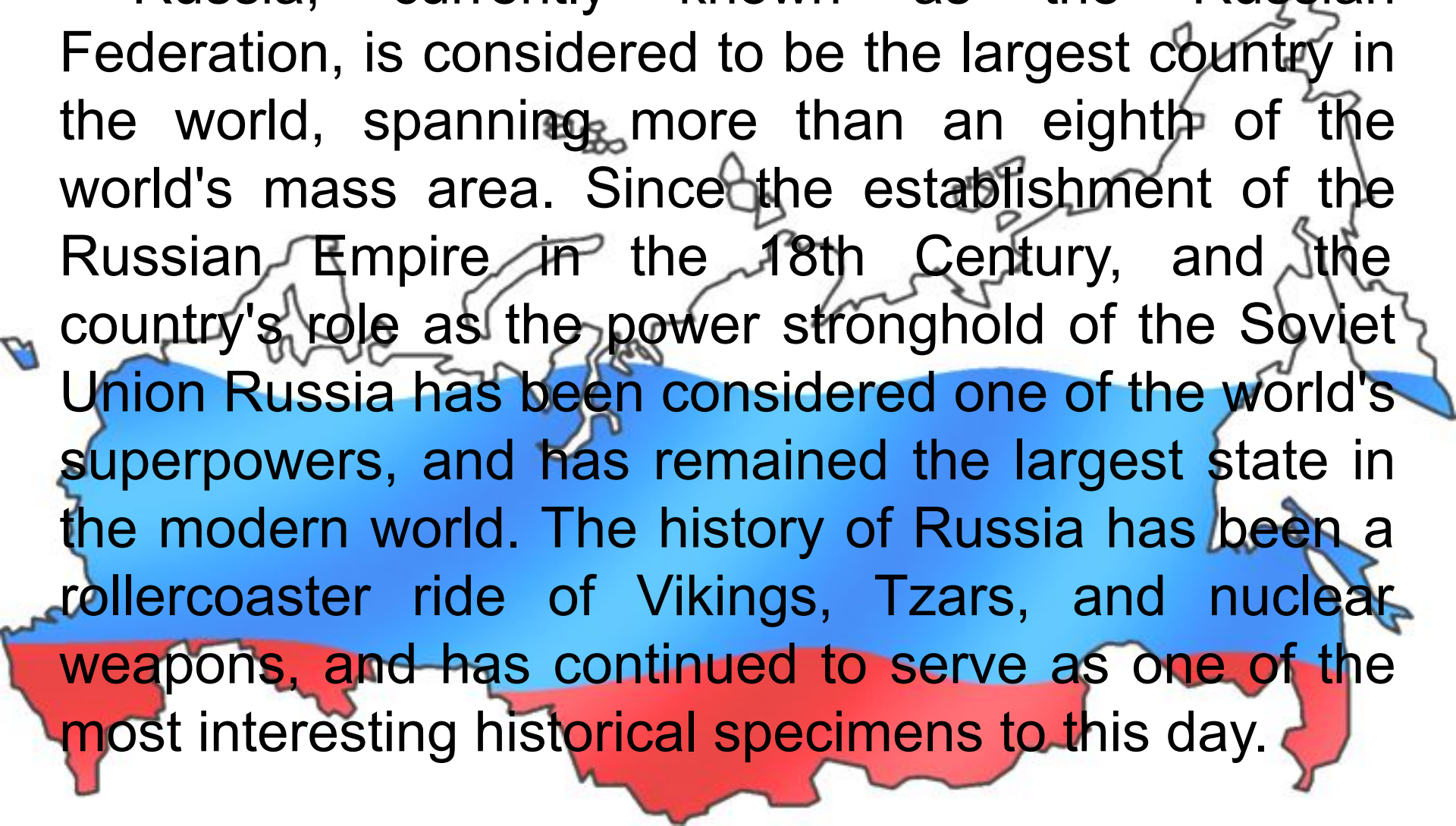




Russia, currently known as the Russian Federation, is considered to be the largest country in the world, spanning more than an eighth of the world's mass area. Since the establishment of the Russian Empire in the 18th Century, and the country's role as the power stronghold of the Soviet Union Russia has been considered one of the world's superpowers, and has remained the largest state in the modern world. The history of Russia has been a rollercoaster ride of Vikings, Tzars, and nuclear weapons, and has continued to serve as one of the most interesting historical specimens to this day.





Russia's capital city is Moscow. Moscow is the largest city in all of Europe, and it is well known for its natural landmarks, and its breathtaking architecture.

THE NEW 7 WONDERS OF THE WORLD

The New7Wonders organization is happy to announce the following 7 candidates have been elected to represent global heritage throughout history.



Chichén Itzá, Mexico



Christ Redeemer, Brazil



The Great Wall, China



Machu Picchu, Peru



Petra, Jordan



The Roman Colosseum, Italy



The Taj Mahal, India

As a response to Europe's "Seven Wonders of the World" list, which didn't include any Russian sights, Russia organized a national contest to select the seven most beautiful destinations the country has to offer.



MAREK DUCHOWSKI
NA FOUNTAIN



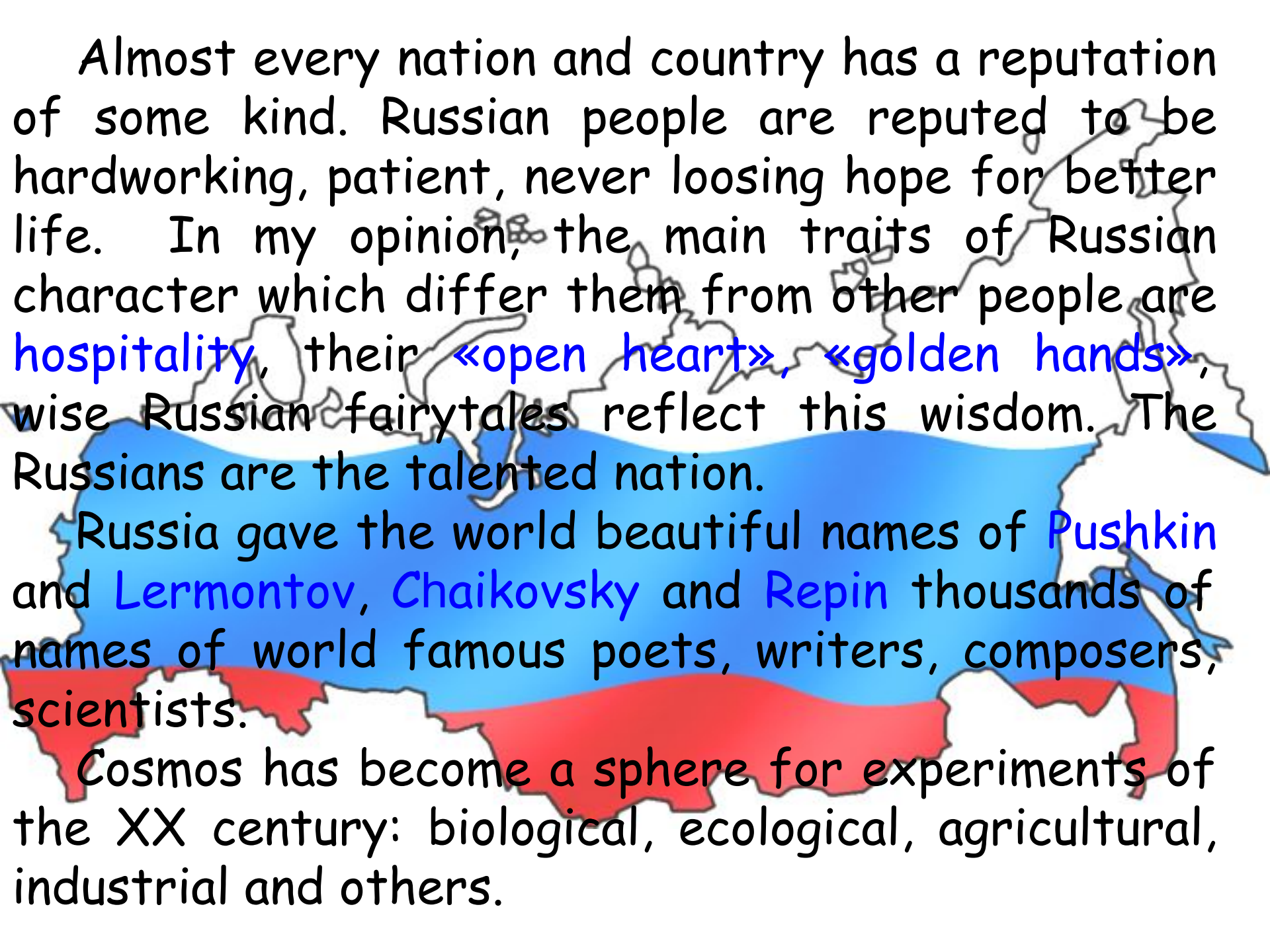












Almost every nation and country has a reputation of some kind. Russian people are reputed to be hardworking, patient, never losing hope for better life. In my opinion, the main traits of Russian character which differ them from other people are **hospitality**, their «**open heart**», «**golden hands**», wise Russian fairytales reflect this wisdom. The Russians are the talented nation.

Russia gave the world beautiful names of **Pushkin** and **Lermontov**, **Chaikovsky** and **Repin** thousands of names of world famous poets, writers, composers, scientists.

Cosmos has become a sphere for experiments of the XX century: biological, ecological, agricultural, industrial and others.



Everybody remembers outstanding scientists of our country: **K. Tsiolkovsky**, **S. Korolev** and other cosmos scientists who studied the Cosmos and gave the world the first flight round our dear and beautiful earth. We all know the courageous hero — **Yury Gagarin**. Glory to all of them dead and living!

I believe Russia is a unique country: it does not belong to Europe and is not considered part of Asia. Some Russian traditions date back to pagan time and there are some, which are brand new. Russia influenced traditions of other nations, but at the same time absorbed a lot of their traditions.

I'd like to speak about the most important ones that well demonstrate the country's peculiarity.



On the 13th of January the Russians celebrate Old New Year. A very popular holiday in memory of the old calendar.

The holiday confusion is almost a century old. In czarist times, Christmas was the traditional family holiday, celebrated on the 25th of December. All this time Russia lived according to the Julian calendar, conceived by Caesar, while Europe has long since switched to the Gregorian calendar. By 1918 the difference between two calendars was about fourteen days. In 1918 the new Soviet government decided to modernize and took the country forward 14 days at once, making the 25th of December into January 7th and January 1st into January 14th.



My native town is Belgorod.



The nature and people inhabiting our Belgorodian land are given the most important thing- **faith**. It's faith that creates a harmony with the "world of the spirit". It's faith that makes us patient and understanding, the qualities which helped us to survive in the most hard times of the Great Patriotic War when Belgorod was twice occupied by the Germans and it was completely destroyed. In fact before the war the population of Belgorod was about 34000 people and only 150 people left after the battles of July- August 1943. In honor of the liberation of the cities of Belgorod and Orel the first salute was fired in Moscow. Russian nature, spirit and genius come together in the greatest people of our land.



V. Shukhov was one of them. He was the world important scientist and engineer. The Technological Academy was named in honour of him. Belgorod was also the home of the first Russian actor **M. Shchepkin**. He is memorialized at the Shchepkin Drama Theatre.

Belgorod is a great sports center. The Belgorodians are very proud of their sportsmen, some of them are world-famed, such as Olympic Gymnastics champion **Svetlana Khorkina**, volleyball team "**Lokomotive-Belgorie**", football team "**Salut Energiya**" and many others.

Belgorod has spent many years waiting for your visit. Visit us first and you'll enjoy the wonders of Beigorod!



All in all, Russia is a country that does not leave much to be desired. Make haste everyone! And discover one of the world's most astonishing locations! A picture paints a thousand words!