Russian Given Names: Their Pronunciation, Meaning, and Frequency

Edwin D. Lawson
State University of New York at Fredonia
and
Natan Nevo
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Information in English on Russian given names is limited. A single source with Russian names showing their pronunciation, meaning, and frequency is lacking. This report attempts to overcome that deficiency. From data gathered in a previous investigation on 1421 individuals in Moscow and St. Petersburg in the period 1874-1990, we collected approximately 200 different names. Names dictionaries in English do not indicate how Russian names are pronounced with the exception of one by Norman. One Russian, not widely-available, dictionary (Tikhonov et al.) does give some help in pronunciation but in a Russian format not easily understood by English-speaking readers. We decided to show the pronunciation in three ways: (1) using a "simple" pronunciation style similar to that of the New York Times when it introduces a new name, (2) using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), and (3) demonstrating with a CD (compact disk how the names are pronounced by a Russian speaker. To do this, a Russian speaker made tape recordings. From these recordings, a CD was produced. In addition to pronunciation, we are also showing the meaning of each name and its frequency.

In our report on Russian naming patterns, 1874-1990 (Lawson, Glushkovskaya, & Sheil in press), we reported on the naming patterns of 100 families from Moscow and 99 families from St. Petersburg. The sample totaled 1421 individuals. Results indicated that contrary to results in Latvia (Lawson & Balode, 1998) and Lithuania (Lawson & Butkus, 1999) that might have predicted an increase in Russian or Slavic names, the traditional language sources, i.e., Church Slavonic and Greek, persisted.

This investigation goes further with the data. To acquaint scholars who may be somewhat unfamiliar with

Russian names, we will describe the names we found with their gender, pronunciation, their language if not Russian, etymology, meaning, affectionate name(s), and the frequency in our sample.

After searching the available literature on Russian given names, we compiled a table showing our results. Table 1 shows the tabulation of these sources. Benson (1992) gives a listing in Cyrillic of all or most of the names in our list but offers no further information. Dunkling and Gosling (1983) and Hanks (1990) do cover some of the names along with their derivation.

Table 1. Comparisons of features of sources on Russian names.

Source	Pronunciation	Etymology	Listing	Meaning	Frequency	Comment
Benson	NO	NO	Probably all Russian names	NO	NO	Names in Russian
Dunkling	NO	Some	Some	YES	NO	
Hanks	NO	Some	Some	YES	NO	
Ingraham	NO	NO	Half	NO	NO	
Norman	YES	YES	Half	YES	NO	
Tikhonov	?	NO	All Russian	NO	NO	In Russian
Unbegaun	NO	A bit	Scattered	NO	NO	Some surname info helpful
Al-Ja-'fari	Some help	NO	Some Arabic names in data	YES	NO	Some Arabic help
Beider	NO	YES	Jewish names	YES	NO	Jewish names

and meaning. Ingraham (1996) lists Russian names by sex in her categories but offers no further information. Norman (1996) has chapters for thirty-one categories of names. One of these is Russian. About half of the names in our sample were among those she listed along with useful information on derivation and meaning. Tikhonov, Boiarinova, and Ryzhkova (1995) offer a great deal of information on Russian names and their variations. However, there is little on derivation and meaning. Further, the book is in Russian. Richman (1993) is in the same general category as Dunkling and Gosling and Hanks.

There are two specialized dictionaries that have been helpful. The Al-Ja`fari (1977) was useful for most of the Arabic names in our list; the Beider (2001) was excellent for all of the Jewish names. The Al-Ja`fari also gives some help on pronunciation.

As can be seen from Table 1 and our summary, none of the sources gives any information on frequency. Norman is the best of the sources but we were able to find only about half of the names in our sample. While Norman does give a simple guide to pronunciation, she does not show the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Since there was no one complete guide to the Russian names for our empirical sample, we decided to develop one. In addition to showing a simple guide to pronunciation similar to that of Norman, we decided to also show the names in IPA. We also went a step farther by showing with a CD how a Russian speaker pronounces the names. Finally, using data developed from our sample developed in Moscow and St. Petersburg, we show the approximately frequency of each name.

Procedure

Using the data reported by Lawson, Glushkovskaya, & Sheil (in press), we first listed all the names reported. Then we

secured the services of a male Russian speaker (Natan Nevo) who recorded the pronunciation of the names. He spoke the names first slowly, syllable by syllable, then at normal conversational speed.

Then, analysis was made to show the "simple" pronunciation style and the IPA style. The Appendix shows the results, along with information on gender, language if other than Russian, affectionate form(s), and frequency of the name in the sample.

Results and Discussion

Examination of the data indicates that approximately 80% of the names are Russian. The bulk of the names seem to be derived from Greek with a significant percentage from Latin. Among those from other languages (or derived from them), there are 14 from Hebrew (Daniil, David, Elizaveta, Gavriil, Isaak, Israil, Lazar, Mariam, Mikhail, Moisey, Rebekka, Serafima, Veniamin, Yakov), 8 from Arabic (Aleftina, Ali, Arif, Dinara, Iraida, Magomed, Rauf, Zakhra), 5 from Scandinavian sources(Egor, Erik, Inga, Oleg, Olga), 4 from English (Alina, Alisa, Elfrida, Ernest, Robert), and 4 from French (Denis, Jozefina, Violetta). Other languages represented are: Armenian (Varnaz), German (German, Volf, Zelik), Persian (Rustam), Spanish (Bella, Lolita), Turkic (Khan, Timur), and Yiddish (Abram, Faina).

The bulk of the Russian names are Greek in origin with a fair proportion from Latin. What is striking is the preponderance of saints' names. At least some observers would have thought that the effect of atheistic communism would have reduced the percentage of religious names.

To get some idea of the proportion of saints' names, we first evaluated how many children were named under communism. In looking at the original data, we saw that 73% of the individuals in our sample (1040 out of 1421) were born in 1921 or after. Yet it is quite clear that at least that many with Russian names had saints' names. While there were some

purely Russian names like Vladimir and Ludmila, it is striking how many church-related names were used.

One question that might be raised is whether the people who bear these saints' names are aware of their religious significance. Based on the replies to questions posed by the interviewers, it would appear they are not. Earlier, we had mentioned that the earlier studies in Latvia and Lithuania showed that there had been significant increases in patriotic names. Further, that under Russian communist rule, religious names had remained at about the same percentage in Latvia (20%), while in Lithuania names associated with religion had declined (Hebrew from 27% to 5%; Latin 18% to 12%). In fact, a composite of German, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Slavic names declined from about 64% at the beginning of 1919 to about 35% at the end of communist rule. We should mention that Latvia had a largely Roman Catholic population; Lithuania had a split population of Roman Catholics and Lutherans.

What explanation can we offer for the puzzling question of why the two Baltic countries increased their names associated with their countries' culture while the Russians kept names associated with religion and did not increase the names associated with Russian or Slavic culture?

One explanation might simply be that the Russians were unaware of the religious significance of their names. Is that sufficient? Or, can we go further? Russia came into Christianity when St. Validimir, Grand Prince of Kiev, accepted baptism in 988 and established Christianity there. Latvia came to Christianity in the 12th century, Lithuania in the 14th. Is it possible that the longer exposure to Christianity by the Russians created a situation whereby the names became an accepted part of the culture, more than being associated with the Church so that even under presumably atheistic communism the names were able to survive? Ladislav Zgusta (2004), commenting on this paper, points out that many

Russian toponyms such as Archangelsk also have Christian connotations that are not recognized as such by the average Russian. Do these data reveal something about the influence of different religions in these countries?

Authors' Notes

Appendix
Note 1: Affectionate Names. In the interviewing, respondents were asked what other names were used. Most of the names can be easily recognized as affectionate names "belonging to" the names in question. For example, Sasha is an affectionate form for Alexander. We did not find affectionate forms for all names. Affectionate names are shown within {} (bows).
Note 2: Frequency. The frequencies for names in the sample are shown after the affectionate forms or if there are no affectionate forms, the last bit of information. Frequencies are shown by the following system:

* Occurred 1 time in the sample.

** Occurred 2-9 times in the sample.

*** Occurred 10-25 times in the sample.

**** Occurred 26 or more times in the sample.

Note 3: Pronunciation. The aim of the work here on pronunciation is to give the interested, educated person without a background in Russian some kind of a basic guide to the pronunciation of leading Russian. The pronunciation guide is not directed to language experts in Russian. We have discovered that language experts differ among themselves. There are also subtle distinctions that only those with sophistication can follow. Thus, we present guides which approximate correct pronunciation.

Note 4: Kinnui Names. There are five names that we have designated as *kinnui* names (Feliks, Lazar, Lev, Volf, and Zelik) when borne by Jews. For those not familiar with the term, it might be well to explain it.

Kinnui names or link-names were--and still are--used as the secular equivalents of sacred names. These secular names, usually in the language of the host country were thought to be more acceptable in social or business life. At least as early as the twelfth century, every Jew had to have a *shem kodesh* (sacred name), as decreed by the rabbis who required a sacred name for religious purposes, but allowed a kinnui (link-name) for business purposes. For a Jewish male to participate in the reading of the Torah (or to get married or to be buried), he had to have an acceptable Hebrew name. The only exceptions were Aramaic and Greek names that constant usage had virtually "sanctified." They are: Alexander, Kalman, Gronim, and Todros.

An example of a kinnui name is Lev (or one of its forms. The name Lev could refer to a courageous person, but in the Jewish community it meant a reference to the biblical Yehuda [Judah], the eldest son of the Patriarch, Jacob. What is the connection between Lev and Yehuda? The answer is that Jacob on his death-bed giving his final blessing to his sons,

compared Judah to a lion. For further information on kinnui names, see Kaganoff (1977, 49).

The use of vernacular names by minority groups is not confined to Jews. For example, Chester and Stanley, names used by men of Polish descent in the United States are probably understood in the Polish-American community as representing Czeslaw and Stanislaw.

Note 5: English Forms. In a few cases, we have listed the more familiar spelling of the name in English alongside the usual Russian form transliterated into English. For example Yakov and Jacob, Rebekka and Rebecca. The more usual English forms are in parentheses as Yakov (Jacob).

Abram, Avram, Авраáм (m) ah-BRAHM, ah-VRAHM [a-ˈbram a-ˈvram] Yiddish form of Abraham 'father of a multitude.' Bible, Genesis. First of the Patriarchs. {Abrasha}**.

Adskhan Адсхан (m) ahd-SKAN, [ad-ˈʃkan]. Turkic 'khan, knight,
prince'*.

Afanasyi Афанáсий (m) ah-fa-NAH-see, [a-fa-ˈna-si] < Greek, 'immortal.' {Afonya}*.

Agaphya Агáфья (f) ah-GAH-fya [a-ˈga-fja] from Greek *agápe* 'brotherly love', 'good, noble person'*.

Agnessa Агнесса (f) ah-GNEH-sah, [a-ˈga-fja] < Greek *agnos* 'pure, chaste.' It is also possible to postulate a derivation from the Greek *agăthós* 'good.' St. Agnes was martyred in the 4th century. {Agnessochka, Agus'ka, Agusya}*.

Agrapena Аграпена (f) ah-grah-PYEH-nah [a-gra-ˈpjɛ-na]. Variant of Agrippina (see below)*.

Agrippina Агриппина (f) ah-gree-PEE-nah [a-gri-ˈpi-na] < old Roman family name. Name of the mother of the Emperor Nero and also an early Christian martyred saint. {Gylya}*.

Aleftina Алевтина (f) ah-lyef-TEE-nah [a-ʎef-ˈti-na]. Arabic 'very

beautiful.' {Alya, Aliona}**.

Aleksey Алексей (m) ah-LYEK-syay, [ɑ-ˈʎɛk-sje] < Greek 'to protect.' {Aleshen'ka, Alyosha, Alyoshen'ka, Iyalik, Lapa, Lenya, Lesha, Leshen'ka, Leshka, Luoshen'ka, Lyokha, Lyonya, Lyosha, Lyoshik, Lyolya}****.

Alexander Александр (m) ah-lyek-SAHNDR [ɑ-ʎek-ˈsɑndr] < Greek *alexein*
'protector of men.' {Aleksasha, Alik,Aliosha, Lyosha, Pushkin, Sakha, Sakher, Sanka, Sanya, Sasha, Sashulyk, Sashjen, Sashka, Sashechka, Sashen'ka, Sasher, Sashok, Sashulya, Sashunya, Sashusya, Shura, Shurik, Shurka, Shurochka}****.

Alexandra Александра(f) ah-lyek-SAN-drah [ɑ-ʎek-ˈsɑn-drɑ]. Feminine form of Alexander. {Sasha, Sashenka, Aleksa, Sashenka, Shura, Shurik, Shurka, Shurtk, Shurochka}***.

Ali Али (m) AH-lee [ɑ-li] < Arabic, 'the highest.' **.

Alisa Алиса (f) ah-LEE-sah [ɑ-ˈli-sɑ] . English < Old French < Old German 'of noble kind', possibly a form of Alexandra. {Alisochka, Lisa}*.

Alina Алина (f) ah-LEE-nah [ɑ-ˈli-nɑ]. A form of Adelaide which itself is a French form of Old German *Adelheit*, 'nobility' {Alinochka, Alya}*.

Alla Алла (f) AHL-la [ˈɑl-lɑ]. One suggestion is that it is a short form of Alexandra. Another that it is < Greek *alla* 'other', possibly by extension 'the only one.' {Alka, Allochka, Allusya}**.

Anastasia, Anastasiya Анастасия (f) ah-nas-TAH-sya, ah-nasta-SEEYAH [ɑ-nɑs-ˈtɑ-sjɑ], [ɑ-nɑs-tɑ-ˈsi-jɑ] < Greek *anástatsis* 'resurrection.' {Asya, Asulya, Asyanya, Nasten'ka, Nastentsiya, Nastukha, Nastulya, Nastya, Nastyona, Nastyusha, Tosen'ka}***.

Anatoliy, Anatoly, Anatolyi Анатолий (m) ah-nah-TOH-lee [ɑ-nɑ-ˈto-li] < Greek *anatolé* 'sunrise, east, dawn.'

{Tolechka, Tolen'ka, Tolik, Tolunchik, Tolusha, Tolya, Tolyasha}***.

Andrey Андрей(m) Andréy, ahn-DRAY [ɑn-ˈdrjej] < Greek *andreîos* 'brave, manly'. {Andreyka, Andron, Andrukha, Andryusha, Andryushka, Andryushen'ka, Drunya}***.

Anfisa Анфиса (f) ahn-FEE-sah [ɑn-ˈfi-sɑ] < Greek *ánthos* 'flower' {Anya, Fisa}*.

Anna Анна (f) AHN-nah [ɑn-nɑ] < Greek form of < Hebrew *hannāh* 'gracious.' Probably associated by tradition with most Russians (and hence its spread) with the mother of the Virgin Mary. {Aniuta, Anechka, Annushka, An'ul'ka, Anuta, Anya, Anytik, Njura, Njurochka, Njushen'ka, Njusya, Nura, Nurka, Nurochka, Nusha, Nuta, Nutochka}****.

Anton Антон (m) ahn-TOHN [ɑn-ˈton]. Russian form of Antony, Anthony < Latin *Antōnius* name of an old Roman family. Meaning uncertain. {Antosha, Antoshen'ka}**.

Antonina Антонина (f) ahn-tah-NEE-nah, ahn-toh-NEE-nah [ɑn-tɑ-ˈni-nɑ], [ɑn-to-ˈni-nɑ]. Feminine form of Anton {Anton, Anya, Tonechka, Ton'ka, Tonya, Tosik, Tosya}***.

Arif Ариф (m) ah-RIF [ɑ-ˈrif]. Arabic 'wise, knowledgeable.'*

Arkady Аркадий (m) ahr-KAH-dee [ɑr-kɑ-di] < Greek *Arkadíos*, a region in the Greek Peloponnesus. Popularity in Russia due to St. Arkadios, 4th century bishop. {Arkan, Arkasha)**.

Arly Арли (m) AHR-lee [ɑr-li] < Alexander? {Alik}*.

Arsentiy Арсентий (m) ahr-SYEN-tee [ɑr-ˈsjɛn-ti]. Variant of Arsenij < Greek *Arseníos* 'brave,courageous'. Popularity due to St. Arsenius the Great, 5th century saint. {Arsya}*.

Artemiy Артемий (m) ahr-TYEH-meey [ɑr-ˈtjɛ-mij] . Russian derivation < Greek *Artemis*, goddess of the moon and hunting, equivalent to the Roman Diana. 4th century saint. {Tyoma}**.

Artyom Артём (m) ahr-TYOHM [ɑr-ˈtjom]. See: Artemiy above. {Tuoma, Tyoma}**

Asya Ася (f) AH-syah [ˈɑ-sjɑ]. Affectionate form of Anastasia or Anna. Also an independent name. {Asusha, Asunta}**.

Avgusta Августа (f) ahv-GUH-stah [ɑv-ˈgu-sta]. Feminine form of Latin *Augustus* 'venerable, grand.'*

Bella Бэла (f) BEHL-lah [ˈbɛl-lɑ]. Short form of Spanish Isabella, which itself is derived from the Hebrew *elisheva* 'God is my oath.' See: Elizabeta (below). A 2nd root is that it is from French (*belle*) or Italian (*bello*)meaning 'beautiful'*.

Boris Борис (m) bah-REES [bɑ-ˈris]. Two possible sources: (1) < Tartar *Bogoris,* 'small' or (2) Slavonic *bor,* 'battle.' Name of a 10th century Russian saint. {Bob, Borenka, Borenok, Borik, Borusya, Borya, Boryushka}***.

Bronislava Бронислава (f) brah-nee-SLAH-vah [brɑ-ni-ˈslɑ-vɑ]. Feminine form of Bronislav, combination of Slavonic elements *bron,* 'armor, protection' and *slav* 'glory.' {Slava}*.

Catherine. See: Katerina below.

Daniil Даниил (m) dahn-nee-EEL [dɑ-ni-ˈil] < Hebrew *Daniel* 'God is my judge.' {Danya, Danyasha, Den, Dunyasha, Zaika}**.

Dar'iya, Dar'ya, Darya Дарья (f) DAH-ryah [ˈdɑ-rjɑ] < Greek *dareîos* from the name of the Persian King Darius. {Danya, Daryusha, Dasha, Dashik}**.

David Давид (m) dah-VEED [ˈdɑ-vid] < Hebrew 'beloved.' {Gusya}*.

Denis (Dennis), Денис (m) duh-nee [də-ni]; **Denise** (f) duh-neez [də-niz]. French form of the Greek *Dionusios,* the Greek god of wine. Also a saints' name. {Deniska, Denichka, Denya, Dinya}**.

Dinara Динара (f) dee-NAH-rah [di-ˈnɑ-rɑ] < Arabic *dinar* (Arab monetary unit). By extension can be understood as 'wealthy.' {Dina, Dinarik, Dinochka}*.

Dimitryi Димитрий (m) dee-MEET-ree [di-ˈmit-ri] < Greek *Dēmētrios,* < *Dēmētēr* Greek goddess of fertility. Famous 4th century saint. {Dadik, Dima, Dimon, Dimulia, Dimulyk, Dimchik, Dimochka, Mimya, Mityai, Mitenka, Mitya}***.

Efim Ефим (m) yeh-FEEM [jɛ-ˈfim]. Short form of Euphemios < Greek *euphemos* 'of good voice, fair speech.' {Fima}**.

Efrosinya Евфросинья (f) yef-rah-SEE-nyah [jɛf-rɑ-ˈsi-ɲɑ] < Greek *euphrosúnē,* 'cheerful.' {Fros'ka}*.

Egor Игорь (m) YEH-gohr [ˈjɛ-gɔr] . Russian form of Scandinavian < Old Norse *ýr* 'bow' + *herr* 'warrior = 'archer.' {Garik, Igoryok, Igoryuk}*.

Ekaterina Екатерина (f) yeh-ka-tyeh-REE-nah [jɛ-kɑ-tjɛ-ˈri-nɑ]. Russian form < Greek. Clear etymology not known. However, the name has been associated by folk-etymology with the Greek *katheros,* 'pure.' 4th century saint of this name martyred in Alexandria. {Katya, Katyen'ka, Katyusha, Katyushka, Katyushen'ka, Katrinushka, Katyookha, Ket, Kitty}***.

Elfrida Эльфрида (f) yel'FREE-dah [jɛl-ˈfri-dɑ] (pronunciation not certain). Old English elements *elf* 'elf, supernatural being' + *frid,* 'strength.' {Elya}*.

Elena Елена (f) yeh-LYEH-nah [jɛ-ˈʎɛ-nɑ] < Greek *(h)élen,* daughter of Zeus, meaning 'Greek, educated' by extension 'the bright one, the shining one.' Associated with St. Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine. {Lena, Lenka, Lenochka, Lenusya, Lyalya, Ljolya}****.

Elizaveta Елизавета (f) yeh-lee-zah-VYEH-tah [jɛ-li-zɑ-ˈvjɛ-tɑ] < Hebrew *elisheva* 'God is my oath.' Bible, the wife of Aaron, the high priest. New Testament, mother of John the Baptist. Also the name of two saints. {Lilya, Liza, Lizan'ka, Lizaveta, Lizochka, Lusechka}**.

Emmanuil Эммануил (m) eh-mah-noo-EEL [ɛ-mɑ-nu-ˈil] < Hebrew *Ee-mah-noo ehl (imanu-ēl)*'God is with us.' {Monya}*.

Erik Эрик (m) YEH-reek [ˈjɛ-rik] < Old Norse *ei* 'ever' + *rikr* 'ruler of all', 'always ruler.' Associated with Eric the Red, 10th century Norwegian explorer. {Erya}*.

Ernest Эрнест (m) ehr-NEST [ɛr-ˈnɛst], EHR-nest [ˈɛr-nɛst]. English form of German *Ernst* 'vigor, earnestness.' Probably associated with the Oscar Wilde play *The Importance of Being Earnest.* Another association might be with Ernest Hemingway. (Ernestina, Er}*.

Evdokija, Evdokiya Евдокия (f) yehv-dah-KEE-yah [jɛv-dɑ-ˈki-jɑ]; yehv-DAW-kyah [jev-ˈdɔ-kjɑ] < Greek, *eû* 'good, well' + *dóxă* 'credit, honor, glory.' By extension, 'satisfaction, particularly of God with the bearer of the name. {Dina, Dunya, Dusen'ka, Dusya}**.

Evgeniy Евгений (m) yehv-GYEH-nee [jev-ˈdɔ-kjɑ] < Greek *eû* 'well' + *genēs* 'born.' Name of a 4th century missionary bishop. Evgesha, Ganna, Gannik, Ganushkasee, Genechka, Genya, Jannulya, Zheka, Zhen'ka, Zhenya, Zhenechka, Xhenura, Zhenusha, Zhenys}***.

Evgeniya Евгения (f) yehv-GYEH-nee-yah [jɛv-ˈgjɛ-ni-jɑ] See: Evgeniy (above). {Genya, Zhenya, Zhenechka, Zheshka}***.

Faina Фаина (f) fah-EE-nah [fɑ-ˈi-nɑ]. Yiddishised form of East Slavic *Fanya*, ultimately < Greek *stéphanos* crown. {Faya}*.

Feliks Феликс (m) FYEH-leefks [ˈfjɛ-liks] < Latin, 'happy, fortunate, lucky.' Also used as a kinnui (link name) by Jews for Asher since one of the meanings of Asher is 'fortunate.' {Felya, Lutik}*.

Feoktista Феоктиста (f) feh-ahk-TEES-tah [fjɛ-ɑk-ˈtis-tɑ] < Greek *theós* 'God' + *ktístēs* 'founder, creator', 'God is the creator.' {Fenya}*.

Fyodor Фёдор (m) FYAW-dawr [ˈfjɔ-dɔr] < Greek *theós* 'God' + *dóron* 'gift', 'God's gift.' {Faya, Feden'ka, Fedya, Vadik}**.

Galina Галина (f) gah-LEE-nah [gɑ-ˈli-nɑ]. Uncertain origin. One interpretation is that it is a form of Elena. Another is that it is from the Greek *galéne* 'calm'. {Galechka, Galinka, Galka, Galochka, Galchonok, Galusha, Galya}***.

Ganei, Ganey Ганей (m) GAH-nee [ˈgɑ-ni]. Possibly variant short form of Gennady*.

Gavriil Гавриил (m) gahv-ree-EEL [gɑv-ri-ˈil]. Russian form of Hebrew Gavriel *gavhri'ēl,* 'God is my strength.' {Ganya}*.

Gennady, Gennadi Геннадий (m) gyehn-NAH-deey [gjɛn-ˈnɑ-dij]. Meaning and origin uncertain. Hanks and Hodges (130-131) think the Greek *Gennadíos* may come from a derivative of names like *Diogenes* or *Hermogenes.* We tend to think it more likely it is derived from the Greek *gennaîos* '*noble, high-born.'* Saint's name. {Gena, Gesha, Genulya, Genya, Gnochka}**.

Genya Гена (f) GYEHN-yah [ˈgjɛ-ɲɑ]. Form of Gennady*

Georgiy Георгий (m) gyeh-AWR-geey [gjɛ-ˈɔr-gij] < Greek *geōrgós* 'farmer.' Name of several early saints. {Garya, Garik, Gosha, Zhora, Zhorik}**.

German Герман (m) GYEHR-mahn [ˈgjɛr-mɑn] < German *Hermann* composed of *hari, heri* 'army' + *man* 'man' = 'army man, soldier' {Gera}**.

Gleb Глеб (m) GLYEHB [gʎɛb] According to Hanks and Hodges (137) < Old Norse *guÞ* 'god' + *leifr* 'life.' A saint's name. 'God of life'? Under God's protection? {Glebka, Glebushka}**

Grigoryi Григорий (m) gree-GAW-ree [gri-ˈgɔ-ri] < Greek *gregoréo* 'to be watchful'. Name of several early saints and popes. {Grisha, Grishen'ka, Grinya}***.

Gultchara Гяльчара (f) gool-TSCHA-rah [gul-ˈtʃɑ-rɑ]. Meaning unknown*.

Gyena Хьена (f) GYEH-nah [ˈgjɛ-nɑ]. Meaning unknown, pronunciation dubious*.

Helen, Helena. See: Elena, above.

Igor See: Egor, above.

Iliya, Illya, Illia Илья (m) EEL-yah [ˈil-jɑ] <
Greek form of the Hebrew *ēlīyāhū* 'the Lord is my God.'
{Iljushka, Iluka, Ilusha, Ilushen'ka, Iluska, Lusya}**.

Inga Инга (f) EEN-gah [ˈin-gɑ] . Short form of Ingeborg.
Scandinavian < Old Norse *Ing*, Norse god of peace,
fertility, and prosperity*.

Inna Инна (f) EEN-nah [ˈin-nɑ] . Affectionate form of a
name ending in *-ina* such as Khristina or Katerina. Also an
independent name. {Innochka, Innusha}**.

In(n)essa Инесса (Agnes) (f) een-NYEH-sah [in-ˈnjɛs-sɑ] .
Russian form of the Latin *Agnēs* < *Greek agnós* 'pure,
chaste.' St. Agnes was martyred in the 4th century. {Inna,
Innulya, Innusya}*.

Iosif Иосиф (m) ee-YO-seef [jɔ-sif] < Greek < Hebrew
yōsēf 'God adds.' Bible, favored son of Jacob. Feminine
form, Iozefina Жозфина (f) yoh seeFEE-nah [jɔ-si-ˈfi-
nɑ] New Testament, husband of Mary. {Jozya, Osya,
Zhozya}*.

Iraida Ираида (f) eeh-rah-EE-dah [i-rɑ-ˈi-dɑ] < Arabic 'the
seeker.' {Raya}*.

Irina Ирина (f) eeh-REE-nah [i-ˈri-nɑ] < Greek *eirēnē*
'peace.' Name of several saints in the Orthodox Church.
Very popular name in Russia. {Ira, Iren, Irka, Irinka,
Irinushka, Irisha, Iriska, Irishka, Irok, Irochka, Risha,
Trunchik}****.

Isaak Исаак (Isaac)(m) ee-SAHK [i-ˈsɑk] . Russian form of
Hebrew *yitshāk* 'he will laugh.' Bible, Genesis, son of
Abraham and Sarah born in their old age. {Isya}*.

Israil Израиль (Israel)(m) ee-zrah-EEL [i-zrɑ-ˈil] .
Russian form of Hebrew *yisrā'ēl* 'wrestled with God.' Bible,
Genesis, name given to Jacob after he wrestled with the
angel*.

Ivan Иван (m) ee-VAHN [i-ˈvɑn] < Latin < Greek to
Hebrew *yōchānān* 'God is gracious.' Bible, at least 9 figures

with that name and more with the Greek New Testament version, *Jōannes*. {Ivanko, Ivashechka, Vanek, Vanechka,Vanya, Van'ka, Vanusha/Vanyusha/Vanushka, Vanyushechka}****.

Julia. See: Yulia, (below).

Kapitolina Капитолина (f) kah-pee-tah-LEE-nah [ka-pi-ta-'li-na]. Possibly the feminine form of the name Kapiton < Latin *Capito* 'big-headed.' 4th century missionary bishop. {Kapa}*.

Karina Карина (f) kah-REE-nah [ka-'ri-na]. Russian form of Katherine possibly < Greek *katheros* 'pure', an early saint of this name martyred in Alexandria*. See: Ekaterina above.

Katerina (Katherine). See: Ekaterina above.

Katya Катя (f) KAH-tyah ['ka-tja]. Affectionate form of Ekaterina*.

Kira Кира (f) KEE-rah ['ki-ra] < feminine form of *Kûros,* 'Cyrus.' {Kirochka}*.

Kirill Кирилл (m) kee-REEL [ki-'ril] < Greek *kúrios* 'lord, ruler.' Name of the 9th century missionary who is credited with the Russian alphabet. {Kiryunchik, Kiryusha}**.

Klara Клара (f) KLAH-rah ['kla-ra] < Latin *clārus* 'bright, shining, clear' {Klarochka}**.

Klavdia, Klavdiya Клавдиа (f) KLAHV-dyah ['klav-dja]. Russian form of the feminine form of Latin *Claudius,* Roman family name < *claudus,* 'lame.' New Testament, St. Paul. {Klava, Klavochka}**.

Konstantin Константин (m) kahn-stahn-TEEN [kan-stan-'tin] < Latin *constans* 'constant, steady.' Name of the first Roman emperor, 288?-337, converted to Christianity. {Kitya, Kosten'ka, Kostik, Kostya, Kotik, Kotunka, Kotya}***.

Kronid Кронид (m) KROH-need ['kro-nid] Appears to be derived from the Greek *Krónos* 'Cronus, or Saturn'. Probably associated with St. Kronides, a 3rd century martyr. {Kronya}*.

Ksenia, Kseniya Ксения (f) KSYEH-nyah [ˈksɛ-ɲɑ] <
Greek *xenia*
'hospitality.' {Ksyusha}**.

Larisa Лариса (f) lah-REE-sah [lɑ-ˈri-sɑ]. Origin not clear.
Name of a Greek martyr venerated by the Orthodox
Church. {Lara, Lora, Larochka, Lialya}**.

Lazar Лазарь (m) LAH-zar [ˈlɑ-zɑr] < Hebrew < *Ēli'ēzer*
'my God has helped.' Bible figure, servant of Abraham.
Also,New Testament figures: (1) brother of Martha and
Mary, raised from the dead by Jesus, (2) the beggar with
sores*.

Lena Лена (f) LEEH-nah [ˈli-nɑ] . Short form of Elena (See:
above). Used as an independent name. {Lusya}*.

Leonid Леонид (m) lyeh-ah-NEED [ʎɛ-ɑ-ˈnid] < Greek
Leontōdēs, 'like a lion.' Name of two Orthodox saints.
{Lenya, Lyokha, Lyonetska, Lyon'chik}**.

Lev Лев (m) LYEHV [ʎɛv] < Greek *leōn* 'lion.' Name of
several popes. Used by Jews as a kinnui (link name) for
Yehuda (Judah). {Lyonya, Lyova, Lyoyushka}**.

Lidia, Lidiya, Lydia Лидия (f) LEE-deeyah [ˈli-djɑ] <
Greek 'woman from Lydia'. Region of Asia Minor. New
Testament. {Lida, Lidok, Lidochka}**.

Lika Лёка (f) LEEH-kah [ˈli-kɑ]. Combined form of Lydia
and Katherine. {Likunya, Likusya}*.

Liliya, Lilya Лиля (f) LEEH-lyah [ˈli-ljɑ] < Latin *lilium*
'lily'. {Lilechka, Lilya}**.

Lina Лена (f) LEEH-nah [ˈli-nɑ] . Affectionate form of
names with the suffix *–lina* such as Ekaterina, Elena, or
Kristina*.

Lolita Лолита (f) lah-LEE-tah [lɑ-ˈli-tɑ]. Short form of
Dolores < Spanish cognate, 'sorrows', one of the titles of
the Virgin Mary. {Lola}*.

Lubov Любовь (f) lyoo-BOF [lu-ˈbɔf] 'love.' Loan
translation from the original Greek *agápe*. See: Agaphya

(above). {Luba, Lubochka, Luban'ka, Lubushka, Lyubasha}***.

Ludmila Людмила (f) lyud-MEE-lah [ljud-ˈmi-lɑ] < Old Slavonic *lud* 'people' + *mila* 'love, grace' = 'loved by people.' Bohemian saint who was martyred in the 10th century. {Lyuda, Lyudochka, Lyusya, Lyusen'ka, Lulya, Mila, Milochka}*.

Lukeriya Лукерья (f) loo-KYEHR-yah [lu-ˈkjɛr-jɑ] < Latin *lux* 'light'? {Lusha}*.

Magomed Магомед (m) mah-GAH-myeht [mɑ-ˈgɑ-mjɛt]. Russian form of Muhammad 'praised'*. Note: the *h* sound is different in Russian. Names from other languages often have a *g* replacing an *h*.

Maiya Майя (f) MAH-yah [ˈmɑ-jɑ]] < Latin, *Māia*, Roman goddess, one of the Pleiades loved by Zeus and mother of Hermes. Said to have given her name to the month of May*.

Maksim, Maxim Максим (m) mahk-SEEM [mɑk-ˈsim]. Short form of Maksimilian (Maximilian) < Latin *maximus*, 'the greatest.' Another root is that it is the blending of Maximus and Aemiliānus (meaning uncertain). But the name of a famous Roman general Maximus was given to the son of Emperor Friedrich III) {Maxik, Maximushka}*.

Manazai Маназай (m) MAHN-dzai? [ˈmɑn-dzɑi] Pronunciation uncertain, meaning unknown*.

Marek (Mark) Марк (m) MAH-rek [ˈmɑ-rɛk]. Russian form of Mark < Latin *Mārs* 'war-like.' New Testament author of the Gospel that bears his name. {Marka, Marik, Marochka}*.

Margarita Маргарита (f) mar-gah-REE-tah [mɑr-gɑ-ˈri-tɑ] < Greek *margaron* 'pearl'. {Margo, Rima, Rita, Ritochka}**.

Maria, Mariya Мария (f) MAHR-yah [ˈmɑr-jɑ], mah-REE-yah [mɑ-ˈri-jɑ]. Russian form of Mary < Hebrew *Miryām,* meaning uncertain. New Testament, mother of Jesus. {Manya, Manyash, Mari, Marochka, Marusen'ka,

Marusya, Masha, Mashen'ka, Mashka, Mashulya, Mukha, Musya, Musienka}****.

Mariam Мариам (f) mahr-YAHM [mɑr-'jɑm] < Hebrew *Miryām* meaning uncertain. Bible, sister of Moses and Aaron. {Masha}*.

Marina Марина (f) mah-REE-nah [mɑ-'ri-nɑ]. Possibly derived from Latin *Marius.* Another widely held view is that it means 'of the sea.' Possible popularity of this name in Russia may be the influence of Princess Marina of Greece. {Marisha, Marishka, Musen'ka}**.

Mark Марк (m) A form of Marek above. Mahrk, [mɑrk] < Latin *Mārs* 'war-like. New Testament author of the Gospel that bears his name**.

Martemyan Мартемьян (m) mahr-teem-YAHN [mɑr-tim-'jɑn]*. Listed in Benson (169) as a less frequent male name. Shown in Unbegaun (53, 59) . Meaning not given*.

Mikhail Михаил (m) mee-kha-EEL [mi-xɑ-'il] < Hebrew 'Who is like God.' An archangel. Also an important religious figure in Christianity. While a Jewish name originally, was not commonly used by Jews in Russia. {Mikele, Mikha, Mikhryut, Mikhryutka, Miniok, Minya, Misha, Mishanya, Mishen'ka, Mishulya, Mishunya, Mishya, Mishulya, Mishutka}****.

Mitrofan Митрофан (m) mee-trah-FAHN [mi-trɑ-'fɑn] < Greek *Mētrophanēs* < *mēter* 'mother' + *phaínein* 'to show, appear.' Meaning uncertain. Early bishop. {Mitrosha}*.

Moisey Моисуй (Moses)(m) moy-SYAY [mɔi-'sje] < Hebrew *Mōshe.* Meaning uncertain. Bible. Leader who brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Known as 'the Lawgiver'*.

Musa Муза (f) MOO-sah, MOO-zah ['mu-sɑ] , ['mu-zɑ] < Greek *moūsa* 'muse'** .

Nadezhda Надежда (f) nah-DYEZH-dah [nɑ-'djɛʒ-dɑ] 'hope.' Name of Lenin's wife. {Dadenka, Naden'ka,

Nadulya, Nadusha, Nadya, Nadyusha, Nadyusho, Nadyuska, Nadyushen'ka}***.

Natalia, Nataliya, Natalya, Natalyia Наталья (f) nah-TAL-yah [nɑ-ˈtɑ-ʎɑ] < Late Latin < Natālia < *natālis diēs* 'birthday of the Lord', i.e., Christmas. Associated with a 4th century saint. {Habibi, Nanechka, Nata, Natalochka, Natalya, Natasha, Natashen'ka, Natashik, Natashka, Natik, Natka, Natochka, Natalochka, Natulechka, Natulya, Natusya, Natysya, Tasha, Tata, Tatochka, Tusik, Tulya, Tusya, Tysya}***.

Nikita Никита (m) nee-KEE-tah [ni-ˈki-tɑ] < Greek *Anikētos* 'unconquered.' Name associated with Nikita Krushchev, Russian premier. Also the name of an early pope. {Nika, Nikitushka} **.

Nikolai, Nikolay Николай (m) nee-kah-LYE (**-lai** pronounced as "lye" or "lie") [ni-kɑ-ˈlɑi] Russian form of Nicholas < Greek *nikē* 'victor' + *laos* 'people' = 'victory of the people.' Name of a 4th century saint. Also associated with the last czar. {Kolen'ka, Kol'ka, Kolya, Kolyai, Kolyan, Kolyunja, Lado, Nika, Nikolasha, Nikolashka, Nikolen'ka, Nikolka, Nikusya}****.

Nina Нина (f) NEE-nah [ˈni-nɑ] . Short form of Antonina (above). Also an independent name. {Ninok, Ninochka, Ninulya, Ninus'ka, Ninusen'ka}***.

Oksana Оксана (f) ahk-SAH-nah [ɑk-ˈsɑ-nɑ] < Greek *xenia* 'hospitality'*.

Oleg Олег (m) ah-LYEG [ɑ-ˈʎɛk]. Russian form of Scandinavian *Helge*, originally meant 'prosperous.' Later came to mean 'holy.' Name not approved by the Orthodox Church. {Alik, Alusha, Olezhek, Olezhka}**.

Olga Ольга (f) AWL-gah [ˈɔl-gɑ]. Russian feminine equivalent of Oleg. But, unlike Olga was approved by the Orthodox Church because of St. Olga of Kiev, a 10th century saint. {Alenka, Aliona, Lyalya, Lyolya, Lyolyok, Olechka, Olen'ka, Olezhek, Olgunya, Olgusha, Olgushka, Olka, Olushka, Olya]****.

Pavel Павел (m) PAH-vyel ['pɑ-vjɛl]. Russian form of Latin *paulus* 'small.' New Testament name associated with St. Paul. {Pasha, Pashka, Pashulya, Pava, Pavlik, Pavlusha, Pavlushka}***.

Pelageya Пелагея (f) pyay-lah-GYEH-yah [pje-lɑ-'gjɛ-jɑ] < Greek name *Pelagios* < *pélagos* 'of the sea.' {Palaga, Pelaga, Polen'ka, Polina, Polinka, Polya}**.

Philip Филипп (m) fee-LEEP [fi-'lip] < Greek *phílos* 'love' + *(h)íppos* 'horse' = 'lover of horses.' Two prominent figures: (1) New Testament, one of the 12 Apostles, (2) father of Alexander the Great. {Philya}*.

Polina (Paulina) Полина (f) pah-LEE-nah [pɑ-'lin-nɑ]. Form of Latin *paulus.* See: Pavel, above. {Polen'ka, Polinochka, Polya}**.

Praskovia, Praskovya Прасковья (f) prahs-KAWV-yah [prɑs-'kɔv-jɑ] < Greek *prosdokétós,* 'expected.' {Pana, Pasha, Parasha, Parashka}**.

Prokhor Прохор (m) PRAW-khar ['prɔ-xɑr] < Greek *pro* 'ahead' + *khoreúein* 'line of dancers, singers' = 'the leader in a line of dancers. Associated with St. Prochorus. New Testament. Bishop of Nicomedia. {Pronya}*

Prokophij Прокофий (m) prah-KAW-fee [prɑ-'kɔ-fi]. Russian form of Prokopij < Greek *Prokopios* < *prokóptein* 'success, advance.' 4th century Greek saint. {Pronya}*.

Pyotr Пётр (m) PYAW-tr ['pjɔ-tr] < Greek *pétros* 'rock.' New Testament. Chief of the Apostles. First bishop of Rome. {Pepik, Petechka, Petro, Peten'ka, Petrusha, Petyunchik, Petunya, Petya, Peyunt}***.

Raisa Раиса (f) rah-EE-sah [ra-'i-sɑ]. Uncertain Greek origin. Name of a 4th century Christian martyr. Raechka, Raika, Raya, Rayusha}**.

Rafael, (Raphael) Рафаил (m)rah-fah-EHL [rɑ-fɑ-'ɛl] < Hebrew *rephā'ēl* 'God has healed.' Name of the angel of healing. Also, the name of a Levite in I Chronicles. {Raph, Rapho}*.

Ra'uf Рауф (m) RAH-oof ['rɑuf]. Arabic *ra'ūf* 'compassionate, merciful.'*

Rebekka (Rebecca) Ревекка (f) ryeh-VYEH-kah [rjɛ-'vjɛ-kɑ] < Hebrew *rīvka* 'noose.' Bible. Wife of Isaac. Mother of Esau and Jacob*.

Rimma Римма (f) REEM-mah ['rim-mɑ] . A feminine form of Roman. See: Roman (below). {Rimka}**.

Robert Роберт (m) RAW-bert ['rɔ-bɛrt] . English < French < German *hrod* 'fame' + *berth* 'bright.' {Rob}*.

Roman Роман (m) raw-MAHN [rɔ-'mɑn] < Latin *Rōmānus* 'Roman.' Name of several early saints. {Roma, Romka}**.

Roza Роза (f) RAW-zah ['rɔ-zɑ] < Latin *rōsā* 'rose'**.

Rostislav Ростислав (m) rahs-tis-LAHV, rahs-tis-LAHF [rɑs-tis-'lɑv], [rɑs-tis-'lɑf] < Old Slavonic *rosts* 'usurp' + *slav* 'glory.' {Slava}*.

Ruslan Руслан (m) roos-LAHN [rus-'lɑn] . Meaning unknown. Name of a character in Alexander Pushkin's poem 'Ruslan and Ludmila' {Rusya}*.

Rustam Рустам (m) ROOS-tyehm ['rus-tjɛm] < Persian 'tall, big, strong'*.   Rostam (slightly different spelling) was a major figure in Iranian folklore who unwittingly killed his own son.
Matthew Arnold told the story in his famous poem "*Sohrab and Rustam.*"

Salame Саламэ (f) sah-LAH-meh [sɑ-'lɑ-mɛ] < Hebrew *shālōm* 'peace.' Popular name at the time of Jesus. Name of two New Testament figures*.

Samuil Самуил (Samuel)(m) sah-moo-EEL [sɑ-mu-'il] < Hebrew *shmūēl* 'God heard' or 'His name is God'**.

Seda Седа (f) SYEH-dah ['sjɛ-dɑ]. Armenian 'spirit of the forest'*.

Semyon Семен (m) syehm-YAWN [sjɛ-'mjɔn]. Russian form of Simeon < Hebrew *shī'mōn* ([God] heard.' 2nd son of Jacob. Also associated with several New Testament figures. {Senya, Senechka, Zambik, Zyama}**.

Serafima Серафима (f) syeh-rah-FEE-mah [sjɛ-ra-ˈfi-ma] < Hebrew *serāphīm* 'burning ones' originally referring to the angels guarding the throne of God. {Fima}*.

Sergey, Sergei Сергей (m) sehr-GAY [sɛr-ˈgai] . Russian from a Roman family name. Meaning uncertain. Associated with St. Sergius of Radonezh, famous 14th century Russian saint. {Seryozha, Seryozhechka, Seryozhen'ka, Sergunya, Sergun'ka, Serik, Seryoga}****

Shanifa Шанифа (f) shah-NEE-fah [ʃa-ˈni-fa]* . Meaning unknown.

Sofya, Sophia София (f) SOH-fyah [ˈso-fja] , sah-FEE-yah }sA-+fi-jA] < Greek *sophós* 'wisdom.' {Masjavick, Sonya, Sonyechka, Sophinka, Sophochka}**.

Stalina Сталина (f) stah-LEE-nah [sta-ˈli-na]. Feminine form of Stalin < *stal* 'steel.' Influenced by Joseph Stalin whose original name was Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili*.

Stanislav Станислав (m) stah-nee-SLAHV [sta-ni-ˈslav], stah-nee-SLAHF [sta-ni-ˈslaf] Slavic *stan* 'government' + *slav* 'glory' = 'glorious government.' St. Stanislaus (Polish form), 11th century saint, bishop of Cracow. {Slava, Stas, Stasik}**.

Stepan Степан (m) styeh-PAHN [stjɛ-ˈpan] < Greek *stéphanos* 'crown.' New Testament. First Christian martyr. {Styopa, Styopan}**.

Svetlana Светлана (f) sfeet-LAH-nah [sfitˈla-na] , sveht-LAH-nah [sfɛt-ˈla-na] < Slavonic translation of the Greek *phōtiné* 'light.' St. Photine was a martyred saint. Also associated with a figure in John: 4, New Testament. {Lyalya, Setka, Sveta, Svetik, Svetlanochka, Svetulik, Svetulya, Svetlyachok, Svetochka, Vetochka}***.

Svyatoslav Святослав (m) sfyah-tah-SLAHF [sfja-ta-ˈslaf] < Old Slavonic *svyanto* 'bright' + *slav* 'glory.' {Slava}*.

Taisiya Таисия (f) tah-EE-syah [tɑ-ˈi-sjɑ] . Russian form of the Greek *Thēssa,* originally referring to 'a poor girl, one obliged to go out for hire' (Liddell and Scott, 1964, 89) by extension 'bond' or 'bonded.' {Taika, Tain'ka, Taya, Tayona, Tayonochka}**.

Tamara Тамара (f) tah-MAH-rah [tɑ-ˈmɑ-rɑ] . Russian form of the Hebrew *Tāmārā* 'date palm tree.' {Tamarochka, Toma, Tomik, Tamochka}***.

Taras Тарас (m) tah-RAHS [tɑ-ˈrɑs] < Greek *Tarasíos.* Meaning uncertain. Name associated with St. Tarasius, bishop of Constantinople. It can also refer to the town known as Tarentum. {Bulba}*.

Tatyana/Tatiana Татьяна (f) tah-TYAH-nah [tɑ-ˈtjɑ-nɑ] < Latin *Tātiānus,* an old Roman family name. Meaning uncertain. {Lucy, Ljubasha, Ljubushka, Talka, Tanechka, Tan'ka, Tan'kin, Tanurochka, Tanushka, Tanya, Tanyusha, Tata, Tatyanus}****.

Timur Тимур (m) tee-MOOR [ti-ˈmur] Turkic 'iron.' The root of the name is found in Tamerlane, the great Tartar conqueror, 1335-1405. The *lane* is traced to *lenk* 'lame.' {Timochka, Timosha}*.

Vadim Вадим (m) vah-DEEM [vɑ-ˈdim]. Origin uncertain, possibly from Vladimir. (See: below). {Vadik, Vadya}**.

Valentin Валентин (m) vah-lyehn-TEEN [vɑ-ljɛn-ˈtin] < Latin *valens* 'healthy. Name of a 3rd century Roman martyr. {Valik, Valen'ka, Valyusha}**.

Valentina Валентина (f) vah-lyehn-TEE-nah [vɑ-ljɛn-ˈti-nɑ]. Feminine form of Valentin above. {Valya, Valyechka, Valyusha, Valy'}****.

Valery, Valeryi Валерий(m) vah-LYEH-ree [vɑ-ˈljɛ-ri] < Latin *valere* 'to be strong', a Roman clan name. {Lerchik, Valera, Valerik, Valerochka, Valya, Volya, Vol'ka, Vyalya}***.

Valeria, Valerian Валерия, Валериян (f) vah-LYEHR-yah [vɑ-ˈljɛr-jɑ] , vah-lyehr-YAHN [vɑ-lɛr-ˈjɑn] Feminine

form of Valery, above. {Alya, Lera, Lerochka, Vaka}**.

Varnaz Варназ (m) vahr-NAZ [vɑr-ˈnɑz] . Respondent reports that it is an Armenian name meaning 'victor'*.

Varvara Варвара (f) VAHR-vah-rah [ˈvɑr-vɑ-rɑ] < Greek *bárbǎros* 'not Greek, barbarian, foreign.' {Varya}*.

Vasilisa Василиса (f) vah-see-LEE-sah [vɑ-si-ˈli-sɑ]. Feminine form of Vasilyi*.

Vasilyi Василий (m) vah-SEE-lee [vɑ-si-ˈli] < Greek *bǎsíleios* 'kingly.' Associated with 4th century theologian, St. Basil the Great. {Vasen'ka, Vasilyok, Vasunchik, Vasya, Vas'ka}***.

Valerian Валерьян (m) vah-LYEH-ryahn [vɑ-le-ˈrjɑn] . Variant of Valery, above. {Valerik, Valya}**.

Veniamin Вениамин (m) veh-nyah-MEEN [vɛ-ɲɑ-ˈmin] < Hebrew *bēnyāmēn* 'son of my right hand.' Bible. 12th son of Jacob. {Venichka, Ven'ka, Venya, Vinik}**.

Vera Вера (f) vyeh-RAH [ˈvjɛ-rɑ] 'faith. {Veranchik, Verochka, Verus'ka, Verunchek, Verunchik, Verusya, Verunchik, Veri, Verik, Verochka}***.

Veronika Вероника (f) vyeh-RAH-nee-kah [vjɛ-ˈrɑ-ni-kɑ]. Meaning not clear. One view is that it < Late Latin *veraiconica* 'true image' < *verus* 'true' + *iconicus* 'image.' Name associated with the saint who wiped Jesus' face on the road to Calvary*.

Viktor Виктор (m) VEE-ktahr [vi-ktɑr] < Latin *victor* 'conqueror.' {Vik, Viten'ka, Vitunchik, Vitunya, Vitusha, Vitusya, Vitya, Vityok}**.

Victoria, Viktoriya Виктория (f) veek-TAWR-yah [vik-ˈtɔr-jɑ]. Feminine form of Viktor, above. {Vika, Vikunchik, Vikusya}**.

Vilen Вилен (m) vee-LYEHN [vi-ˈʎɛn]. Combination of letters from *V*ladimir *I*lyich *Len*in {Vilya}*.

Violetta Виолетта (f) vee-lyaw-LYEH-tah [vi-ʎɔ-ˈʎɛ-tɑ] < Old French *violette* < Late Latin *violetta,* diminutive of *viola* 'violet.' {Veta}*.

Vitaliy, Vitaly Виталий (m) vee-TAH-leey [vi-ˈta-lij] < Latin *vita* 'life.' Name of several early saints. {Vit, Vilya, Vitalik, Vitalya, Vitya}**.

Vladlen Владлен (m) vlahd-LYEN [vlɑd-ˈʎɛn] < combination of letters from *Vlad*imir Ilyich *Len*in. {Valya, Valechka}*.

Vladimir Владимир (m) vlah-DEE-mir [vlɑ-ˈdi-mir] , vlah-dee-MIR [vlɑ-di-ˈmir] < Old Slavonic 'world ruler.' Important 10th-11th century saint who brought Christianity into Russia. {Dzhonya, Valodya, Valodushka, Vladyasha, Volodechka, Volodya, Volya, Vovik, Vovok, Vova, Vovka, Vovedza, Vovochka}****.

Vladislav Владислав (m) vlah-dee-SLAF [vlɑ-di-ˈslɑf] < Old Slavonic *volod* 'rule' + *slav* 'glorious.' Slava, Slavik, Vladik}*.

Volf Вольф (Wolf) (m) VAWLF [vɔlf] < German *wolf* 'wolf.'*.

Vsevolod Всеволод (m) fsyeh-vah-LAWD [fsɛ-vɑ-ˈlɔd] < Old Slavonic *vse* 'all' + *volod* 'rule.' {Seva, Sevik, Sevka}**.

Vyacheslaph, Vyacheslav Вячеслав (m) fyah-chehs-LAHF [fjɑ-tʃɛs-ˈlɑf] < Old Slavonic *ventie* 'more' + *slav* 'glorious.' {Slava, Slavik, Slavochka, Slavusha}**.

Yakov Иаков (Jacob) (m) YAH-kuhf [ˈja-kəf] < Hebrew *yāhāhkōv* 'supplanter, heel.' Bible. Name of the Patriarch (Jacob) born grasping the heel of his twin brother, Esau. Son of Isaac. {Yasha, Yashenka}**.

Yasher Яшер (m) YAH-shehr [ˈja-ʃɛr] . The bearer of the name, a Muslim Tartar, explained that it means 'will live.' {Yasha, Yashenka}*.

Yulia, Yuliya, Yulya Юлия (f) YOO-lyah [ˈju-ʎɑ] < Latin, Roman clan name. {Yul'ka, Yulenka, Yulechka, Yulyasha}**.

Yuri, Yury Юрий (m) YOO-reey [`ju-rij] < Greek *geōrgós* 'farmer.' {Yurasha, Yurik, Yurka, Yuro, Yurok, Yurochka}****.

Zakhra Захра (f) ZAKH-rah [`zɑx-rɑ]. Arabic *Zahrah* 'flower'*.

Zelik Зелик (m) ZEH-leek [`zjɛ-lik]. < German *Selig* 'happy.' This is a kinnui (Jewish link name) for Asher, 8th son of Jacob. Bible*.

Zhanna Жанна (f) ZHAHN-nah [`ʒɑn-nɑ]. Short form of Zuzanna? {Zhannochka}*. *ZH* as *z* in *azure*.

Zinaida Зинаида (f) zee-nah-EE-dah [zi-nɑ-`i-dɑ] < Greek *Zeús* 'Zeus', father of the gods. Name of two saints of the Orthodox Church. {Zina, Zinaidik, Zinochka, Zinochka, Zinulya, Zinushka}**.

Zoya Зоя (f) ZAW-yah [`zɔ-jɑ] < Greek *zóē* 'life.' {Zoen'ka, Zoin'ka, Zoyukha, Zoyushka}**.

References

Al-Ja'fari, Fatima Suzan. 1977. *Muslim names*. Indianapolis: American Trust Publications.

Beider, Alexander. 2001. *A dictionary of Ashkenazic given names: Their origins, structure, pronunciation, and migrations.* Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu.

Benson, Morton. 1992. *Dictionary of Russian personal names with a revised guide to stress and morphology.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Dunkling, Leslie and Gosling, William. 1983. *Everyman's dictionary of first names.* London: J. M. Dent. Also published in the United States as *The Facts on File dictionary of first names.* New York: Facts on File.

Hanks, Patrick and Hodges, Flavia. 1990. *A dictionary of first name.* Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Ingraham, Holly. 1996. *People's names: A cross-cultural reference guide to the proper use of over 40,000 personal and familial names in over 100 cultures*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Kaganoff, Benzion C. 1977. *A dictionary of Jewish names and their history*. New York: Schocken.

Lawson, Edwin D., and Balode, Laimute. 1998. "Latvian naming patterns, 1880-1991." *Proceedings of the 19th International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, Aberdeen, Scotland, August 4-11, 1996*. Volume 3, pp. 244-249. The complete report is available from ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 424771

Lawson, Edwin D., and Butkus, Alvydas. 1999. "Lithuanian patriotic names 1878-1991." *Onoma* 34:249-263. An abridged version of this paper appeared in *Proteviai/Forefathers: A publication of the Lithuanian Global Genealogical Society* 1(1):6-10.

Lawson, Edwin D., Glushkovskaya, Irina; and Sheil, Richard F. in press. "Russian Naming Patterns, 1874-1990." *Congress Acts. 21st International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, Uppsala, August 19-24, 2002*.

Liddell, Henry George and Scott, Robert. 1964. *An intermediate Greek-English lexicon, founded upon the seventh edition of Liddell and Scott's Greek-English lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Norman, Teresa. 1996. *A world of baby names*. New York: Berkley.

Richman, Daniel A. 1993. *From Aaron to Zoe: 15,000 great baby names*. Boston: Little, Brown.