange of population or forced migration triggered by economic deprivations. As a result, in some border zones one can encounter Russian-speaking villages using archaic forms and/or code-mixing Russian with the local idiom.

While Soviet linguists were aware of the importance of studying dialects, the overall attitude to them and to the national varieties as they existed in the Soviet republics was quite skeptical and even patronizing in Soviet society. Thanks to the fast pace of urbanization and the growing prestige of literacy and education, use of dialects decreased dramatically and was limited to the elderly in rural areas. Dialects came to be associated with an archaic culture and socio-economic backwardness. Dialectisms became part of the jokelore, deriding the uneducated and non-sophisticated. Equally, specific features of Russian pronunciation and grammar deviations from standard Russian that are typical of Russian L2 speakers residing in the Soviet republics and the autonomous republics of the Russian Federation were an indispensable part of Soviet ethnic jokes.<sup>9</sup> Notably, the pronunciation of Soviet leaders, many of whom had traces of southern dialects in their speech, was mockingly imitated by the intelligentsia as a sign of the partocrats' poor education.

At the beginning of the post-Soviet period, when the Russian language underwent fast changes the fashion reversed. Shedding the confines of what is "normative", journalists, bloggers and rank-and-file internet users started discussing differences between the local and the standard in the speech of their environment, arguing about etymology, compiling glossaries and tests on the knowledge of regionalisms and "crowd-creating" comic lists explaining differences between the words used in the capital and other parts of the country. A case in point is differences between some lexemes one hears in St. Petersburg and Moscow that often come up in Internet discussions and are successfully used by commercial companies

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9 Е.Я. ШМЕЛЕВА, А.Д. ШМЕЛЕВ, *Русский анекдот. Текст и речевой жанр* (Москва: Языки славянской культуры, 2003).

as advertising gimmicks.<sup>10</sup> Another example is a glossary of 150 words collected by the journalists of the central newspaper *Komsomol'skaja Pravda* on the basis of materials published by its regional branches. In the introduction to the article the author writes: "Planning a trip in Russia, study this short phrasebook. Fine details of translating "from Russian to Russian" in some areas of our Fatherland might puzzle you greatly".<sup>11</sup> The Russian internet abounds in posts and subsequent discussions about regiolects.<sup>12</sup> Reflections about speech habits and increased language awareness are typical of folk linguists. Although many participants have little linguistic knowledge which could help them distinguish between regiolects, sociolects and ideolects, they are sensitive to speech varieties, reflecting on local culture that was not obliterated by the overwhelming standardization of the Soviet period. These observations resonate with Romaine's idea that it is more appropriate to think of a standard language as an idea rather than a reality, as a set of abstract forms to which actual usage may adhere to various degrees.<sup>13</sup> Some posts, however, show that the prestige of "correct", i.e., normative speech of Moscow and St. Petersburg, is still strong in society.<sup>14</sup>

10 MARIA YELENEVSKAYA, "Moscow and St. Petersburg Compete: Negotiating City Identity on Ru.Net", in *Shaping Virtual Lives: Online Identities, Representations, and Conducts*, eds. VIOLETTA KRAWCZYK-WASILEWSKA, THEO MEDER, ANDY ROSS (Lodz: University of Lodz Press, 2012), 105–30.

11 А. ЛЯБИНА, «150 региональных словечек, которые введут в ступор москвичей», *Комсомольская правда*, 14 марта 2018, kp.ru/daily/26342.7/3222103 (Дата обращения: 4 июня 2020 г.).

12 Following Michal'chenko we will further distinguish between regiolects – "speech of middle-size and small towns, considerably affected by local subdialects and showing traces of common parlance" and ethnolects – speech "resulting from differentiation of the language functioning in the contact zone and acquiring specific features under the influence of bilinguals' languages due to language interference" (В.Ю. МИХАЛЬЧЕНКО (ред.), *Словарь социолингвистических терминов* (Москва: Институт языкознания РАН, 2006): 180, 250). However, we tend to believe that the term "code-mixing" would be more fitting than "language interference" in the situation of contact languages.

13 SUSANNE ROMAINE, "Standard Languages, Standardization and Standard Language Cultures", in *Handbook of Language and Communication Diversity and Change*, eds. MARLIS HELLIGER, ANNE PAUWELS (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2007), 685.

14 "Where do they speak most correct Russian?", [lingvoforum.net/index.php?topic=2296.0](http://lingvoforum.net/index.php?topic=2296.0), "Whatcha say is unclear? Should one get rid of the Ural sub-dialect?", [chel.aif.ru/culture/1205071](http://chel.aif.ru/culture/1205071); others reveal people's pride in the distinctiveness of local sub-dialects and regionalisms: "Our Siberian words", [gorod.tomsk.ru/index-1357758165.php](http://gorod.tomsk.ru/index-1357758165.php), "Umat, *kuksa derebas*: What language do they speak in the Far East?", [dv.land/tests/sleng](http://dv.land/tests/sleng), "Amusing dialects of Russian", [fishki.net/1421624-zabavnye-dialekty-russkogo-jazyka.html](http://fishki.net/1421624-zabavnye-dialekty-russkogo-jazyka.html) (Accessed: June 4, 2020).

On the whole, the attitude to regiolects on the part of contemporary Russian linguists is positive and they are studied as part of the linguistic landscape, but the versions of the Russian language spoken in the diaspora are often treated as contaminations. Equally, the idea that “the Great and Mighty Russian language” has legitimate varieties in other countries is emotionally rejected by many educated Russians. As Muhr aptly remarks, language communities opposing their status of pluricentricity share a centralist and elitist notion of standard forms, and it takes at least two generations to adapt to the idea that several norms may coexist.<sup>15</sup> Proponents of the theory that Russian is a monocentric language view borrowings from contact languages solely as a sign of language attrition, and then complex processes of linguistic and cultural hybridity are mistaken for a loss of Russian identity. In fact, continuing to be disdainful of diasporic versions of the Russian language ignores the fact that languages are dynamic entities, constantly malleable, constantly segmentable and segmented. They are marked by their internal potential for multiplication and differential developments generated by their users and uses and functionalized in context. Even the language of the communities of “Old Believers”, known for their isolated way of life and great efforts to maintain Russian for nearly two centuries, is influenced by the languages of the host countries.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. THE RUSSIAN WORLD: UNITED OR FRAGMENTED BY THE LANGUAGE?

The role of the language is cornerstone in the ideology of the “Russian World”. A follow-up of the ideas expressed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, its theoreticians—experts in the diasporas—conceived of it as a multi-ethnic

15 RUDOLF MUHR, “The State of the Art of Research on Pluricentric Languages: Where We Were and Where We Are Now”, in *Pluricentric Languages and Non-dominant Varieties Worldwide. Vol. 1: Pluricentric Languages across Continents – Features and Usage*, eds. RUDOLF MUHR, KELEN E. FONYUY, ZEINAB IBRAHIM, COREY MILLER (Wien: Lang, 2016), 19.

16 И.П. Кюльмоя, «О влиянии эстонского языка на говоры Западного Причудья», в *Очерки по истории и культуре староверов Эстонии*, ред. И.П. Кюльмоя (Tartu: University of Tartu, 2004), 155–9; О.Г. Ровнова, «“Полиглоты поневоле”: языковая ситуация в старообрядческих общинах Южной Америки», в *Staroodrzędowcy za granicą*, ed. M. GŁUSZKOWSKI, S. GRZYBOWSKI (Toruń: Wydawnictwo naukowe Uniwersytetu M. Kopernika, 2010), 137–57.

supra-national phenomenon based on shared language, culture and memories. They posit that this imagined community does not only include those who live in and outside the nation, émigrés of different waves and their descendants, but also all those who have affinities with Russia and its culture<sup>17</sup>. Institutions promoting maintenance of the Russian language outside the nation are sponsored by the government. These are the Foundation “Russian World”, set up in 2007, and the Federal Agency of CIS Affairs, Compatriots Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation, *Rossostrudnichestvo*, founded in 2008. The attitude to these organizations in the diasporas has been ambivalent since their foundation, and suspicions became stronger after the annexation of the Crimea in 2014.<sup>18</sup> Some analysts admit that the Russian-Ukrainian conflict also accounts for a drop in trust in the Russian media on the part of diasporans.<sup>19</sup> One reason may be that the concept of the “Russian world” broadens the goals of consolidating ties with the diaspora by linking it to the transcendent mission of the Russian people to defend and disseminate concrete values, challenging the democratic values of the West.<sup>20</sup> Another one is that “soft power” may easily transform into “hard” power.<sup>21</sup> Support of and imposition of the standard version of the language, as it is maintained in Russia, is viewed by Russia’s present-day elite as a geopolitical necessity<sup>22</sup>. The imposition of the standard goes hand in hand with purism. Many leading Russian linguists are concerned about massive borrowings from English and about slang and “low style” penetrating the media discourse and movies—those very sources that have powerful influence on the speech habits of lay people. Thus, addressing members of the International Association of the Teachers of the Russian Language and Literature, its late president, Lyudmila Verbitskaya, quoted the Russian writer Alexei

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17 П.Г. Щедровицкий, «Русский мир и транснациональное русское», *Гуманитарные технологии*. 28.08.2006. [gtmarket.ru/laboratory/expertize/2006/2508](http://gtmarket.ru/laboratory/expertize/2006/2508) (Дата обращения: 4 июня 2020 г.); В.А. Тишков, *Этническое и религиозное многообразие – основа стабильности и развития российского общества* (Москва: Academia, 2008).

18 MARIA YELENEVSKAYA, EKATERINA PROTASSOVA, “Global Russian: Between Decline and Revitalization”, *Russian Journal of Communication*, no. 2 (2015): 139–149.

19 В.А. АЧКАСОВА, А.С. СМОЛЯРОВА, «Массмедиа и консолидация “Русского мира”», *Евразийская интеграция: экономика, право, политика*, no. 1 (2015): 127–32.

20 ANDIS KUDORS, “Russian World” – Russia’s Soft Power Approach to Compatriots Policy”, *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 81 (2010): 2–4.

21 TOMASZ KAMUSELLA, “Russian: A Monocentric or Pluricentric Language?”, *Colloquia Humanistica*, 7 (2018): 153–196.

22 А. Н. Рудяков, *Георусистика: первое приближение* (Симферополь: Антиква, 2010).

Tolstoy: “Treating the language carelessly is equal to sloppy, imprecise and incorrect thinking”. And she added, “It should be prestigious for the entire Russian World to speak Russian correctly”.<sup>23</sup> Linguistic purism is known to be a potent tool in the politics of inclusion and exclusion.<sup>24</sup> But then for a country which wants to promote its values in the diaspora, this can act as a boomerang: in diasporic communities, young people in particular have strong ties with the host cultures. As heritage speakers they are unlikely to be willing to maintain the language of their parents’ mother country if it does not incorporate realities of their own life.

#### 4. RUSSIAN IN THE DIASPORA: SOME COMMON FEATURES

Relying on the criteria that make it possible to classify languages as pluricentric,<sup>25</sup> we will see that Russian demonstrates different types of pluricentricity. On the one hand, its status of pluricentricity is denied by the institutions and speakers of the dominant variety; on the other hand, it functions as an official language in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, where the local variety is used in administration. Russian textbooks written after the disintegration of the USSR in these countries take into account realities of national life. This serves as the first step in codification of deviations from the standard Russian of Russia. Then there are Ukraine and Moldova, where the status of the Russian language keeps changing as part of the political struggle, currently weakening ties with Russia, and as a result creating favorable conditions for further mixing with the titular languages of these states. There are countries in the Caucasus, where the number of proficient speakers has dropped dramatically, but where Russian is still taught at schools as L1 and L2. Russian media and the linguistic landscape of these countries give many examples of deviations from standard Russian. The needs of the economy, scientific exchange and, recently, security issues, have made it necessary to have professionals proficient in Russian. However, since the influence of Russian educational

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23 Л.А. ВЕРБИЦКАЯ, «Русский язык в России и за ее пределами», *Мир русского слова*, no. 3 (2014): 1–15.

24 (Romaine, 2007: 700)

25 Put forward in RUDOLF MUHR, “Linguistic Dominance and Non-dominance in Pluricentric Languages: A Typology”, in *Non-Dominant Varieties of Pluricentric Languages. Getting the Picture. In Memory of Michael Clyne*, ed. RUDOLF MUHR (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2012): 23–48, and elaborated later.

institutions on the teaching of Russian has considerably diminished, the role of standard Russian has also dropped. The format of this essay does not allow us to discuss the situation in the rest of the newly-formed countries. The sociolinguistic situation with Russian in the Baltic States has been analyzed in multiple studies.<sup>26</sup>

MAPRYAL and the *Russian World Foundation* pursue policies which should boost Russian speakers' affinity with Russia and her culture irrespective of their ethnic belonging, place of origin and domicile. These institutions perceive attempts to preserve and solidify unified communicative space as a prerequisite of peaceful co-existence of different ethnicities, state construction and normal functioning of social institutions. They understand that to be effective, language policies should involve research.

The Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States' Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (*Rossotrudnichestvo*), which has operated under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation since 2008, published a document called "Consolidation of the Russian Language" ([rs.gov.ru/en/activities/9](http://rs.gov.ru/en/activities/9)). This paper includes diverse statistics aimed to illustrate the role of Russian in culture and knowledge production. It claims that in terms of translation, Russian occupies fourth position among the languages from which texts are translated and seventh position among those into which various literatures are translated. What is becoming increasingly important is that it is second most often used language on the Internet. Russia and Belarus use it as the state language; in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan it is used for a variety of purposes and in different domains, making it the de facto official language. Many international organizations, such as the UN, the SCO, the WHO, UNESCO, the OSCE, and others use Russian as a working language.

Today, Russian Centers of Science and Culture function in 58 countries, organizing various activities, among them teaching Russian at different levels and for different purposes. Students learn to communicate in Russian in the public sphere, when dealing with administrative issues, conducting

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26 The changes that have occurred in Central Asia have been covered in A. МУСТАЙОКИ, Е. ПРОТАСОВА (ред.), *Русскоязычный человек в иноязычном окружении* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2004); ARTO MUSTAJOKI, EKATERINA PROTASSOVA, NIKOLAI VAKHTIN, eds., *Instrumentatium of Linguistics: Sociolinguistic Approaches to Non-Standard Russian* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2010); ARTO MUSTAJOKI, EKATERINA PROTASSOVA, MARIA YELENEVSKAYA, eds., *The Soft Power of the Russian Language: Pliricentricity, Politics and Policies* (London: Routledge, 2020).

business, doing banking and making investments. They are also taught Russian culture and literature, family traditions, and cuisine. They learn to speak about travelling, hobbies and various issues of private life. A new and fast expanding sphere of Russian-language instruction is heritage-language teaching to the children of expats and children from mixed marriages. About 15,000 students of various categories come to study in Russia annually ([russia.study](http://russia.study)). *Rossotrudnichestvo* supplies Russian schools and instructors abroad with teaching materials and provides methodological guidance. The document cited earlier states that “support and promotion of the Russian language abroad is one of the most important instruments of expanding international cultural-humanitarian cooperation of Russia with other countries”.

Russia considers educational services as a way to earn money and influence her diaspora. The legal basis of the concept of the “Russian school abroad”, formulated in the document signed by Vladimir Putin on 11.04.2015, is the Constitution of the Russian Federation and several Federal laws: 24.05.1999 No. 99-FZ “On State Policy of the Russian Federation in Relation to Compatriots Abroad”, 29.12.2012 No. 273-F3 “On Education in the Russian Federation”. Also the decrees of the President of the Russian Federation of 11.08.1994 No. 1681 “On the Main Directions of State Policy of the Russian Federation in Relation to Compatriots Living abroad”, of 08.11.2011. No. 1478 “On the Coordinating Role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation in Carrying out the Unified Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation” as well as that dated 07.05.2012 No. 605 “On Measures to Implement the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation”, the Foreign Policy concept of the Russian Federation, the concept of long-term socio-economic development of the Russian Federation for the period until 2020, the generally recognized principles and norms of international law and international treaties of the Russian Federation governing the activities of Federal bodies of state power in the sphere of international humanitarian ties, including in education. This concept complements and develops the main policy directions of the Russian Federation in the field of international cultural and humanitarian cooperation, approved by the President of the Russian Federation on December 18, 2010, and provides support to the so-called compatriots living abroad, including protection of their rights (among them, the right to study in Russian). This makes the governments of respective countries fear the soft power of the Russian language. Besides schools at the embassies which take money for studies and examinations, no Russian school managed to comply with the

regulations of any country when governed by the RF. Instead, numerous private Russian schools, courses and study groups proliferated in all the countries where Russian speakers reside. Russian businesses and Russian schools are in contact with each other. The export of the educational services also includes branches of Russian universities, Russian and Slavic universities in the countries of the Near Abroad, courses of language and culture organized by Rossotrudnichestvo and Pushkin Centers, periodical grants from the Russkiy Mir Foundation and free lectures and seminars for those who teach Russian abroad. Testing the level of language proficiency is charged for, as are logopedic consultancies. The Russian authorities often donate books and textbooks created in Russia, which is part of the promotion of the ideology among the young learners. The positive image of Russia should attract potential learners to study at the Russian universities, and each country has a quota to send their citizens to get higher education in Russia.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, there are big immigrant enclaves in Canada, Finland, Germany, Greece, Israel, the U.S.A and in the countries of Eastern Europe. In Finland and Israel, Russian has become the third most spoken language and immigrant communities have created many cultural institutions supported by the state. Notably, Russian immigrants in these countries, as well as in Germany and Greece, are mainly those who belong to the category of

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27 Е.Л. Кудрявцева, «Обзор русских образовательных центров в Германии», *Русский язык за рубежом*, no. 4 (2010): 110–115; Е.А. ХАМРАЕВА, «Детский модуль РКИ. Особенности организации русской школы за рубежом и методики преподавания русского языка», *Русский язык за рубежом*, no. 5 (2014): 44–54; О.В. АЛЕКСАНДРЕ, Н.И. НИКОЛЬСКАЯ, «Тестирование детей-билингвов в русском учебном центре “Матрешка” в Швейцарии: о том, как все начиналось», *Русский язык за рубежом*, no. 6 (2016): 26–32; А.Л. АРЕФЬЕВ, Н.М. ДМИТРИЕВ, «Русские школы за рубежом», в *Образование и наука в России: состояние и потенциал развития*, ред. М.К. Горшков, А.Л. Арефьев, Г.А. Ключарев, Ф.Э. Шереги (Москва: Центр социологических исследований Министерства образования и науки Российской Федерации, 2016): 373–380; И.В. Лафи, «О необходимости разработки единых рекомендаций для русских школ выходного дня на примере программы по истории и литературе», в *Инновации в отраслях народного хозяйства, как фактор решения социально-экономических проблем современности*, ред. Е.Е. Бодрова (Москва: Институт непрерывного образования, 2018): 170–177; О.В. Миронюк, «Особенности преподавания русского языка детям-билингвам в Центре Института русского языка им. А.С. Пушкина в Париже», *Русский язык за рубежом*, no. 2 (2018): 69–74; И.И. БАРАНОВА, «Международное сотрудничество в продвижении русского языка и русской культуры за рубежом», *Teaching Methodology in Higher Education*, no. 7 (2019): 8–16; М.Н. РУСЕЦКАЯ, А.В. ЛАГУТИНА, О.А. ВЕЛИЧЕНКОВА, «Возможности организации логопедического онлайн-консультирования русскоязычных семей за рубежом», *Русский язык за рубежом*, no. 1 (2020): 89–93.

“returning diaspora”. In Greece and Israel, a large percentage emigrated from Ukraine, and in Germany from Kazakhstan. The Russian spoken by these people when they migrated deviated from the standard Russian of Russia. Contacts with the titular languages of the host countries added new features to their speech. These differences are most noticeable in prosody and lexis. Russian spoken by immigrants includes a large number of borrowings which can be classified as follows:

- Vocabulary of administration and legalese. These words have entered ethnolects of Russian speakers residing in the new states on the territory of the FSU in which Russian does not have the status of an official language;
- Cultural borrowings (names of holidays, foods, rituals, clothes, crafts, etc.). In the Russian spoken in the FSU, some of these terms were absorbed much earlier since the language contact situation started as early as in the period of the Russian Empire;
- local toponyms;
- words expressing emotions;
- local slang.

Due to a highly developed system of affixes, newly borrowed words do not stay long as exoticisms: Russian ethnolects in the diaspora quickly “domesticate” them. Many acquire diminutive, endearing or pejorative suffixes and form derivatives. Experimental research has shown that changes in the diasporans’ lexicon are reflected on the cognitive level and emerge in verbal associations that differ from those in the metropolis.<sup>28</sup>

Russian ethnolects also differ from standard Russian in their pragmalinguistic features. They absorb local forms of politeness, often appearing as calques, and forms of address. One of the most distinctive features is the wide-spread abandoning of the second person plural pronoun “Vy” used to address one person as a feature of politeness and social hierarchy.

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28 MARIA YELENEVSKAYA, IRINA OVCHINNIKOVA, “The Transformation in Language and Culture of Russian-speaking Israelis as Reflected in Free Association sets”, *Вопросы психолингвистики*, no. 2 (2015): 226–41.

## 5. RUSSIAN IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE

We will now take the reader to those places in Europe which are seldom discussed in the literature devoted to the functioning of the Russian language outside the nation. This section provides a comparative analysis of immigrant groups diverse in terms of settlement patterns, their length of residence, and degree of acculturation. We will look into their status in the host societies and attitudes to the language of their home countries. We will examine the cultural institutions they have created and the role they play in the economy of their countries.

Russian policy in Southern Europe used to be differentiated on the state level; some countries were treated as close allies, while others remained rather distant.<sup>29</sup> A variety of religious issues also played a role: historically, the Orthodox countries supported each other and displayed solidarity in days of trial. Today, after decades of turbulence, the Balkans and Greece have become an attractive tourist destination. Residents of Russia coming for a vacation there no longer opt for package tours but choose to travel independently, and the ability of the hosts to speak Russian is viewed as a boon. Many post-Soviet émigrés settled in the Balkans. They choose various methods of integration and make different decisions concerning native language maintenance in their families. Russia and Greece have had a long history of exchanging populations. Neither émigrés of the post-revolutionary, nor of the post-Soviet waves had to start from scratch but could benefit from the cultural institutions created by their predecessors. Despite significant differences between the 'White' and post-Soviet immigration waves, in terms of demographic features and motives for migration, their patterns of community building in Greece were quite similar.

Besides Russian citizens of various ethnic origins, the Balkans have become home for many Russian-speaking citizens of Kazakhstan and Ukraine. Settling down, the newcomers join Russian-speaking communities but also form their own. Like Russian émigrés, they open schools to facilitate language and culture maintenance in the second generation.

Exploring experiences of the Russian immigrants in Greece, we will demonstrate how Greece, a purely mono-national state accustomed to emigration but lacking experience in hosting immigrants, greeted the

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29 Cf. DIMITAR BECHEV, *Rival Power: Russia in Southeast Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

waves of Russian “late home-comers”. Despite the societal pressure to adapt and assimilate, Russian-speaking immigrants of different waves succeeded in preserving and transferring Russian language and traditions to new generations. Notably, Russophones did not remain on the periphery of Greek society but came to play a significant role in various domains, primarily in science and culture.

**The Orthodox Slavs** in Southern Europe, especially Serbs, but also Montenegrins, regard Russians as a brotherly nation with a long history of helping Serbs when in need. In the first half of 18<sup>th</sup> century, when there was a significant exodus of the Orthodox population from the Ottoman lands to Austro-Hungarian Vojvodina, an important cultural import was that of teachers from Russia, the most famous of whom were Maksim Suvorov and Emanuil Kozačinski.<sup>30</sup> Later the Serbian kingdom and Montenegrin rulers enjoyed the support of the Russian Empire; this support was mostly moral, but at times also political and economic.

**Yugoslavia** came into existence as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes after World War I. An Orthodox country, using Cyrillic alongside with Roman alphabet, it welcomed the White Emigration. Alexander I of the Serbian Royal House of Karađorđević, favored Russians who had helped his country and tried to make a new home for them. He sponsored the establishment of Russian schools of the old type, especially praising their success in teaching mathematics. He allowed Russians to receive military education and he welcomed Russian cultural life—among other forms, theater events. Russian professors were permitted to teach at the universities; thus at the University of Ljubljana, six out of eighteen professors were of Russian origin. The first Russian *Matica* (association) was founded by A.D. Bilimovich in 1924 in Slovenia; afterwards, similar organizations appeared in Serbia and Croatia, aiming to help Russian culture thrive and reinforce Russian national identity away from the Fatherland. The émigrés brought up their children in the spirit of Russian educational traditions. They organized lectures, concerts and theatre performances. They published newspapers, books and journals, and put together a library that got all the new

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30 WERNER LEHFELDT, “Herausbildung der Standardsprachen bei Serben und Kroaten. Die slavischen Sprachen”, in *Handbook of Linguistics and Communication Science*, Hrsg. KARL GUTSCHMIDT, SEBASTIAN KEMPGEN, TILMAN BERGER, PETER KOSTA, Halbband 2 (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2014): 1449.

publications released in the USSR. They took part in creating Yugoslav opera and ballet, and they contributed to the development of tertiary education and educational cinema. Serbs were disappointed to see that many were not enthusiastic about mastering Serbian which they perceived as broken Russian; others adopted the local way of life, preferred Serbian schools to those created by their compatriots and welcomed their children's evolving multilingualism. Every year Matica's members and friends went to visit the Russian chapel of St. Vladimir erected in the Slovene Alps during World War I by the Russian prisoners of war. In the 1930s, Russian youth founded the National Union of the New Generation (later NTS, *Narodno-trudovoj sojuz* [National Alliance of Russian Solidarists]), which was committed to fighting against communism. After World War II, many displaced people had to leave Europe with fake documents or changed their country of residence.<sup>31</sup> One can find biographies of a considerable number of White Russian emigrants to Yugoslavia in Wikipedia and some of them have English versions.

While paying tribute to the role of the White Russian immigration in its culture and economy,<sup>32</sup> **Serbia** has a controversial attitude to contemporary Russia. Honoring Russia is sometimes difficult to combine with aspirations to join the European Union. The Russian presence is more visible on the official than on the personal level. In the last decade, some Russians tried to establish businesses, buy property or study in Serbia (see *serbialife.ru*). At the same time, there were some waves of Serbian migration to Russia. The reasons to stay in Serbia are a pleasant climate, reasonably low prices, an ease of getting the residence permit, a language that is quite comprehensible, the same religion, and positive attitudes of the population towards Russianness. In the linguistic landscape, an observer notices some markers of Russian presence, such as a monument to General Wrangel in Sremski Karlovci, the White Army cemetery in Belgrade, and the Hotel

31 Г.Н. САФРОНОВА, *Культурно-просветительные организации российской эмиграции в Югославии в 1920–1930-е гг.*, канд. дис. (Москва: Московский педагогический государственный университет, 2005); В.А. ТЕСЕМНИКОВ, В.И. КОСТИК (ред.) *Русский Белград* (Москва: Издательство Московского университета, 2008); IRINA MAKAROVA TOMINEC, "Ruščina in slovenščina: jezikovna odstopanja v ruščini pod vplivom slovenščine kot jezika okolja", *Jezikoslovni zapiski*, no. 2 (2015): 159–89; О. МАТИЧ, *Записки русской американки. Семейные хроники и случайные встречи* (Москва: НЛО, 2017); Ю. МЕСАРИЧ (ред.), *Русский след в Словении* (Ljubljana: Zavod Vesela dRuščina, 2018).

32 See, e.g., MIODRAG SIBINOVICH, ed., *Ruska emigracija u srpskoj kulturi XX veka*, tt. I, II. (Beograd: University of Beograd, 1994); Б. ЧУРИЧ, *Из жизни русского Белграда* (Beograd: University of Beograd, 2015).

Moskva, a part of the Palace Rossiya built in 1908—all of them reminders of the common past. Among the new markers of Russian presence one can notice advertisements in Russian suggesting that tourists should buy furs and the Russian Railway company, which Serbians most probably perceive as an international company.

**Slovenia** has received most of its recent Russian-speaking immigrants in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because it has the most humane immigration legislation in the EU. Newcomers arrive predominantly from Ukraine and Russia. The reasons for immigration might be political and economic uncertainties in the country of birth, a lack of resources, poor working facilities, as well as a consequence of climate change and pollution. Émigrés are attracted by the European lifestyle secured by a constitutional state. They hope for quality education and bright future for their children and a dignified old age for themselves. They enjoy the unpolluted environment, the Alps and the sea, and reasonable housing prices. The road infrastructure is well developed, cars are inexpensive, and police are “normal”. Having left “the sixth largest part of the earth”, they like living in a small country. The brochure “*Dobro pozhalovat’ v Sloveniju!* [Welcome to Slovenia!]” and the website *dialog-slovenia.com* entice newcomers by mentioning the climate, security, the culinary and wine culture, medical services, free schooling, Slavic roots, civic conditions for entrepreneurship, the proximity of European attractions in adjacent Italy, Austria and Croatia, and the possibility of travelling to Great Britain and the U.S.A. They admit that while living in Slovenia is comfortable, it is not easy to find a well-paid job. Many owners of capital accumulated in Russia travel to spend it in Slovenia surrounded by compatriots. Russian speakers frequent the Centre for Russian Culture and Science (*ruskicenter.si*). The country offers favorable conditions for creating businesses, which entitles owners to obtain a residence permit. Russian businessmen consider small hotels to be reasonable investments, because Slovenia has developed into an attractive tourist destination.

Materials published for tourists in Russian are translations and are usually made by competent speakers of both languages, yet, they are not perfect. In the brochure in Russian “*Turisticheskij spravochnik*” [Tourist guide], posted at *visitljubljana.com/ru/posetiteley*, errors in Russian stem from interlingual homophones differing in meaning. Thus, *ogovorki* means “slips of the tongue” in Russian but “conditions” or “terms” in Slovenian, so the use of this word in the phrase intended to be “booking terms” puzzles the Russian reader. *Reguljarnyj osmotr* - Russian for “regular inspection” is

used instead of *ezhednevnye tury* ‘everyday tours’, *dejatel’nosti* ‘business, public or occupational activities’ for *razvlechenija*, *aktivnost’* ‘leisure activities, things to do’, etc.

Russian-speaking parents are invited to live and study in the country without the family having to discard their native language (*ruskasolasi*)—the law on education guarantees the right to maintain minority and immigrant languages. There is a full-day Russian school affiliated with the Russian Embassy. Complementary education for children and adolescents (aged 3–17) is conducted in the framework of the school “*Vesjolye rebjata* [Joyful Children]” in Ljubljana, Novo Mesto, Koper and Radovlica in ordinary school buildings, and the grades are included in the matriculation certificate. A school pupil receives three lessons per week (105 lessons per school year), while pre-primary school children receive only two lessons per week. The school offers a variety of subjects to study: Russian language and literature, communication, creative writing, logic, culture, music and civilization. All students are provided with free teaching materials from Russia; and all the teachers obtained their professional education in Russia. The Russian language Olympics contest, New Year celebrations, *Maslenica* (Pancake Week and the winter carnival), Pushkin’s birthday are traditional festive events. In the school journal “*Kljuchik*” [Little Key] published by the students once a year, we read that some children come from bilingual families and speak Russian with their mothers and grandmothers. Some speak Ukrainian at home, Russian at school and in their leisure time. One of the students writes that she was born in Russia and couldn’t “simply throw out the Russian language”, as half of her life, and all her childhood memories are connected to it. Her friends still live there, so, she intends to keep learning Russian for a long time and pledges never to forget it. Among the pupils there are adopted children continuing to learn their heritage language. Clearly, parents trust the school, and the school reciprocates in doing its best.

The international club of Slavic compatriots maintains a center for mutual help and support, “*Ruslo*”. Its mission is to facilitate logistics, help prepare various documents, and provide legal services. The name of the center is an interlingual pun, combining the Russian “river bed” with the Slovenian “canal, track”. It plays with the sound similarity of this word with “*russkii*”. The Russian school “*Stupen’ki*, “Steps” functions under the auspices of the centre. Visitors to the Orthodox church see announcements and greetings in Russian.

Professor Emerita in the Russian Language Department at Ljubljana University, Alexandra Derganc, gave us an interview on September 21, 2017. She was born in 1948 in Maribor. Her father was Russian from Kireevka in the Orel region; her mother was half German and half Slovene. Her grandfather joined the White Army and ended up in Constantinople (Istanbul), where he met English industrialists who invited him to work for them in Slovenia. His wife and children joined him some years later with the help of the Red Cross. A chemical engineer by profession, Alexandra's grandfather worked at the factory, and her grandmother gave French lessons, or as the interviewee put it in archaic Russian *davala chasy* literally 'gave hours' That was their life. Her grandmother learned the Slovene language rather well, but her grandfather *govoril vsju zhizn' kakuju-to smes'* 'all his life spoke some mixture'. At home grandparents spoke Russian, and her father went to a Russian school and later to a Russian high school in Beograd. Slovene was not his mother tongue, although both Slovene and German were spoken in his family. As a child, Alexandra could understand but couldn't speak Russian; she studied Russian and English at the university.

Ljubljana University was founded in 1919, and R. Nachtigall who had studied in Graz became the first professor of Slavic languages at the new university. After WWII, many people studied Russian, and it was taught at school, but in 1968 its popularity dropped, and since 1980 it has not been in the school curricula. The lowest number of students enrolled in Russian courses in 1979, the year when Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan. With Perestroika, interest started growing, and now about 100-150 students learn Russian. Some high schools offer Russian as a foreign language again, but most of the students are beginners. A new phenomenon in the system of education is a growing number of heritage speakers who need a different type of instruction from students who learn it as a foreign language. At the University of Koper, Russian is taught for practical use in a variety of contexts.

**Montenegro** has recently become a major destination of Russian emigration. Most newcomers have invested in summer houses. They have opened boarding schools and camps for Russian-speaking children. Some families have second homes elsewhere. Montenegro has earned a reputation as a haven for Russian dissidents, and Russians' interests go beyond peaceful dwelling near the sea.<sup>33</sup>

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33 DIMITAR BECHEV, *The 2016 Coup Attempt in Montenegro: Is Russia's Balkans Footprint Expanding?* (Sofia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 2018).

Russian speakers in Montenegro maintain the website *rudiaspora.me*. The Adriatic College (*adriaticcollege.com*) is a polylingual school in Budva for children aged 3 to 17 with the curriculum compatible with European, Russian and Montenegrin standards. The most popular media resource is “*Ruskij vestnik – Chernogorija*” (*rusvestnik.me*)

Russian tourists form the second largest group of the country’s visitors. In 2017, only tourists from neighboring Serbia accounted for more arrivals, whereas Russian tourists had more overnight stays, topping the list with 26.7% of all overnight stays in Montenegro.<sup>34</sup> Compared to less than 5% of the tourist arrivals in Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and slightly less than 10% of the tourist arrivals in Bulgaria, the appeal of Montenegro to tourists from Russia is self-evident.<sup>35</sup> In July 2018, travelling with (blonde) children in Kotor and its surroundings, we were addressed in Russian everywhere and heard Russian spoken by fellow tourists everywhere. Chatting with the owner of a chain of local hamburger restaurants we found that the number of Russian tourists was decreasing, and Turkish tourists might be the next big thing – but Montenegro, he felt, would not be attractive to Turkish tourists because of the prices.

In the linguistic landscape of Montenegro, texts in Cyrillic are primarily Russian. In addition to restaurant menus, advertisements from real estate and tourist agencies and different service businesses appear in Russian predominantly in the tourist zones. Some of these firms belong to Russian speakers from the FSU. Many older Montenegrins speak Russian as they learned it at school. In the speech of a tourist guide who uses Russian on an everyday basis, the accent is hardly audible: I and Y, soft and hard consonants are confused, and word stress is not always right: *vísjat* for *visját*, *rimljáne* for *rímljane*, *ózernyj* for *ozjórnyj*, *korólevstvo* for *korolévstvo*, *dochkámi* for *dóchkami*). Sometimes alternation of sounds was wrong (*postavljat* for *postavjat* ‘will deliver’) and sometimes case endings in nouns were mistaken (*cena sutki* for *cena za sutki* ‘day price’, *za etix sto evro* for *za eti sto evro* ‘for these 100 euro’, *po 19-m veke* for *do 19-go veka* ‘until the 19<sup>th</sup> century’, *govorit’ etim jazykom* for *govorit’ na etom jazyke* ‘speak this language’, *ego nasledoval* for *emu nasledoval* ‘inherited from him’), absence of reflexives (*proguljat’* instead of *proguljat’sja* ‘hike’, *nauchat* for *nauchatsja* ‘will learn’, *poselili* for *poselilis’* ‘settled down’, *torgovat’*

34 Monstat, *Survey on Arrivals and Overnight Stays of Tourists*, June 1, 2018, [dzs.hr, bhas.ba, stat.si/StatWeb/en, nsi.bg, stat.gov.rs/en-US/oblasti/ugostiteljstvo-i-turizam/turizam](http://dzs.hr_bhas.ba_stat.si/StatWeb/en_nsi.bg_stat.gov.rs/en-US/oblasti/ugostiteljstvo-i-turizam/turizam).

35 National Statistical Institute, Sofia, and Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Croatian Bureau of Statistics, Republic of Slovenia Statistical Office (Accessed: October 26, 2018).

for *torgovat'sja* 'bargain') and constructions like *uznaem, esli postroili for uznaem, postroili li* 'we'll know whether they have built'; *est' i takix ljudej for est' i takie ljudi* 'there are such people', Montenegrin lexis (*mapa for karta* 'map', *velilepnyj for velikolepnyj* 'beautiful').

Russians have lived in **Bulgaria** for more than 200 years. This period embraces church migration (Old Believers and post-revolutionary émigrés), political refugees in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and soldiers who remained after the country's liberation from the Ottoman Empire. White émigrés in the 1920s-1940s included General Wrangel's army of tens of thousands of militants. There were also Bulgarian returnees with their Russian families after WWII. Every big city has its own history of relationships with Russia and Russians. Bulgarian-Soviet friendship and diverse contacts led to numerous mixed marriages, and the Union of the Soviet Citizens in Bulgaria was founded.

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, men dominated in the immigration influx, but in the second the number of women exceeded men. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the gender composition of the immigration waves became balanced. Many Russian immigrants contributed to the development of Bulgarian science and technology. Russian schools operated here before and after WWII. Russian ballet, theater, painting, education, medicine, and journalism had a significant impact upon Bulgarian way of life. Russian cemeteries, archives, museums and legations are places where the memory of those people is preserved. Twenty thousand Bulgarians studied in Soviet tertiary educational institutions and about two thousand after 1992, and these numbers do not include alumni of the military schools.<sup>36</sup> These young professionals returned to Bulgaria, often together with their Russian-speaking family members.

The Russian-speaking diaspora today combines members or descendants of all the immigration waves. In the 1990s, new organizations came into existence. Some of them were and others still are involved in publishing periodicals: the Russian club *Raduga* [Rainbow] published the newsletter *Russkoe slovo* [Russian Word]"; the Union of the Descendants of the Russian Nobility in Bulgaria published "*Dvorjanskaja gazeta* [Nobility

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<sup>36</sup> Экспорт российских образовательных услуг. Статистический сборник. Вып. 7. (Москва: Центр социологических исследований, 2017): 24, 41, 287; Обучение иностранных граждан в высших учебных заведениях Российской Федерации. Статистический сборник. Вып. 15 (Москва: Центр социологических исследований, 2018): 23.

Newspaper]; the Russian Orthodox church distributes *Luch* [Ray], and the old White émigrés issue *Belaja Volna* [White Wave]”. The latter also assist individuals filing restitution claims to the property confiscated by the former socialist regime. As in many other countries, in the 2000s the situation of the Russian press changed. All the media are interested in global and local history. Russian life today, especially its connections to Bulgaria, and the Russian-speaking migration attract the reader. Many Bulgarians experience nostalgia for the hearty friendship of the past. Today, different organizations of compatriots operate in the country, including associations of academics, patrons of chamber theater, and self-support groups of the disabled. The weekly *Rusia dnes* [Russia Today]” has sections targeting Russian-speakers in Bulgaria. Information it publishes concerns questions that may interest visitors, e.g., property laws, sightseeing and entertainment, legal advice, information about medical services, and others. Bilateral Bulgarian-Russian relations used to be in the focus of *Russkaja gazeta v Bolgarii* [Russian newspaper in Bulgaria]”.<sup>37</sup> Most of the paper editions closed during the crises of 2008 and 2014 but the online versions thrive.

The new amendment of the Law on Foreigners<sup>38</sup> stipulates that young volunteers coming to work in Bulgaria may receive a residence permit for one year. Researchers involved in projects at research organizations of the European Union may live in Bulgaria with their families; students and seasonal workers are also granted a special status.

A lot of Russians buy a second home in Bulgaria, and the peak of these acquisitions was less than ten years ago.<sup>39</sup> Among those who choose Bulgaria as their permanent domicile we find people of different age groups and different incomes. Seniors form a significant group; many of them own businesses in Bulgaria or in Russia and invest in the Bulgarian economy. One district of Pomorie is called “Little Moscow”, and a Russian school has opened there fairly recently. The Orthodox religion, historical ties, membership in the European Union, an amiable climate, reasonable prices, the possibility of maintaining Russian as a home language for children (see *rurech.bg*, *shkolaburgas.bg*), the proximity of the languages and cultures of the mother and host countries help newcomers to integrate. Mixed

37 С.А. Рожков (ред.), *Русское зарубежье в Болгарии: история и современность* (София: Русский Академический Союз в Болгарии, 2009).

38 This law passed 16.03.2018 [lex.bg/bg/laws/ldoc/2134455296](http://lex.bg/bg/laws/ldoc/2134455296)

39 Н. ИВАНОВА, «Русские и русский язык в Болгарии: языковая среда и двуязычное образование», в *Многоязычие и семья*, ред. А. НИКУНЛАССИ, Е. ПРОТАСОВА (Berlin: Retorika, 2018): 26–36.

marriages were common in the socialist times and this trend in family-making continues, which is exceptional for a country with one of the lowest level of mixed marriages in Europe. Most Bulgarians approve of Russian immigration. Festivals, concerts and exhibitions organized by the Russians are frequented by the hosts since many Bulgarians are still proficient in Russian. During the entire socialist period, from 1944, Russian was studied as a mandatory school subject. Today many universities still have Russian departments, and the linguistic journal *Bolgarskaja rusistika* [Bulgarian Russistics]” is published regularly (*bgrusistika.com*). Russians in Bulgaria help each other cope with legal, psychological and economic problems<sup>40</sup>.

Those who have lived there for a while mention that their Russian is influenced by Bulgarian. It starts with talking about documents needed for domicile in Bulgaria. It is easier to adapt legalese to Russian morphology than translate it into Russian. Names of foods, in particular vegetables and fruit forming a substantial part of the local diet are also quickly integrated into speech. Names of shops are also borrowed: *sladkarnica* replaces *konditerskaja* [confectionary], *xlebarnica* is used for *bulochnaja* [bakery], and *mesarnica* for *mjasnoj magazin* [butchery]. An interesting phenomenon is the use of Bulgarian suffixes and stresses in common lexis: *prijatelka* for *prijatelnica* ‘female friend’.<sup>41</sup> Some use Latin-based lexis in Russian in the same way as they use it in Bulgarian: *lokacija* for *mestopolozhenie* [location], *vakacija* for *kanikuly* [vacation], *restrikcija* for *ogranichenie* [restriction]. Notably, in Russian these words do not belong to the everyday vocabulary. In the Russian language of those who grew up bilingual the influence of the language of the host society is deeper.<sup>42</sup>

**Greece** stands out among other immigrant-receiving countries due to its complex migratory relations with Russia. These relations have an intricate history, they are multifaceted and multilayered. Talking about mass migration, we can name as many as four waves only in the twentieth century: twice Greeks moved to Russia and twice Russians (or rather Russian speakers) migrated to Greece. It all began when after the fall of Constantinople—the capital of the Byzantine Empire—into the hands of

40 See, e.g., *bulgaria-dobrich.ru*)

41 Н. ИВАНОВА, «Русские и русский язык в Болгарии: языковая среда и двуязычное образование», в *Многоязычие и семья*, ред. А. НИКУНЛАССИ, Е. ПРОТАСОВА (Berlin: Retorika, 2018): 26–36.

42 А. БАРАНОВА, «Некоторые нарушения в родной речи русских, живущих в Болгарии, под влиянием болгарского языка», в *Русский +*, ред. Е. Протасова (Helsinki: SVKKY, 2000): 100–4.

the Ottomans in 1453 there was a mass flight of the Greeks. Some fled to Rome, heading for the West, others chose Muscovy. Then in 1770, after the suppression of the Orlov revolt on the islands of the Archipelago in the Aegean Sea, Greeks escaped to find refuge in Russia then ruled by Catherine II. Particularly large Russo-Greek migratory flows can be traced to the 20<sup>th</sup> century: first, Greeks fled to Russia and the Caucasus in the 1920s after the Turks attempted to physically exterminate the Greek population of Asia Minor and the Pontus. Almost simultaneously, mass emigration from the Russian Empire took place after the Revolution of 1917, and Greece was one of the destinations. The year of 1949 was marked by migration of Greek partisans to the countries of the Eastern bloc and the USSR (Uzbekistan) after the defeat of the Democratic Front during the Civil War, which followed WWII and the occupation of Greece by Nazi Germany. Finally, there was an exodus of Soviet citizens after the country's collapse. Among several returning diasporas, émigrés of the 1990s, there were Russian speakers of Pontian origin who had left their homes in the former Soviet republics for Greece.

In short, Russia and Greece have had a long history of exchanging populations. Neither the post-revolution, nor the post-Soviet migrants had to start community-building from scratch, although the differences between these two “emigration tsunamis” were striking. Despite significant differences between the “White” and post-Soviet immigration waves in terms of demographic features and motives for migration, their patterns of community building in Greece were quite similar. The first thing natives of the Russian Empire and, more than seventy years later, children of the Soviet empire did was to create interest groups and voluntary associations, launch schools and establish newspapers—all in an attempt not to get lost in an alien environment but to “retrieve” space where they would be able to create and cultivate their mini-homeland, just like their ancestors, the Greeks who once escaped to Russia, did and whose experience of emigration was well known to their descendants.<sup>43</sup>

Greece is a purely mono-ethnic state, and Greeks, accustomed to migration but lacking the experience of hosting immigrants, greeted the waves of Russian “late home-comers”. Despite the societal pressure to adapt and assimilate, Russian-speaking immigrants of different waves strove and

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43 Cf. KIRA KAURINKOSKI, “Migration from Ukraine to Greece since Perestroika: Ukrainians and ‘Returning’ Ethnic Greeks. Reflections on the Migration Process and on Collective Identities”, *Migrance*, no. 31 (2008): 71–85; KIRA KAURINKOSKI, *Le « retour » des Grecs de Russie. Identités, mémoires, trajectoires* (Athènes: École française d’Athènes, 2018).

succeeded in preserving and transmitting Russian language and traditions to new generations. At the same time, they did not remain on the periphery of Greek society but have played a significant role in various areas of the country's life, mainly in science and culture. Numerous NGOs, afternoon schools, newspapers, websites and businesses form the Russian-speaking infrastructure. Most of the newcomers reside in Athens and Thessaloniki. While adapting to the Greek way of life, people with different background in the countries of the FSU share a common past.

Despite a long cultural tradition and the development of a conventional system of transliterating Greek geographic names, immigrants who are poorly educated transliterate them again as if they were the first to hear of them (Rus. *Santorin, Evbeja, Samofrakija, Geba, Gesiod* are called *Sandorini/Santorini, Evija, Samotraki, Ivi, Isiod*). The Russian ethnolect in Greece reflects local realities: names of documents, everyday habits, architectural details, building materials (e.g., *merokamoto* 'day payment', *mesa/ekso* 'with/without accommodation', *isogie* 'basement', *trohospito* 'caravan', *asfalias* 'armored', *polikatikia* 'multistoried building', 'kinohrista', etc.). Even those who are not proficient in Greek use abundant Greek communicative tags (e.g., *ohi* 'no', *endaksi* 'Ok', *ela* 'let's', *ti kanis?* 'how are you?', *sig-a-sig-a* 'little-by-little', congratulations). The Russian of the second generation immigrants has absorbed Greek lexis and syntax more extensively than that of their parents.<sup>44</sup>

Greeks usually have a positive attitude towards Russia, Russians and the Russian government.<sup>45</sup> This creates favorable conditions and motivation for both groups to learn the language and traditions of each other.

In the countries known today as the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia**, the first 'White' wave of Russian emigration left a huge imprint on the culture between the two wars (cf. Prague Linguistic Circle). Returning White and Red Czechs (the writer Jaroslav Hašek among them) built bridges between the cultures too. The contribution of these people was forgotten after 1945. In socialist times, ties between Czechoslovakia and the USSR were both official and

44 Е. ЯНОВА, «Проблемы обучения русскому языку в греческой аудитории», в *Ошибки и многоязычие*, ред. А. НИКУНЛАСИ, Е. ПРОТАСОВА (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2014), 114–31; Е. КРИЧЕВСКАЯ, Е. ЯНОВА, «Крутые виражи двойной эмиграции», в *Многоязычие и образование*, ред. Ю. МЕНЬШИКОВА, Е. ПРОТАСОВА (Берлин: Риторика, 2019), 28–43.

45 MARGARET VICE, "Publics Worldwide Unfavorable Toward Putin, Russia", August 16, 2017, [pewglobal.org/2017/08/16/publics-worldwide-unfavorable-toward-putin-russia](http://pewglobal.org/2017/08/16/publics-worldwide-unfavorable-toward-putin-russia) (Accessed: June 4, 2020).

informal, especially among the intelligentsia. The Soviet invasion in 1968 destroyed many relationships, while others—between the dissidents and the radical communists—grew. After perestroika, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the new waves of migration are multi-ethnic and multicultural. One can find people from different corners of the FSU. Many are Ukrainians but they join the group of Russian-speakers. These newcomers are education-, start-up- and business-oriented.<sup>46</sup> The recent diplomatic wars between CR and RF demonstrate that among other advantages of being in Central Europe, this location is favorable for espionage. Nowadays, in both countries, Russian speakers form communities, have their clubs, schools, stores and websites, etc. Prague is one of the main tourist destinations of Russian speakers in Europe. In 2015, the Russian language received minority status in Slovakia.

Teaching Russian as a foreign language started after WWII and covered the whole country. Nowadays, tens of thousands are still learning it, and the quality of research remains high.<sup>47</sup> Chalupa<sup>48</sup> has reflected on the practical use of the Russian language in the past and today, and on the motivation of Czechs to learn it. He has also hypothesized about its future. Numerous comments published in response to his article reveal that the matter is of interest to the public. Eva Kollarova, a famous Slovak specialist in Russian, edits an influential journal “*Russkij jazyk v tsentre Evropy*” [Russian Language in the Centre of Europe] providing discussion space for teachers and students of Russian; more journals on Slavistics are published. Many errors in the Russian speech of Slovaks are caused by differences in government, gender, number, in meanings of cognates, paronymic contaminations, etc. These deviations from the metropolitan

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46 L'UBICA HARBUĽOVÁ, *Ruská emigrácia a Slovensko: pôsobenie ruskej poškôbrovej emigrácie na Slovensku v rokoch 1919-1939* (Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity, 2001); A.B. ЧУМАКОВ, *Россияне в Словакии. История и современность* (Bratislava: Stredna odboma skola polygraficka, 2008); Н.И. КОМАНДОРОВА, *Русская Прага* (Москва: Вече, 2009); О. АЛБОРОВ (ред.-сост.), *Россияне в Чехии: вчера и сегодня* (Praha: Ottovo nakladatelství, 2012); Е.Ю. ПРОТАСОВА, *Русская эмиграция в Чехословакии 1920-1930-х гг. в оценках современной российской историографии*, канд. дис. (Воронеж: ВГУ, 2012); PETR HLAVÁČEK, MYCHAJLO FESENKO, *Rusové v Praze: Ruští intelektuálové v meziválečném Československu* (Praha: Filozofická fakulta UK v Praze, 2017).

47 Я. ГРАНАТОВА, Е.Н. БАРЫШНИКОВА, «История, современная ситуация и перспективы преподавания русского языка в Чехии», *Вестник РУДН. Русский и иностранные языки и методика их преподавания*, no. 3 (2012): 121–4.

48 KRISTIÁN CHALUPA, “Od fanatické ruštinářky po solidní výuku na univerzitní půdě. Jak se daří ruštině v Česku?” *HP*. July 7, 2017. [hlidacipes.org/od-fanaticke-rustinarky-roztrhanym-vysvedcenim-solidni-vyuku-univerzitni-pude-se-dari-rustine-cesku](http://hlidacipes.org/od-fanaticke-rustinarky-roztrhanym-vysvedcenim-solidni-vyuku-univerzitni-pude-se-dari-rustine-cesku) (Accessed: June 4, 2020).

standard are the sources for the emergence of a Russian ethnolect in Slovakia.<sup>49</sup>

Among research projects dedicated to Slavic language contacts, a study carried out in Slovakia by Tsifrak<sup>50</sup> is of special interest. She discusses a new variant of the Russian language as used by Russian émigrés. Russian and Slovak are genetically related, so it is not so difficult for Russian speakers to understand Slovak, and as time goes on, the two languages merge into one system. Tsifrak notes that the dwellers of the post-Soviet space are accustomed to mixing cultures and languages, but habitual code-mixing may produce an unexpected effect, sometimes changing the sense of what was intended, and sometimes creating a comic effect. Thus, *ovocie* in Slovak is close to the Russian овощи [vegetables] but it denotes fruit while vegetables are *zelenina* – perceived by Russian speakers as ‘edible greenery’. Words and phrases frequently used at work, in shops, restaurants and other public places form a linguistic cocktail in the heads of bilinguals who do not acquire the language of the host country in the classroom but in the situation of uncontrolled language immersion. Such expressions are well remembered and form the basis of Russian macaronic expressions: *наступить на автобус* (*nastupit na autobus* in Slovak) instead of *сесть в автобус*, or *дам себе чай* (Slovak *dam si čaj*) instead of *выпью чая*. In their new language immigrants often find words attractive due to the emotional depth or succinctness, like *obdivovat* that simultaneously stands for wonder, appreciate and marvel. They are amused to discover words that have phonetic similarity with familiar Russian ones but have a different meaning. These pairs confirm Tsifrak’s observations: *rodina* is not ‘homeland’ like in Russian but ‘family’. *Pohoda*, with its stress on the 1<sup>st</sup> syllable, is only slightly different in form from the Russian *pogoda*, but it means ‘super, o.k.’, while in Russian it is ‘weather’. *Zakusky* is a sort of dessert but not an appetizer as in Russian. Such interlingual quasi-homophones are a source of amusement for language learners and form an essential part of émigré folklore. *Runet* still gives many links to these pairs<sup>51</sup>. Notably, as émigrés improve their proficiency in the language of the

49 Т.В. КОРЕНЬКОВА, А.Ю. КРАЕВ, А.В. КОРЕНЬКОВ, «Русский язык в Словакии», в *Russian Language in the Multilingual World*, ed. A. NIKUNLASSI, E. PROTASSOVA (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2019), 172–92.

50 Н. ЦИФРАК, «Языковой коктейль: как сохранить чистоту русской речи», *Ключ к жизни за рубежом*. 28.7.2017. [key-journal.com/2017/07/28/jazykovo-j-koktejl-kak-sohranit-cistotu-rechi](http://key-journal.com/2017/07/28/jazykovo-j-koktejl-kak-sohranit-cistotu-rechi) (Дата обращения: 4 июня 2020 г.).

51 See, e.g., [virtualireland.ru/showthread.php?t=49753](http://virtualireland.ru/showthread.php?t=49753), [creu.ru/smeshny-e-slova-i-frazy-15836](http://creu.ru/smeshny-e-slova-i-frazy-15836), (retrieved June 4, 2020).

host country, these words stop being funny and lose associations with their Russian counterparts.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Research of Russian as a pluricentric language is still in its infancy. Russian in the nation has changed dramatically after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Under the influence of language policies, favoring hegemony of titular languages and limiting the functions of Russian in the public sphere, ethnolects on the territory of the FSU also underwent changes, absorbing lexis that was not needed in the Soviet times. New ethnolects began to develop in the countries where big communities of ex-Soviets settled down. This is not always welcomed by the majority society. Attitudes towards learning Russian depend mostly on Russia's politics, economy, tourist flows and some other socio-economic factors. Demand for proficient Russian speakers is dynamic and may come up unexpectedly. One proof of this is that universities in the predominantly Russian-speaking cities of Narva (Estonia) and Daugavpils (Latvia) have recently got a new source of money-making: teaching Russian to American service people.

Due to mass emigration from the countries of the FSU, the last three decades have seen an emergence of big groups of heritage speakers of Russian. Some of these speakers can barely use the language and are limited to everyday family conversations, but others, attending bilingual kindergartens and complementary afternoon schools created by the immigrants of the last waves, are engaged in various educational activities which lead to the acquisition of academic literacy skills in Russian. Although in this respect they fail to be on a par with their peers in the metropolis, Russian schools greatly expand the linguistic repertoire of young diasporans and help them develop some metalinguistic knowledge of the Russian language. Together with educational institutions, cultural institutions, conventional and electronic media created by émigrés, the development of tourism and the transnational connections of Russian speakers facilitate Russian-language maintenance in the diaspora. Yet deviations of regiolects from the language of the metropolis are varied and are becoming stronger with the years. Documentation of new diasporic regiolects is only beginning and is an important task for linguists.

The driving force for learning and maintaining Russian for people living outside the nation is commodification of the language. While many first-generation immigrants have retained strong symbolic ties with the language and culture of the mother country, they are becoming much less significant for the second generation. This is equally true for Russian speakers in the FSU brought up in the post-Soviet decades.

The transnational ties of Russian speakers are another factor. They are multi-directional and multipurpose, ranging from business and professional connections, to friendships and family relationships. Thanks to these ties, many businesses flourish, and scientific and social projects are implemented. Abroad, many speakers of Slavic and Baltic languages flock together with Russian speakers, feeling closer to them than to the host society.

Orientation to the norm as it exists and is imposed by Russia has weakened. In the absence of codification deviations in the diaspora have increased. The norm in Russia has also eroded. Some liberation of the language has occurred; new linguistic developments sometimes originate in the diaspora and only later reach Russia. There is still little done to document local deviations from standard Russian. Material should be collected from oral interviews, participant observation and ethnographic diaries, as well as from analysis of the linguistic landscape and local conventional and electronic media in Russian.





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