

Російська меншина і Російська діаспора: Питання формування та місце в багатонаціональному розвитку різних країн на пострадянському просторі

У статті проаналізовано питання формування та місце російської меншини і російської діаспори в багатонаціональному розвитку різних країн на пострадянському просторі. Виявлено масив проблем, які детермінують конфронтацію російського та титульного етносів у різних країнах на пострадянському просторі. Аргументовано, що не можна уніфіковано виокремлювати механізми вирішення російського питання в різних країнах на пострадянському просторі, а доцільно поглиблено розглядати усі існуючі тенденції, які притаманні кожній країні.

Ключові слова: російська меншина, російська діаспора, Росія, зарубіжжя, пострадянський простір.

The Russian minority and the Russian diaspora: Formation and place in multicultural development of different countries at the post-soviet space

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The article is dedicated to analyzing the items of the formation and place of the Russian minority and the Russian diaspora in the multinational development of various countries at post-soviet space. The author discovered an array of problems that determine the confrontation of Russian and titular ethnic groups in different countries of the former Soviet Union. The researcher argued that it is impossible to isolate unified resolution mechanisms of the Russian question in different countries of the former Soviet Union, and it is advisable to consider thoroughly all existing tendencies inherent in each country.

Keywords: the Russian minority, the Russian diaspora, Russia, foreign countries, the post-Soviet space.

Historical state-building experience at the post-Soviet space and even nowadays shows that geopolitical and ethnopolitical factors are of great if not crucial importance for it. Close connection between ethnopolitical and geopolitical is designated by the fact that in various countries, which appeared as a result of the USSR's collapse, live numerous ethnic communities, first of all the Russian one, which never before have been treated as national minorities (when the USSR existed). Consequently, such sharp change of identity reveals itself due to a complicated social and economic situation, which makes a number of people seek for reasons of the crisis, firstly, in the independence of separate countries and only after that in the lack of economic reforms. As a result there is a possibility of the society's disintegration along social and economic, political and ethnical lines, what endangers the statehood and national identity. Besides, another result is an extremely specific positioning of the Russian minorities in every country, which emerged at the post-Soviet space, as well as an exceptionally specific interpretation and self-awareness of the Russian diaspora.

The Russian diaspora is consistently believed to be immigrants from Russia and the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic and their direct descendants, who are not citizens of the Russian Federation, but who recognize their spiritual or cultural and ethnic connection with Russia or any of its actors¹. At the same time, referring people to the Russian diaspora is not carried out on the basis of their national or ethnic affiliation, language, religion, type and character of occupation, place of residence or any other circumstances. According to another, more metaphorical definition, diaspora is connected with personal qualities of people, when they "feel themselves strangers in any specific place ... as they are responsible for constructing their identity"². The collapse of the USSR brought the issue of diaspora to the foreground, creating several new situations. The most peculiar one was the formation of the so-called "coastal" and "shallow" diasporas, communities in the so-called Russia's "near abroad", which in early 90-s of the 20th century started the process of juridical "diasporization", without "leaving their house" due to the disintegration of the USSR into 15 sovereign states. And namely these diasporas, as R. Brubaker states, belong not to the post-national, but to the post-multinational world. They exist in countries, which declared "non-waiver of the principle of the national state, but its triumph"³. That is why in the Russians' context some scholars make use of a bit broader definition of diaspora or the notion of "the new Russian diaspora", which is frequently used to designate measurable Russian ethnic minorities outside the Russian Federation. Other scientists employ more strict definitions, arguing that not all minorities succeeded in "self-organization, and creation of the diaspora, capable of carrying out purposeful policy to their own benefit". Otherwise, they are

¹ S. Savoskul, A. Ginzburg, *Rossiya i russkie novogo zarubezhya*, "Pravda", 23 noyabrya 1994 g., źródło: <http://www.ecsocman.edu.ru/data/894/679/1219/054.SAVOSKUL.pdf> [odczyt: 1 września 2016].

² D. Schnapper, *From the Nation-State to the Transnational World: On the Meaning and Usefulness of Diaspora as a Concept*, "Diaspora", 1999, vol 8, nr 3, s. 251.; D. Boyarin, J. Boyarin, *Diaspora: Generation and the Ground of Jewish Identity*, „Critical Enquiry” 1993, vol 19, s. 711.

³ R. Brubaker, *Diasporas of Cataclysm in Central and Eastern Europe and their Relations with the Motherland*, "Diaspory" 2001, vol 3, s. 6.

still “amorphous ethnic minorities”⁴, as a result of which it is reasoned that it is not enough to be an ethnic minority to form the diaspora of this minority. There also must be an “essential idea, which gets together ethnic groups”, as well as their “organizational structure”, aimed at implementation of the idea, and therefore, functions to support the diaspora. The difference and these comments are of crucial importance, while analyzing the state of the Russian diaspora in the “Russia’s near abroad”.

The point is that in 2005 the number of the Russian diaspora in the world was over 25 m people⁵. First of all, it is composed of the Russian citizens, who constantly lived outside Russia and it is almost 1.2 m people, who are registered in the consular missions abroad. But this is only 15-20% of all the Russians, who permanently reside abroad. That is, due to the calculations, the number of the Russian citizens abroad is up to 8-10 m people (till 2013-2016). Another group consists of the immigrants originating from Russia, whose roots are still there. 15-20 years ago the quantity announced was 35-40 m people. Thus, a large number of the Russians have returned to their Motherland over the recent years and this tendency became permanent. Along with that, there is a great amount of statistic data, concerning the Russian diaspora in different countries of the world. However, due to some difficulties in calculations and differences in determination of the diaspora composition, these figures (depending on the source) vary, even in the countries at the post-Soviet space.

The data below (see table 1) make it absolutely obvious that the Russian minority comprises a large part of population of such countries (according to official data or as a result of the lack of updated information), as Latvia (25,8 %), Estonia (25,2 %), Kazakhstan (21,5 %), Ukraine (17,3% – as of 2001). Among these countries, an average number of the ethnical Russians in Ukraine in fact corresponds with an average figure across the countries of the former USSR (14,2 %), but in Ukraine the problem of the Russian minority is enhanced by the fact, that in quantitative correlations the Russians comprise the biggest Russian minority in the world – 8,33 m (according to the official data of the population census, conducted in 2001, but it becomes much smaller as a result of the 2013-2016 events), and this corresponds with 52% of a general quantity of the Russian minorities among the former USSR countries (except Russia, where it is a titular ethnic group).

Despite this, however, since the 70-s of the 20th century the tendency of the Russians’ migration to Russia had become quite clear, though the situation changed to the contrary after the collapse of the USSR: a total number of the Russians, who immigrated to Russia over 1992-1998 equaled 2.7 m people. Over the period of 1990-1997 Ukraine lost 2,4% of ethnic Russians, Belarus lost 2%, Armenia and Tajikistan – more than 50%, Azerbaijan and Georgia – more than 40%, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – 23%, Kazakhstan – 14%, Lithuania and Estonia – 12%, Latvia – 10%, Moldova – 8,5%. In sum, the “weight number” of the Russians in non-Slavic CIS countries and the Baltic states shrank by 18,3% only as a result of repatriation.

⁴ V. Kolosov, *Geopoliticheskoe polozhenie Rossii: predstavleniya i realnost*, Wyd. Art-Kurer 2000.

⁵ *Chislennost rossijskoy diaspori v mire prevyshaet 25 millionov chelovek*, “Na prostorah Rossii”, źródło: <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2005/0221/rossia01.php#1> [odczyt: 1 września 2016].

The most intensive outflow of the Russians was observed from the Trans-Caucasian region, and equaled 13% of repatriates. Taking into account, that there lived only 3,1% of a total number of the Russians, residing abroad in early 1990, it should be mentioned that almost all mobile Russian population left that region.

Table 1. The Russian Minority Population at the Post-Soviet Space (over 1989-2015)

Country	1989		1999		2009-2015	
	№, m	% from all population	№, m	% from all population	№, m	% from all population
Azerbaijan	0,392	5,6	0,142	1,8	0,119	1,3
Belarus	1,342	13,2	1,142	11,4	0,785	8,3
Armenia	0,052	1,6	0,015	0,5	0,012	0,4
Georgia	0,341	6,3	0,140	3,0	0,027	0,7
Estonia	0,475	30,3	0,351	25,6	0,326	25,2
Kazakhstan	6,062	37,4	4,480	30,0	3,685	21,5
Kyrgyzstan	0,917	21,5	0,603	12,5	0,370	6,4
Latvia	0,906	34,0	0,700	29,4	0,520	25,8
Lithuania	0,345	9,4	0,280	8,0	0,177	5,8
Moldova	0,562	13,0	0,501	11,6	0,159	5,4
Russia	119,865	81,5	115,889	80,6	111,017	80,9
Tajikistan	0,388	7,6	0,068	1,1	0,035	0,5
Turkmenistan	0,334	9,5	0,240	5,0	0,242	5,1
Uzbekistan	1,654	8,3	1,150	4,7	0,650	1,8
Ukraine	11,356	22,1	9,100	18,2	–	–

Źródło: P. Baev, P. Kolstoe, Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Union, [w:] Conflicts in the OSCE Area, Źródło: <http://www.prio.no/files/osce-pdf/osce-russianminorities.pdf> [odczyt: 1 września 2016].; Wikipedia, Źródło: <https://www.wikipedia.org/> [odczyt: 1 września 2016].

Consequently, the state of the Russians outside their ethnical Motherland, especially at the post-Soviet space, has still been unstable and not fully determined, what directly influences their self-esteem, which combines two extremes of haughtiness and self-abasement. O. Vendina singles out a number of reasons: firstly, difficult economic situation and lowering of their social status, which have led to a strong sense of inferiority; secondly, the point is that national elites in the newly created countries inconsistently treat the Russian population (as minority)⁶, as on the one hand, the politicians require mass support from the side of the Russian voters, and on the other hand are afraid of a real increase of the Russian population's political influence as a leading factor of the Russian impact on the immature democracies (as in case of Ukraine in 2014-2016). That is why the Russians are always described as a "fifth column" capable of splitting insufficiently nationally and territorially consolidated young countries.

⁶ O. Vendina, *Russkie za rubezhami Rossii*, „Geografiya”, 2001, nr 11, Źródło: <http://geo.1september.ru/2001/11/6.htm> [odczyt: 1 września 2016].

The reason is, that the Russians have never seen a principal difference between their own and foreign territories. Most of the Russian population, living now abroad, believes the USSR to be their primary motherland and only then Russia or any other country of their residence. While an overwhelming majority of the titular nations share opposing opinions. They call the country of their residence their motherland and only a small part of them identify it with the former Soviet Union (along with that they do not consider themselves to be a national minority⁷). Both on subjective and objective levels this is, first of all, connected with a special place occupied by the Russians among other former USSR nations. As in the scale of the USSR they comprised an “ethnic majority” even in comparison with the most numerous titular ethnoses of other republics, and that is why there was no need of acquiring any deep experience of “ethnic adaptation”⁸. It was supplemented by quite a high level of social and cultural development of the Russian nation. Due to these objective reasons it is naturally to expect social and economic, ethnocultural, language and political (first of all in the centre of the state) dominance of the Russians in the USSR⁹. And from the ethnic perspective, the Russians unified the USSR nations in many different ways. Moreover, all this was provided not only on the basis of a single cultural and language, but also informational space, mainly created on the base of the Russian language and Soviet (predominantly Russian) culture, and due to the extremely vast territories of the Russian residence, it allowed them to penetrate into all other ethnic communities of the country. A unifying (both in positive and negative sense) role of the Russian people was contributed by the fact, that in comparison with many other Soviet nations they were to the least extent inclined to the national restraint and everyday nationalism. Along with that, the national consciousness of the Russian people as representatives of the “Soviet nation” was characterized by a trait, formed under the influence of many developing factors, such as an easygoing and neglectful attitude towards not only own national values, but also their own and other nations’ languages (and national distinctiveness in general). This trait of mentality was revealed in the Russians’ attitude to the representatives of other USSR nations and mainly served as a basis for their accusations of “imperious attitude of mind” towards other nationalities.

That is why, even despite the fact that till 1994 the concept of the Russian political nation “the Russians” had been formed in Russia, the essence of a new identity remained mainly the same. It is quite enough to name a number of fundamental symbolic personalities like Peter I, Lenin, Stalin, Zhukov, Suvorov, Kutuzov. These and other data allows scholars to study modern Russian identity as an absolutely transformed mode of the Soviet identity¹⁰. As a result of this, national mythology of the post-Soviet Russian society is based on the values of the late-Soviet

⁷ E. Poppe, L. Hagendoorn, *Titular Identification of Russians in Former Soviet Republics*, “Europe-Asia Studies”, 2003, vol 55, nr 5, s. 771-787.

⁸ A. Ginzburg, *Sindrom natsionalnogo menshinstva u russkikh*, [2:] *Kuda idet Rossiya: alternativnyi obschestvennogo razvitiya*, Moskva 1994, nr 1.; L. Ostapenko, I. Subbotina, *Nekotorye problemy russkikh v blizhnem zarubezhe: migratsiya, zaryyatost, konflikty*, „Rossiyskiy etnograf“, 1993, vol 2.

⁹ S. Savoskul, *Russkie novogo zarubezhya*, “Obschestvennyie nauki i sovremennost”, 1994, nr 5, s. 90-101.

¹⁰ L. Gudkov, *Russkiy neotraditsionalizm i soprotivlenie peremenam*, “Otechestvennyie zapiski”, 2002, nr 3, s. 99.

epoch (stability, social security and nationalism). On the one hand, there is nothing odd in this, as in principle traditional consciousness is always striving for comprehending something new as a “rebranded or reconsidered old”. This is an inertness of our everyday awareness. However, the result of more than twenty-year development must imply not only efficacy of the inert compound, but a purposeful state policy. Nevertheless, it failed in case of a new identity creation. It can testify that the elites in Russia have not found their strategic position and their consciousness is disunited. The mindset “write two, but keep three in mind” establishes an inner contradictory, inconsistent policy, make people turn their attention to nostalgia. As a result of this, the fall of the USSR has been transformed into the Russian authorities’ “skeleton in the closet”. But this “injury” has been carefully kept, cultivated and supported by numerous ideologists and politicians. From time to time the Russia’s leaders make some symbolic gestures, which should be interpreted as the efforts to “unite the lands” again. It is presupposed by the fact that in a newly created Russia there was not a political force, which could be able to screw up all their courage and finally declare that the collapse of the USSR is the biggest historical achievement, which the Russian people has been experiencing over the last 50 years. If Russia is a national state, then it cannot miss the collapse of the Empire, what will contradict the idea of national Russia. If the Russian Federation is a base for another reappearance of the imperial past, then the Russian constitution and its official declarations are nothing more than a tactical deception. Such ambiguity undermines the very bases of Russia’s existence and ruins the concept of national integration. Here are hidden the risks, which can hardly be overestimated¹¹. In the context of the Russians treating and interpretation of the Russian diaspora it resulted in the fact that after the collapse of the USSR the struggle for independence conducted by new republics/countries turned into a conflict with the “center”, personified by Moscow, and therefore it carried an anti-Russian connotation. In the republics where the Russian population predominated the fears were fueled by the demographic threat of “the colossal nation’s attack”. As a result, the ethno-political situation, which had been established just before and immediately after the fall of the USSR, in all other former USSR countries, beyond Russia, was characterized by a certain confrontation degree between the Russians and the ethnic titular population in the newly created sovereign states.

Such traits in common have mainly influenced the position of the Russians among other former USSR nations, though in each of these republics, except Russia, they were revealed in their own way. But even in this sense there were factors, mutual for all newly created states, which determined the position and status of the Russian population. Among the most significant is a factor of vast involvement of the non-Russian peoples, including the titular ethnic groups of the former Soviet republics, to the Russian language and culture, what became quite obvious in the 60-s-80-s of the 20th century. Naturally, this circumstance did not stimulate the Russians to master languages and cultures of other USSR nations. Other factors as specific

¹¹ I. Yakovenko, *Ya – russkiy. Kto ya i zachem ya? Posleslovie A. Melihova*, „Neva“, 2004, nr 6, źródło: <http://magazines.russ.ru/neva/2004/6/iak12.html> [odczyt: 1 września 2016].

character of resettlement (even now the Russians live in big cities in the former USSR countries, predominantly in capitals) and employment worked in the same way. The Russians were mainly employed at large industrial complexes. And on the contrary, representatives of the titular ethnic groups formed a minority, and for the most part they spoke the Russian language fluently and to any extent were adapted to the culture and way of life distinctive of the ethnic Russian population¹².

Of course all this gives just a generalized vision of the situation which was built up in every republic and new country and in detail looked much more variegated. It should be mentioned that in a sharply-changed ethnopolitical environment, which was established in the former USSR before and immediately after its collapse, the state and status of the Russians were to alter deeply and this finally took place. The representatives of the mostly dominated nation in the USSR faced the necessity to accept the unusual role and status of the national minority. From the citizens of the formerly unified state they suddenly and unwillingly were transformed into citizens (average people) in new independent "national" (formally) countries. It is naturally, that this process could not be simple, smooth and rapid. It generated a number of problems for the Russians from the "new abroad", for people from other nationalities (including the titular ones) in new countries, for their politicians, as well as for the Russian politicians and leaders of many other countries. Thus, the peculiarities of social and professional composition of the Russians, which gave them the advantage during the Soviet times, in 90-s of the 20th century turned their backs on them, when market reoriented itself from industry to trading and intermediary and financial activity. State budget crisis and economic recession led to curtailment of production, especially in the military-industrial sector. As a result, declining living standards was much more notable for the Russians than for the titular population. Among other problems one could name the dilemmas of the Russians' labor activity, which were complicated by two other circumstances: their predominant employment in heavy industry, which earlier was subordinated to the Soviet authority and a poor knowledge of the titular peoples' languages which became national languages. These circumstances under new ethical and political condition quite rapidly declined the Russians' chances to become competitive with the representatives of the titular ethnic groups, mainly bilingual. The problems of labor (social) increase of the local Russians became even more complicated due to practical steps, taken by authority in new independent countries, concerning the implementation of their own "national" state doctrine, and due to the measures aimed at reducing the influence of the Russian language in the sphere of secondary, as well as higher education¹³. Moreover, national state building in the former USSR republics and new post-Soviet countries turned out to be connected with a spur increase of nationalism, intensification of national languages and culture on the contrary to the formerly dominant Russian language and culture. Namely representatives of the titular ethnic groups

¹² S. Savoskul, *Russkie novogo zarubezhya*, "Obschestvennyie nauki i sovremennost'", 1994, nr 5, s. 90-101.

¹³ S. Savoskul, *Sotsialno-etnicheskie problemy russkogo naroda*, "Etnopolis", 1992, vol 1, s. 104-105.

formed new power and intellectual elites. That is why, there was a change in national politics and international relations, and new difficulties in acquiring citizenship rights by the Russians arose. In addition, the Russian (to the same extent as other nationalities) faced the problem of legal discrimination. Such problems became extremely apparent in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia (the problem of access to citizenship), Kazakhstan, Moldova and Ukraine (the problem of positioning and new status) and so on.

There appeared patterns (though diversified) of the Russian self-identification among the post-Soviet diaspora: process of “new identity” formation, bifurcation with the titular ethnic groups; unwillingness to integrate or slow-paced integration; positioning oneself as a “subethnos with its own faith”; positioning oneself as foreigners (even acquiring status of any countries); differences in various geographical and territorial units of separate countries, however aimed at emphasizing pro-imperial and pro-Soviet desires (“imperial consciousness”) etc. Moreover in the public opinion of the Russians, living in the countries of “far and near abroad”, constant and negative assessments of their cultural and language and social status, international relations within the countries of residence, ethnic and political situations both have been formed in new countries and at the former USSR space¹⁴. At the same time, it is known that the most significant changes in the Russians’ statuses in the former Soviet republics outside Russia are connected with crucial improvements in ethnical-language issues. These changes are, first of all, caused by the adoption of the laws on state languages of the former soviet republics and new states, according to which such status was granted only to the languages of the titular ethnic groups. On the other hand, the tendency towards minimization of quantity of the Russians and their roles in the political processes in various countries of the region has been outlined and is implemented (as it has been stated above).

But such conclusion is very ambiguous, as the Russians’ reaction to the ethnic-political situation, which appeared at the post-Soviet space and is new for them, has not always been the same and even known. Moreover, the position, concerning the question, whether the Russians would be able to consolidate to protect their rights and interests is not always permanent. The point is that more than twenty years of independence of the post-Soviet countries and the problem of ethnic Russians in these countries let us draw some conclusions. First of all, the chosen model of the Russians’ behavior depends on their self-conception and how they conceive themselves. Secondly, the Russians’ positions much depend on the place of their residence and the level of their naturalization. On the basis of these, it is possible to single out three main types of the Russians’ concepts of themselves, which are commonly referred to as identities:

1. «Vague» identity: is inherent in the majority of the Russians in Ukraine and trans-Dniester region, closely connected with the neighboring Ukrainians’ identity; very often, people are not able to make up their minds, whether they are Ukrainians or Russians or any other nation. However, if language and cultural affinity used to contribute to Russifi-

¹⁴ S. Savoskul, *Russkie novogo zarubezhya*, “Obschestvennyie nauki i sovremennost”, 1994, nr 5, s. 90-101.

cation of population, then nowadays (especially after the 2014-2015 events) it works for Ukrainization. It means, that in fact the Russians cannot catch a glance of threat to master the language of the titular ethnos, required to solve administrative and legal issues.

2. National identity combined with a clearly expressed “inferiority complex”: it is based on a critical treatment to themselves, inherent in the Russians in the Baltic countries, Western Ukraine (less after the 2014-2015 events) and Right-bank Moldova, where the Russians feel themselves to a lesser extent “fully realized citizens”, and rather “unnecessary citizens” or even “non-national citizens”. However, the Russian population themselves are primed for adapting to the given situation.
3. National identity, founded on the positive self-esteem (haughtiness), which is peculiar of the Russians, residing in Kazakhstan, Central Asia and some Trans-Caucasian republics, namely in Azerbaijan. Over the previous centuries the Russian population in these countries failed to adapt themselves to the peculiar language and cultural environment, and consequently such Russians face serious difficulties with local population and authorities, and therefore their quantity is substantially reducing.

The abovementioned models and types of the Russians’ self-images let us conclude that the Russians (as an ethnic minority) have several ways to solve the problem. Namely: to leave well enough alone and just keep passively waiting for the problem solution at the international and internal levels; to assimilate consciously (or subconsciously) with the native population in the country of residence; move out of the country (leave); to create their own autonomy within the borders of modern countries and try to identify themselves, to separate from the country and join Russia; to recognize the status of the national minority and form the diaspora, capable of protecting their own interests. In other words, there is a possibility to choose one’s way active or passive, conflict-ridden or conflict-less.

A conflict-less solution of the problem presupposes legislative settlement to the “Russian issue” at international and domestic levels and strict adherence to the adopted agreements. The overwhelming majority of the Russians expect to settle the conflict in this way. A conflict-ridden approach presupposes establishment of any kind of movement or party, aimed at serving the interests of the people and at changing such a scarcely-favorable language and cultural, social and economic and political situation, which is controversial for them in the country of residence. To form such movement one needs the existence of “hostility” and “power” (including those, supported by the “Russian ethnic core”) in the international relations, as well as national elite, capable of embodying this “hostility” in the form of ideology. The Russians outside their motherland are characterized by a lack of these both factors (however, we suppose that at first in Ukraine and other countries there were some efforts to develop both ways active and passive, thus in the course of time this active approach took the upper hand).

Majority of the Russian population in the post-Soviet countries regards an organized civil movement as its defender. Anticipations of the Russian from “new abroad”, concerning possible protection of their interests from the part of Russia, are centered on political and legal, as well as economic spheres, including support to those, who are willing to move to Russia (much more rarely than annexation of the territories). From this perspective, of great significance is the position held by the Russia’s highest-level leaders as for the USSR’s destiny and future (since the early 90-s of the 20th century). The point is, that a large part of the Russians from “near abroad” still negatively treat Belavezha Accords, associating it with USSR collapse. Ethnocratic tendencies of new sovereign countries’ policies, which were strengthened after that, also contribute to confirm negative attitude of the Russian population towards the collapse of the USSR (as well as negative attitude towards Russia on the part of newly created states) and to the main culprit – high-level leaders of Russia, responsible for this process in the opinion of the Russians from the “near abroad”. Only since the 90-s of the 20th century the latter has started revising its opinions, as to the fact of the USSR collapse and on basis of this has worked out another renewed “fellow citizens’ policy”, aimed at restoring of economic and political influence on those independent countries, where the part of the Russians is especially high (Latvia, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and others).

At the same time, the policy pursued by fellow citizens in Russia has some drawbacks, which can be appropriately explained by “great-power ambitions” of the Russians’ historical motherland: it is very advantageous for the Kremlin top-level officials to exert pressure on internal-political processes within the independent countries (though implicitly – “gas” question, “language” question, security policy), sheltering behind the needs of a large number of the Russian population in such newly created countries. Russia’s unwillingness and inability due to economic difficulties to accept its fellow citizens, who want to leave the former Soviet republics, also works at hardening to the stereotypical view of the majority that Russia has betrayed them and they are unwanted in the native country. We believe that such community spirits can explain poor ratings of B. Yeltsin among the Russians from the “new abroad” in comparison with the ratings of the top-level officials in the countries of their residence, and the ratings of the subsequent presidents of the Russian Federation, namely V. Putin and D. Medvedev. But even despite this, the impression emerged that the latter take care not of their fellow citizens, but of the pressure exerted by Russia on the neighboring countries.

The situation is complicated by the fact, that the majority of the Russians from the “near abroad” in the early 90-s of the 20th century even now share the idea to protect their rights and interests not only on the part of their “ethnic core”, but also on the part of the country of their residence. From this perspective critical opinion that Russian army has always been considered as a potential “defender” of the ethnic Russians’ rights abroad was and even is shared by some groups of people. There is some controversy as it is not peculiar of the Russians from the “new abroad” (the exceptions are middle Asian countries), who have stayed in the places of their current residence and for whom adaptation to new conditions is the only real way out. Together

with that, a large part of the Russians often demonstrate readiness to such adaptation. At the same time, political progress towards the Russian population in new independent states, as well as in Russia itself, is connected with an incomplete, just partial adequateness of the state views, as to which political directions will face understanding and support among local Russians and which will be refuted.

From this perspective, it is notable that a very important political step for the Russians from the “new abroad” is introduction of dual citizenship. At the same time the Russian population to some extent experiences refocusing from the once unified social and political space of the former USSR on a new country of its residence, as a great number of the Russians tends to accept the status of ethnic minority in their present-day independent countries. Taking this into consideration, one can assume that the majority of ethnic Russian population even within the countries, where the situation for them is the most threatening being hopeful to stabilize their position, does not want to enter into an open conflict with the authority and the titular population, is ready to some degree to adapt to the alternation of social and cultural and ethnical and political conditions. However, the edge till which an overwhelming majority of the Russian population is ready to adapt under new conditions, first of all includes preservation of their ethnicity, in particular mother tongue, native culture and way of life. The problems are hidden in the fact that aiming at preserving these attributes, the Russian population very often hopes for Russia’s support, support of the country where the main core of the Russian ethnos has been retained. The Russian population from the “new abroad” believes this aid to be a real support of various close connections, in social and economic, humanitarian, cultural and language spheres, provided by the Russian diaspora in new independent countries and Russia, but extremely rarely this support should be based on power and compulsion.

In general, it becomes quite clear that the intensity of goals, put by the Russians in different countries of the “new Russian abroad” and which aim at adaptation or controversy towards new conditions and successfulness of the latter mainly depend on combination of such factors as level of political, economic, cultural, informative ties of their new countries and Russia and other former Soviet republics; absolute quantity of the Russians among population in the sovereign countries and the pattern of their residence; degree of language and cultural affinity, ways of their life together with the representatives of the titular ethnic groups; social and cultural status of the titular ethnos. Ethnical and political factors to a great extent determine the situation in social-economic, informational and cultural and language spheres and play even more important roles in emergence of interethnic conflicts, than social-economic cultural and language and religious factors. Besides it is obvious that the Russians from the “near Russian abroad” are mostly focused on preserving their political, economic and cultural and language (but on the basis of the Russian language and culture) as well as informational status quo, and to a lesser degree on reunion of the former Soviet republics, as under these conditions their status and state are changing to the least extent. Moreover, the Russians, living outside Russia, tend to focus on the

former Soviet center, which is currently associated with Russia. It makes their relations with the resident countries' authorities and their titular population even more complicated, as the former, as well as the latter, aims at constructing independent (first of all from the former Soviet center, and currently from Russia) national states. We assume, that such marginalization of the consciousness among the "new abroad" Russians in comparison with current ethnical and political situation is objectively connected with their social and cultural status; it lowers their chances to adapt and pushes them either for migration or confrontation¹⁵. It can be easily observed and (as the experience shows) it conceals some conflict potential in case of any successful attempts to raise subjectivity of the Russian national minorities in different countries. It is particularly seen when they are synthesized and combined with the elements of various complicated character, like a Russian language issue, territorial problems (autonomous or separatist attitude and trends, regionalism on the background of the Russian minority institutionalization etc.). That is why it is impossible to isolate unified resolution mechanisms of the Russian question in different countries of the former Soviet Union, and it is advisable to consider thoroughly all existing tendencies inherent in each country.

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