Russian Given Names: Their Pronunciation, Meaning, and Frequency

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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

*Names* 53:1&2 (March & June 2005):49-77  
ISSN:0027-7738  
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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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Etymology</th>
<th>Listing</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benson</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Probably all Russian names</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Names in Russian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunkling</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanks</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingraham</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Half</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Half</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tikhonov</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>All Russian</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>In Russian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbeguin</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>A bit</td>
<td>Scattered</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Some surname info helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Ja’fari</td>
<td>Some help</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Some Arabic names in data</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Some Arabic help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beider</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Jewish names</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Jewish names</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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. Vladimir, 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

We wish to acknowledge the tremendous contribution of Richard F. Sheil for his work in showing the International Phonetic Association (IPA) spelling and his work in preparing the CD; the advice and comments of Marwan Elnasser, Christ Gaetanos, Naim Sefein (Emeritus), and Fawzi Yaqub (Emeritus), State University of New York, Fredonia; Rasul Tursun, Tashkent State Economic University of Uzbekistan; Juliya Woodbury, Dunkirk, New York; and Ladislav Zgusta, Center for Advanced Study, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Professor Daniel W. Berggren of the Communication Department was most helpful in preparing the CD.

We also wish to thank the anonymous reviewers for their time, corrections, suggestions, and insights.

The CD showing the pronunciation of the names accompanies this article. For an additional copy, contact: lawson@fredonia.edu

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.** Āvraəm (m) ah-BRAHM, ah-VRAHM [ə-brəm ə-ˈvram] Yiddish form of Abraham ‘father of a multitude.’ Bible, Genesis. First of the Patriarchs. {Abrasha}**.

**Adskhan** Ādskhan (m) ahd-SKAN, [əd-ˈʃkan]. Turkic ‘khan, knight, prince’*

**Afanasyi** Āfanəsiyı (m) ah-fa-NAH-see, [ə-fə-ˈno-si] < Greek, ‘immortal.’ {Afonya}*.  

**Agaphya** Āgaφya (f) ah-GAH-fya [ə-ˈgo-fja] from Greek agápe ‘brotherly love’, ‘good, noble person’*.  

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

**Agrapena** Āgrapena (f) ah-grah-PYEH-nah [ə-grə-ˈpje-nə]. Variant of Agrippina (see below)*.

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

**Aleftina** Ālɛfˈtina (f) ah-lyef-TEE-nah [ə-ˈlef-ˈti-nə]. Arabic ‘very
beautiful.‘ {Alya, Aliona}**.


Alexandra Александра (f) ah-lyek-SAN-drah [ə-ʌːk-ˈsan-dra]. Feminine form of Alexander. {Sasha, Sashenka, Aleksa, Sashenka, Shura, Shurik, Shurka, Shurtk, Shurochka}****.

Ali Али (m) AH-lee [ə-li] < Arabic, ‘the highest.’**.

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

Alina Алина (f) ah-LEE-nah [ə-ˈli-na]. A form of Adelaide which itself is a French form of Old German Adelheit, ‘nobility’ {Alinuchka, Alya}*.

Alla Алла (f) AHL-la [ˈul-la]. 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, Alusya}**.


Anatoliy, Anatoly, Anatolyi Анатолий (m) ah-nah-TOH-lee [ə-na-ˈto-li] < Greek anatólē ‘sunrise, east, dawn.’
Andrey Андрей (m) Ahn-DRAY [ahn-'dray] < Greek andreios 'brave, manly'. {Andreyka, Andron, Andrukh, Andryusha, Andryushka, Andryushen'ka, Drunya}***.

Anfisa Анфиса (f) Ahn-FEE-sah [ahn-'fi-sah] < Greek anthos 'flower' {Anya, Fisa}*. 

Anna Анна (f) Ahn-nah [ahn-nah] < Greek form of < Hebrew hannah '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 [ahn-ton]. Russian form of Antony, Anthony < Latin Antônios name of an old Roman family. Meaning uncertain. {Antosha, Antoshen'ka}**.

Antonina Антонина (f) Ahn-tah-NEE-nah, ahn-toh-NEE-nah [ahn-to-'ni-nah], [ahn-to-'ni-no]. Feminine form of Anton {Anton, Anya, Tonechka, Ton'ka, Tonya, Tosik, Tosya}***.

Arif Ариф (m) Ah-RIF [a-'rif]. Arabic 'wise, knowledgeable.'*

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

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

Arsentiy Арсентий (m) Ahr-SEH-tee [ahr-'sjen-ti]. Variant of Arseniy < Greek Arsenios 'brave, courageous'. Popularity due to St. Arsenius the Great, 5th century saint. {Arsya}*.

Artemiy Артемий (m) Ahr-TYEH-mee [ahr-'tjeh-mee] . Russian derivation < Greek Artemis, goddess of the moon and hunting, equivalent to the Roman Diana. 4th century saint. {Tyoma}**.
Artyom Артем (m) ahr-TYOHM [ar-'tjom]. See: Artemiy above. {Tuoma, Tyoma}**

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

Avgusta Августа (f) ahv-GUH-stah [av-‘gu-sta]. Feminine form of Latin Augustus ‘venerable, grand.’*

Bella Бэла (f) BEHL-la [‘bel-la]. Short form of Spanish Isabella, which itself is derived from the Hebrew elishva ‘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-REESS [bo-‘ris]. Two possible sources: (1) < Tartar Bogoris, ‘small’ or (2) Slavonic bor, ‘battle.’ Name of a 10th century Russian saint. {Bob, Borenka, Borenok, Borik, Borisya, Borya, Boryushka}**.

Bronislava Бронислава (f) brah-nee-SLAH-vah [bru-ni-‘sla-va]. 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 [da-ni-‘il] < Hebrew Daniel ‘God is my judge.’ {Danya, Danyasha, Den, Dunyasha, Zaika}**.

Dar’iya, Dar’ya, Darya Дарья (f) DAH-ryah [‘da-rja] < Greek dariaíos from the name of the Persian King Darius. {Danya, Daryusha, Dasha, Dashik}**.

David Давид (m) dah-VEED [‘da-vid] < Hebrew ‘beloved.’ {Gusya}*

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

Dinara Динара (f) dee-NAH-rah [di-‘na-ra] < Arabic dinar (Arab monetary unit). By extension can be understood as ‘wealthy.’ {Dina, Dinarik, Dinochka}*. 
Dimitryi Димитрий (m) dee-MEET-ree [dɪˈmit-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 [jeˈfim]. Short form of Euphemios < Greek eúphemos ‘of good voice, fair speech.’ [Fima]**.


Egor Игорь (m) YEH-goehr [ˈje-gor]. Russian form of Scandinavian ðyr ‘bow’ + herr ‘warrior = ‘archer.’ [Garik, Igoryok, Igoryuk]*.

Ekaterina Екатерина (f) yeh-ka-tyeh-REE-nah [je-kaˈtje-rɪ-nə]. Russian form < Greek. Clear etymology not known. However, the name has been associated by folklore etymology with the Greek katheros, ‘pure.’ 4th century saint of this name martyred in Alexandria. [Katy, Katyenˈka, Katyusha, Katyushka, Katyushenˈka, Katrinushka, Katyookha, Ket, Kitty]**.

Elfrida Эльфрида (f) yelˈFREE-dah [jɛlˈfri-da](pronunciation not certain). Old English elements elf ‘elf, supernatural being’ + frid, ‘strength.’ [Elya]*.

Elena Елена (f) yeh-LYEH-nah [jeˈle-na] < 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 [je-liˈzə-ˈvjə-tə] < Hebrew elishēva ‘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, Lisanˈka, Lizaveta, Lizochka, Lusechka]**.

Emmanuil Эммануил (m) eh-mah-noo-EEL [e-ma-nuˈil] < Hebrew Ee-mah-noo ehl (imanu-êl)’God is with us.’ [Monya]*.
Erik Эрик (m) YEH-reek ['je-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 [er-'nest], EHR-nest ['er-nest]. 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 [jev-da-'ki-ya]; yehv-DAW-kyah [jev-'da-kja] < Greek, eû 'good, well' + dôxâ '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-'dje-kja] < Greek eû 'well' + genês '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 [jev-'dje-ni-ja] See: Evgeniy (above). {Genya, Zhenya, Zhenechka, Zheshka}***.

Faina Фаина (f) fah-EE-nah [fo-'i-na]. Yiddishised form of East Slavic Fanya, ultimately < Greek stêphanos crown. {Faya}*

Feliks Феликс (m) FYEH-leefks ['fje-liksk] < 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 [fje-ak-'tis-ta] < Greek theōs 'God' + ktistēs 'founder, creator', 'God is the creator.' {Fenia}*

Fyodor Фёдор (m) FYAW-dawr ['fjo-dor] < Greek theōs 'God' + dōron 'gift', 'God's gift.' {Faya, Feden'ka, Fedya, Vadik}**.
Galina Галина (f) gah-LEE-nah [ga-ˈli-na]. Uncertain origin. One interpretation is that it is a form of Elena. Another is that it is from the Greek galēne ‘calm’. [Galechka, Galinka, Galka, Galochka, Galchonok, Galusha, Galya]**.

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

Gavriil Гавриил (m) gahv-ree-EEL [gav-ri-'il]. Russian form of Hebrew Gavriel gaohri'el, 'God is my strength.' [Ganya]*.

Gennady, Gennadiy Геннадий (m) gyehn-NAH-deey [gjen-ˈno-di]. Meaning and origin uncertain. Hanks and Hodges (130-131) think the Greek Gennadios may come from a derivative of names like Diogenes or Hermogenes. We tend to think it more likely it is derived from the Greek gennaīos ‘noble, high-born.’ Saint's name. [Gena, Gesha, Genulya, Genya, Gnochka]**.

Genya Гена (f) GYEHN-yah ['gje-na]. Form of Gennady*

Georgiy Георгий (m) gyeh-AWR-geey [gje-ˈɔr-gij] < Greek geōrgós ‘farmer.’ Name of several early saints. [Garya, Garik, Gasha, Zhora, Zhorik]**.

German Герман (m) GYEHR-mahn ['ɡɪər-mən] < German Hermann composed of hari, heri ‘army’ + man ‘man’ = ‘army man, soldier’ [Gera]**.


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

Gultchara Гъльчарах (f) gool-TSCHA-rah [gul-ˈtʃɔ-ra]. Meaning unknown*.

Gyena Хьена (f) GYEH-nah ['gje-na]. Meaning unknown, pronunciation dubious*.

Helen, Helena. See: Elena, above.
Igor See: Egor, above.

Iliya, Illya, Illia Илья (m) EEL-yah [ˈɪl-ˈjɑ]<
Greek form of the Hebrew ēliyāhū ‘the Lord is my God.’
{Ilyushka, Iluka, Ilusha, Illushen'ka, Iluska, Lusya}**.

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

Inna Инна (f) EEN-nah [ˈɪn-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-ˈnjes-so].
Russian form of the Latin Agnēs < Greek ἀγνός ‘pure, chaste.’ St. Agnes was martyred in the 4th century. {Inna, Innulya, Innusya}*.


Iraida Ираида (f) eeh-rah-EE-dah [i-ˈɾa-ˈdɑ] < Arabic ‘the seeker.’ {Raya}*. 

Irina Ирина (f) eeh-REE-nah [i-ˈri-na] < 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-ˈsək]. Russian form of Hebrew yittshāk ‘he will laugh.’ Bible, Genesis, son of Abraham and Sarah born in their old age. {Isya}*.

Israel Израильт (Israel)(m) ee-zrah-EEL [i-zra-ˈɪl].
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-ˈvan]< Latin < Greek to Hebrew yōchānān ‘God is gracious.’ Bible, at least 9 figures
with that name and more with the Greek New Testament version, Ὀαννές. [Ivanko, Ivashechka, Vanek, Vanetchka, Vanya, Van’ka, Vanusha/Vanyusha/Vanushka, Vanyushechka]**.

**Julia.** See: Yulia, (below).

**Kapitolina** Капитолина (f) kah-pee-tah-LEE-nah [ka-pi-

-tu-'li-no]. 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** Катья (f) KAH-tyah [k-o-ti-o]. Affectionate form of Ekaterina**.

**Kira** Кира (f) KEE-ra [ki-ra] < feminine form of Kúros, ‘Cyrus.’ [Kirochka]**

**Kirill** Кирилл (m) kee-REE-EL [ki-ri-l] < Greek kūrios ‘lord, ruler.’ Name of the 9th century missionary who is credited with the Russian alphabet. [Kiryunchik, Kiryusha]**

**Klara** Клара (f) KLAH-ra [kl-a-ra] < Latin clārus ‘bright, shining, clear’ [Klarochka]**

**Klavdia, Klavdiya** Клавдия (f) KLAHV-dyah [klav-

**Konstantin** Константин (m) kahn-stahn-TEEN [kon-ston-
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-need] Appears to be derived from the Greek Κρόνος ‘Cronus, or Saturn’. Probably associated with St. Kronides, a 3rd century martyr. [Kronya]**
Ksenia, Kseniya Ксения (f) KSYEH-nyah ['kse-nya] < Greek xenia
‘hospitality.’ [Ksyusha]**.

Larisa Лариса (f) lah-REE-sah [la-'ri-sa]. Origin not clear.
Name of a Greek martyr venerated by the Orthodox Church. [Lara, Lora, Larochka, Lialya]**.

Lazar Лазарь (m) LAH-zar ['la-zar] < Hebrew < Řli'êzer
‘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 ['li-na]. Short form of Elena (See: above). Used as an independent name. [Lusya]*.

Leonid Леонид (m) lyeh-ah-NEED [le-en-aid] < Greek
Leontodés, ‘like a lion.’ Name of two Orthodox saints.
[Lenya, Lyokha, Lyonetska, Lyon'chik]**.

Lev Лев (m) LYEHV [le-v] < Greek leôn ‘lion.’ Name of several popes. Used by Jews as a kinnui (link name) for Yehuda (Judah). [Lyonya, Lyova, Lyoyushka]**.


Liká Лика (f) LEEH-kah ['li ka]. Combined form of Lydia and Katherine. [Likunya, Likusya]*.

Liliya, Lilya Лия (f) LEEH-lyah ['li-lya] < Latin lilium ‘lily’. [Lilechka, Lilya]**.

Lina Лина (f) LEEH-nah ['li-na]. Affectionate form of names with the suffix -lina such as Ekaterina, Elena, or Kristina*.

Lolita Лолита (f) lah-LEE-tah [lo-'li-ta]. Short form of Dolores < Spanish cognate, ‘sorrows’, one of the titles of the Virgin Mary. [Lola]*.

Lubov Любовь (f) lyoo-BOF [lu-'bof] ‘love.’ Loan translation from the original Greek agaþe. See: Agaphya
(above). [Luba, Lubochka, Luban’ka, Lubushka, Lyubasha]**.

**Ludmila** Людмила (f) lyud-MEE-lah [ljud-’mi-la] < 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-’kjer-ja] < Latin lux ‘light’? [Lusha]*.

**Magomed** Магомед (m) mah-GAH-myeh [ma-’gu-mjet]. 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 ['ma-ja] < 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 [mok-’sim]. Short form of Maksimilian (Maximilian) < Latin maximus, ‘the greatest.’ Another root is that it is the blending of Maximus and Aemiliánus (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? ['man-dzai] Pronunciation uncertain, meaning unknown*.

**Marek** Марек (m) MAH-rek ['ma-rek]. Russian form of Mark < Latin Mārs ‘war-like.’ New Testament author of the Gospel that bears his name. [Marka, Marik, Marocha]*.

**Margarita** Маргарита (f) mar-gah-REE-tah [mar-ga-’ri-ta] < Greek margaron ‘pearl’. [Margo, Rima, Rita, Ritchka]**.

**Maria, Mariya** Мария (f) MAHR-yah ['mor-ja], mah-REE-yah [ma-’ri-jə]. Russian form of Mary < Hebrew Mirjām, meaning uncertain. New Testament, mother of Jesus. [Manya, Manyash, Mari, Marochka, Marusen’ka,
Mariusya, Masha, Mashen'ka, Mashka, Mashulya, Mukha, Musya, Musienka***.

Mariam Мариям (f) mahr-YAHM [mər-ˈjɑːm] < Hebrew Miryām meaning uncertain. Bible, sister of Moses and Aaron. [Masha]*.

Marina Марина (f) mahr-REE-nah [mə-ˈri-nə]. Possibly derived from Latin Martius. 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]**.


Martemyan Мартемьян (m) mahr-teem-YAHN [mər-tim-ˈjon]*. 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-xɑː-ˈil] < 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-tru-ˈfan] < Greek Mētropōphanēs < méter ‘mother’ + phainein ‘to show, appear.’ Meaning uncertain. Early bishop. {Mitrosha}.*


Musa Муза (f) MOO-sah, MOO-zah [ˈmu-sɑ], [ˈmu-zɑ] < Greek mousa ‘muse’**.

Nadezhda Надежда (f) nah-DYEZH-dah [na-ˈdʲeʐ-dɑ] ‘hope.’ Name of Lenin’s wife. {Dadenka, Naden’ka,
Nadulya, Nadusha, Nadya, Nadyusha, Nadyusho, Nadyuska, Nadyusheń’ka***.

Natalia, Nataliya, Natalya, Nataliya Наталия (f) nah-TAL-yah [na-ˈtə-ʃə] < Late Latin < Natália < natális 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-tə] < Greek Anikētōs ‘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 “Iye” or “lie”) [ni-ko-ˈlai] 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, Nikolent’ka, Nikolka, Nikusya}***.

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

Oksana Оксана (f) ahk-SA-nah [ək-ˈsə-na] < Greek xenia ‘hospitality’*.

Oleg Олег (m) ah-LYE-G [ə-ˈlɛɡ]. 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 [ˈol-gə]. 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, Olent’ka, Olezhek, Olgunya, Olgusha, Olgushka, Olka, Olushka, Olya}***.
Pavel Павел (m) PAH-vgel [‘pa-vgel]. Russian form of Latin paulus ‘small.’ New Testament name associated with St. Paul. {Pasha, Pashka, Pashulya, Pava, Pavlik, Pavlusha, Pavlushka}**.


Philip Филипп (m) fee-LEEP [fi-lip] < Greek philos ‘love’ + (h)ippos ‘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 [po-lin-nah]. Form of Latin paulus. See: Pavel, above. {Pol’en’ka, Polinochka, Polya}**.

Praskovia, Praskovya Прасковья (f) prahs-KAVV-yah [pras’kav-ya] < Greek prosdokétos, ‘expected.’ {Pana, Pasha, Parasha, Parashka}**.


Prokopij Прокопий (m) prah-KAW-fee [pra-’kaw-fi]. Russian form of Prokopij < Greek Prokopios < prokóptein ‘success, advance.’ 4th century Greek saint. {Pronya}*


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

Rafael, (Raphael) Рафаил (m)rah-fah-EHL [ra-fa’el] < Hebrew repḥā’el ‘God has healed.’ Name of the angel of healing. Also, the name of a Levite in I Chronicles. {Raph, Rapho}*. 
Ra‘uf Расф (m) RAH-oof ['rouf]. Arabic ra‘ūf ‘compassionate, merciful.’*
Rimma Римма (f) REEM-mah ['rim-ma]. A feminine form of Roman. See: Roman (below). [Rimka]**.
Robert Роберт (m) RAW-bert ['rɔ-bert]. English < French < German hroth ‘fame’ + berth ‘bright.’ [Rob]*.
Roman Роман (m) raw-MAHN [rɔ-'man] < Latin Rōmānus ‘Roman.’ Name of several early saints. [Roma, Romka]**.
Roza Роза (f) RAW-zah ['rɔ-Za] < Latin rōsā ‘rose’**.
Rostislav Ростислав (m) rahs-tis-LAHV, rahs-tis-LAHF [ras-tis-'lav], [ras-tis-'laf] < Old Slavonic rosts ‘usurp’ + slav ‘glory.’ [Slava]*.
Ruslan Руслан (m) roos-LAHN [rus-'lan]. Meaning unknown. Name of a character in Alexander Pushkin’s poem ‘Ruslan and Ludmila’ [Rusya]*.
Rustam Рустам (m) ROOS-tyehm ['rus-tjem] < 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.”
Samuil Самуил (Samuel)(m) sah-moo-EEL [sa-mu-'iI] < Hebrew shmï‘êl ‘God heard’ or ‘His name is God’**.
Seda Седа (f) SYEH-dah ['sjè-da]. Armenian ‘spirit of the forest’*.
Serafima Серафима (f) syeh-rah-FEE-mah [sje-ra-ˈfi-ma] < Hebrew seraphim 'burning ones' originally referring to the angels guarding the throne of God. [Fima]*.

Sergey, Sergei Серге́й (m) sehr-GAY [seṟ-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.


Stalina Сталина (f) stah-LEE-nah [stəˈli-nə]. Feminine form of Stalin < stal ‘steel.’ Influenced by Joseph Stalin whose original name was Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili*.

Stanislav Станислав (m) stah-nee-SLAHV [stə-niˈsləv], stah-nee-SLAHF [stə-niˈsləf] Slavic stan ‘government’ + slav ‘glory’ = ‘glorious government.’ St. Stanislaus (Polish form), 11th century saint, bishop of Cracow. [Slava, Stas, Stasik]**


Svyatoslav Святослав (m) sfyah-tah-SLAHF [sfjə-tə-ˈslaf] < Old Slavonic svyanto ‘bright’ + slav ‘glory.’ [Slava]*.
Taisiya Тания (f) tah-EE-syah [tɑ-ˈi-sja] . Russian form of the Greek Thēsssa, 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-ˈma-rə] . Russian form of the Hebrew Tāmārā ‘date palm tree.’ [Tamarochka, Toma, Tomik, Tomochka]***.

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


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-ˈljen-ˈtin] < Latin valens ‘healthy. Name of a 3rd century Roman martyr. [Valik, Valen’ka, Valyusha]**.

Valentina Валентина (f) vah-lyehn-TEE-nah [vɑ-ˈljen-ˈti-nə]. Feminine form of Valentin above. [Valya, Valyechka, Valyusha, Valy]*.

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

Valeria, Valerian Валерия, Валериан (f) vah-LYEHR-yah [vɑ-ˈlje-ɾə], vah-lyehr-YAHN [vɑ-ˈlje-ɾən] Feminine
form of Valery, above. {Alya, Lera, Lerochka, Vaka}**.

**Varnaz** Варна́з (m) vahr-NAZ [vər-ˈnaːz]. Respondent reports that it is an Armenian name meaning ‘victor’*.

**Varvara** Варвара (f) VAHR-vah-rah [ˈvər-vo-ra] < Greek bárbaros ‘not Greek, barbarian, foreign.’ {Varya}*.

**Vasilisa** Василица (f) vah-see-LEE-sah [və-ˈsi-li-sə]. Feminine form of Vasily*.

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

**Valerian** Валерьян (m) vah-LYEH-ryahn [va-ˈle-ˈrjon]. Variant of Valery, above. {Valerik, Valya}**.

**Veniamin** Вениамин (m) veh-nyah-MEEN [ve-ˈni-ˈmin] < Hebrew bênyâmên ‘son of my right hand.’ Bible. 12th son of Jacob. {Venichka, Ven’ka, Venya, Vinik}**.

**Vera** Вера (f) vyeh-RAH [ˈve-ra] ‘faith. {Veranchik, Verochka, Verus’ka, Verunchek, Verunchik, Verusya, Verunchik, Veri, Verik, Verochka}***.

**Veronika** Вероника (f) vyeh-RAH-nee-kah [ˈve-ra-ni-ka]. 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** Ви́ктор (m) VEE-ktaHR [vɪktər] < Latin victor ‘conqueror.’ {Vik, Viten’ka, Vitunchik, Vitunya, Vitusha, Vitusya, Vitya, Vityok}**.

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

**Vilen** Вилен (m) vee-LYEHN [vi-ˈleen]. Combination of letters from Vladimir Illyich Lenin {Vilya}*.
Violetta Виолетта (f) vee-lyaw-LYEH-tah [vi-əl-ət-ə] < Old French violette < Late Latin violetta, diminutive of viola 'violet.' [Veta]*.

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

Vladlen Владлен (m) vlahd-LYEN [vlad-lyen] < combination of letters from Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. [Valya, Valechka]*.

Vladimir Владимир (m) vlah-DEE-mir [vlah-di-mir], vlah-dee-MIR [vlah-di-mir] < 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 [vlah-di-slafl] < Old Slavonic volod 'rule' + slav 'glorious.' Slava, Slavik, Vladik]*.

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

Vsevolod Всеволод (m) fsyeh-vah-LAWD [fse-vo-lod] < Old Slavonic use 'all' + volod 'rule.' [Seva, Sevik, Sevka]**.

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

Yakov Иаков (Jacob) (m) YAH-kuhf [ˈja-kaf] < Hebrew yāhākkōw '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-ʃer]. The bearer of the name, a Muslim Tartar, explained that it means 'will live.' [Yasha, Yashenka]*.

Yulia, Yuliya, Yulya Юлия (f) YOO-lyah [ˈju-lya] < Latin, Roman clan name. [Yul’ka, Yulanka, Yulechka, Yulyasha]**.
Yuri, Yury Юрий (m) YOO-reey ['ju-rij] < Greek geòrgós 'farmer.' [Yurasha, Yurik, Yurka, Yuro, Yurok, Yurock, Yurochka]*

Zakhra Захра (f) ZAKH-rah ['zax-ra]. Arabic Zahrah 'flower'.

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

Zhanna Жанна (f) ZHAHN-nah ['zan-na]. Short form of Zuzanna? [Zhannochka]*. ZH as z in azure.

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

Zoya За̀я (f) ZAW-yah ['zò-ja] < Greek zòē 'life.' [Zoin'ka, Zoin'ka, Zoyukha, Zoyushka]**.

References


