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## FORGOTTEN PAGES: GERMAN-RUSSIAN SAGA OF THE GROT FAMILY

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### Summary

The present article represents the history of the foreigners in Russia on the example of four generations of the Grot family. Joachim Grot, the first generation in Russia, was born in Plön, a small city in Holstein. He was educated at the university of Jena and finally found himself as a pastor of a St. Catherine Lutheran church in St. Petersburg. His son, Karl, was educated as Lutheran Russian of the German origin and became a part of the Russian administrative elite. Representative of the third generation of the Grot family, Yakov Grot, a famous linguist, historian of the Russian literature and history, identified himself as a Russian and stood on the side of Russophiles in the Russian Academy of Sciences. His both sons, Nikolai and Konstantin, became prophets of the Slavic literature and philosophy. Despite their self-identifications they still considered as foreigners who should fulfill cultural needs of the Russian nobility as mediators between Eastern and Western cultures.

**Key Words:** Yakov Grot, Konstantin Grot, Nikolai Grot, Germans in Russia, Slavic Literature and Philosophy, reign of Catherine the Great, Russian Slavistics.

Since the reign of Peter the Great the Russians were assured that knowledge and troubles in equal parts come from foreigners who were known under the collective name: the Germans. Even two centuries later while arguing on structure and content of Brockhaus and Efron *Encyclopedic Dictionary*, numerous supporters of the pure Russian character of the *Dictionary* returned to the same words that became a well-known Russian proverb: *What Helps the German Kills the Russian*.

Foreigners arriving to Russia from bordering German lands settled mostly in Russian guberniyas' central cities and both capitals, Moscow and Saint Petersburg. They were attracted by endless commercial possibilities and career opportunities which were impossible in their native lands.

Some of them were invited by tsarist officials and even rulers themselves because of their special knowledge in crafts, commerce, trade, medicine, international relations and western culture. They became a living bridge that connected Russia with the West and with their help the borders of the Eastern Europe were expanded till the Ural mountains.

One of these distinguished and extremely interesting examples is a story of the Grot family. Most Russian and Western scholars are familiar with Yakov Grot, a vice-president of the Russian Imperial Academy of Sciences, full professor, philologist, historian, researcher of the history of literature and educator. His interests stretched from history of gymnastics to philosophy, history and linguistics. One can get the most clear and overwhelming answer about the usefulness of gymnastics exercises for one's health, about history of physical education in Russia, different methods and methodic, recommended exercises and persons who became pioneers of physical education in Russia from the essay of Yakov Grot *Gymnastics in Petersburg* (Grot, 1859).

Russian and Soviet encyclopedia provide incomplete and sometimes incorrect information about Yakov Grot and his family but his contribution to Russian philology and literature is mentioned everywhere. His editing and commentaries to the collected works of G.R.Derzhavin in nine volumes became a standard of academic writing for generations of Soviet and Western philologists and bibliographers (Bol'shaiia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, 1935; Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar', n.y.; Bol'shaiia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, 1952).

### **Family background**

Yakov Grot grandfather, Joachim (Efim) Christian Grot was born in Plön, a tiny city in Holstein, in June 19, 1733. Little known about his family: his father served as an attorney at the court of the local duke and his mother was a daughter of a local pastor Joachim Schmitt. Joachim Grot began his education in Hamburg at private school of E. Albert. This particular school was considered as one of the best private institutions for further court diplomats and put a special emphasize on the teaching of ancient and modern languages such as Latin, Greek, Hebrew and French. At the age of 18 according to recommendation of his uncle, who was employed as a pastor at the Danish Embassy in Hamburg, he decided to continue his education at the university of Jena. There he took an active part in the courses on philosophy, mathematics, rhetoric, natural sciences, history of science, theology, history of church, Hebrew and Kameralwissenschaft. This mixture represented quite a strange choice for the person who supposed to choose a religious career. In 1753 Joachim Grot completed his education, returned to Holstein and settled in Kiel. There were not numerous vacant positions available even for educated persons, so he decided to apply for a position of a pastor in Königsberg. He got the position quite easily with the help of his uncle Schmitt in 1756. Among his intimate friend's circle, he mentioned the names of Immanuel Kant, then a privatdozent at the University of Königsberg and a well-known lawyer and satiric writer Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel. In 1757 he found himself in the middle of political events and territorial rearrangements of the Seven Years' war. Russian army invades Eastern Prussia and in 1758 enters Königsberg. This war episode changed completely future plans and the whole life of young and ambitious pastor. Among new Russian authorities there were several German-Russian aristocratic families which shown interest in his service. Joachim Grot was recommended to governor-general of the city baron Nikolai Andreevich Korf as a perfect candidate for a family pastor. As a matter of fact he was less interested in fulfilling his pastor's duty and soon became a private secretary of baron Korf. While talking with his employer during long winter evenings Joachim Grot came to conclusion that Russia could provide him with more opportunities in career development comparing to his German

Motherland and he decided to take the chance. In 1760 he was recommended as a private tutor for children of baroness Korf, a distant relative of the general, who lived in Saint Petersburg and searched for a good and qualified German teacher.

There was a big community of Germans in Saint Petersburg, no wonder that Joachim Grot soon found himself as one of its active members. After a four-year service as a private teacher, he was proposed a duty of a pastor at the Lutheran church in Vasil'evsky island in the name of the local community. He accepted the post and kept it till his death in 1799. Joachim Grot did a lot to increase a number of parish members, successfully raised money for a new church building and established a school for the children of community members. The church was named after St. Catherine in honor of the Highest patroness of the German community of Saint Petersburg Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup>. He was interested in history of religious tolerance and Lutheran churches in Russia in general and in Saint Petersburg in particular. His scientific interest found its practical realization in writing of three-volume history of Evangelical-Lutheran churches and religious tolerance in Russia (Grot, 2012).

Joachim Grot provided not only religious needs of the community but took care of its prosperity and high standard of life. He decided to establish the Insurance Society on the occasion of unexpected death, the first Insurance society in Russia at that time. The idea came to his mind after the tragic death of one of the parish members and necessity to raise money in order to provide a proper education for children of the diseased and financial support for his widow. The Society was established in 1775 and comprised about 550 members. The charter of the Society was published for times (editions of 1775, 1777, 1789 and 1794) in German, Russian and French languages (Grot, 1775). The activity of the Insurance Society came to its end with the death of Joachim Grot in 1799.

He was known of his distinguished rhetoric abilities and delivered sermons concerning the actual issues of the day such as importance of vaccination in case of smallpox. His sermon speeches and church hymns were published and deserved the attention of Catherine the Great, who awarded him with a Gold medal (*Allgemeine Deutsche Biographic*, 1879, p.756-757).

Joachim Grot was married twice. His first wife, Christine Engelhardt, was a daughter of Nikolai Fedorovich Engelhardt, a doctor of medicine and a director of the Infantry Hospital of Saint Petersburg, who settled in Russia at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. From this marriage Joachim Grot had two children, a son Karl and a daughter Amalia. After the death of his first wife in 1785 he married again to M. Bucher, a prosperous childless widow.

His son, Karl Grot, a father of Yakov Grot, was a talented boy who got an excellent home education. As a young boy he was chosen by the Empress Catherine the Great to be a fellow-companion in mutual games and study of her grandchildren the Grand dukes Alexander and Constantine. Karl Grot graduated from the Petropavlovsk Male Lutheran School with a Big Gold medal and was accepted as a student to the Imperial Academy of Sciences (*Russkii Biograficheskii Slovar'*, 1997, p.527). He worked as a head of the department at the Ministry of State Property under the supervision of the Count Vladimir Grigor'evich Orlov till his premature death in 1817 at the age of 46 leaving his wife with three small children, sons Yakov and Konstantin and a daughter Roza.

### **Yakov Grot - biographical details**

Yakov Grot was born in Saint Petersburg on December 15, 1812. In his autobiographical remarks he intently pointed out that it was the final day of Napoleonic troop's presence on the territory of the Russian Empire (Grot, 1895, p.1-2). His mother was Carolina Ivanovna, nee Tsizmer, a sister of Yakov Ivanovich Tsizmer, who played an important role in Russo-French diplomatic

relation during the period of Napoleonic wars and was a trusted adjutant of Count N.P. Panin.

One of the important rules of the Grot family was a demand that children from their early ages must speak and write Russian. House servants and children's nurses were native Russian-speakers but still the first languages were German as well as French. In close family circle all three languages were spoken equally (Grot, 1899).

At the age of ten Yakov Grot was admitted to Lyceum primary school where he spent three following years. This arrangement was possible due to personal intervention of the tsar Alexander the 1<sup>st</sup> who kept good memoirs on Karl Grot and paid him tribute by taking care of his orphans. Only 25 distinguished primary school graduates were accepted for further study in Lyceum. Yakov Grot always stood out by his academic excellence and was the best pupil in his class. In 1826 at the age of 16 he began his study in Lyceum, where he spent six years. Later Yakov Grot repeatedly mentioned that he was not satisfied with the quality of Lyceum education which was wide and general but at the same time very superficial (Grot, 1895, p. 6-12). The most important memory from his Lyceum life were two brief meetings with Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin. He was so embarrassed to see him, that was able to say only several words of respect and gratitude to the great Russian poet. Yakov Grot graduated from Lyceum in June 1832 with the 9<sup>th</sup> Civil service rank and was recommended to service at the Committee of Ministers office where he worked under the supervision of baron Modest Andreevich Korf.

In 1834 Modest Andreevich Korf was appointed a State secretary of the Great Council. Yakov Grot helped him in his duties and was responsible for arrangement of preliminary Council materials which were prepared for the Council' members and the tsar himself. Summer months Grot spent with the Korf' family on their *dacha* (country-cottage) at Aptekarskii island and became like one of the family. Despite a hot attitude he did not find an interest in his duties and the only thing that he enjoyed a lot was baron Korf's rich library. While working for the Great Council, Yakov Grot decided to translate the poem *Mazeppa* written by Lord George Gordon Byron in 1819. The manuscript with the translation spent two years in a drawer of his working table till he plucks up all his courage to show it to Mikhail Danilovich Delarue, his Lyceum friend and a permanent habitué of Saint Petersburg literary saloons. The translation deserved a positive critic and was published in *Sovremennik* Magazine at the beginning of 1838. The translation of *Mazeppa* developed into a deep interest in Russian history and literature. A meeting with Petr Aleksandrovich Pletnev, the editor in chief of *Sovremennik* and at the same time a rector of Saint Petersburg university, had a decisive influence upon the future of Yakov Grot.

During one of the meetings of a chosen literary circle at Pletnev's house, he met Count Robert Ivanovich Rehbinder (Robert Henrik Rehbinder), then the secretary of State of the Grand Duchy of Finland and one of the highest officials of the Grand Duchy. Count Rehbinder proposed him the duty of official for special duties at the secretary of State of the Grand Duchy of Finland and later to take an appointment as a chief Inspector on implementation the teaching of the Russian language and literature in Finland. The die was cast, and Yakov Grot left his administrative position with a possibility to develop an outstanding state career in favor of an academic one.

For Yakov Grot it was not a first meeting with Finland. In order to improve his fragile health, Yakov Grot for several years was a visitor of gymnastic institution of Gustav Gustavovich Pauli in Vasil'evskii island. There he became interested in Finnish culture and folklore and began studying Swedish. He even translated from Swedish into Russian a famous *Fritthjof's Saga* of Esaias Tegner. Grot decided to enrich his knowledge of Finnish mythology and folklore and improve his knowledge of Swedish. He travelled to Imatra and Helsingfors and was enormously impressed by severe Finnish

nature.

According to Count Rehbinder decision a chair of the Russian language, linguistics and history was established at the University of Helsingfors in March 1841. Yakov Grot became an ordinary professor of the chair in April of the same year and began his teaching since September. Some of his lectures and exams were in Latin but others he should deliver and hold in Swedish. Grot was very capable in studying of foreign languages since childhood and developed his own methodic of studying them. In Helsingfors he had plenty of time to study Finnish, Polish, Czech and other dialects of the Slavic languages (Grot, 1895, p. 38-40). In 1847-1848 he edited the *Complete Swedish-Russian dictionary* and published numerous essays and articles on Finnish history and folklore in *Sovremennik* magazine (Artemyeva, Mikeshin, 2012, p.8-9).

As part of his academic duties Yakov Grot should visit Saint Petersburg twice a year with reports on implementation of Russian language study program in Finland. During one of his visits at the beginning of 1850 he met his future wife Natal'ia Petrovna Semenova, a daughter of Petr Nikolaevich Semenov, well-known in the literary circles for his parodies *Captan Martynov* according to G.R. Derzhavin's *God* and *Mituiha Valdaiskii* according to dramatist and poet V. Ozerov's *Dmitrii Donskoi*. One of Natal'ia Petrovna brothers, Petr Petrovich, became a famous geographer and a senator known under the nickname Semenov-Tyan' Shanskii. Happy couple returned to Finland where their first child Nikolai was born at the beginning of 1852.

Toward the end of 1852 Yakov Grot got a proposal to take a duty of a head of the chair of the Russian Literature at the Lyceum. At the same time Pletnev recommended him for a position of a private tutor of the Grand Dukes Nikolai Aleksandrovich and Alexander Alexandrovich. According the contract, Grot should teach the Grand Dukes Russian and German languages, General and Russian history and Geography. He combined these two duties till 1859. Since 1859 he became a member of the Russian Language and Literature Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences and took the position of editor in chief of Gavriila Romanovich Derzhavin achieve. His duty as a keeper of Derzhavin's archive was to organize the archive and to prepare it for academic publishing. First volume of complete works of Derzhavin with the commentaries of Grot was released in 1864. The last ninth volume was published in 1884, twenty years later.

Literary work of Yakov Grot was not limited by the editing and publishing of Derzhavin's works. As a member and later as a Head of the Russian language and Literature Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences, he took an active part in organizing of important academic events and different jubilee publications such as 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the death of M.V. Lomonosov (1865), 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the birth of N.M. Karamzin (1866), 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the birth of Mitropolit Evgeny (1867), 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the birth of N.A. Krylov (1868), jubilees of N.A. Zhukovsky, organization of subscription to the public fund bonds for erection of monument to A.S. Pushkin in Moscow, 200<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the birth of Pater the Great (1872) and others.

In 1872 Yakov Grot was elected a member of the Russian Historical Society. As a specialist on Russian history he was asked to complete the editing and publishing of collected works of Catherine the Great. First two volumes of Catherine the Great correspondence were prepared and edited by P.P. Pekarsky, the keeper of Catherine the Great archive. Yakov Grot accepted this proposal with a great delight and decided to draw a public attention to quite forgotten genre of literary correspondence that was one of the basic characteristics of the Enlightenment (Grot, 1881). Besides literary correspondence of Catherine the Great, Yakov Grot published several articles devoted to her outstanding personality such as *Education of Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup>* in "*Drevnyaya i*

*Novaya Rossiia*"(Old and New Russia), *Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Gustav the 3<sup>rd</sup>* in "*Russkaiia Starina*" (Russian Antiquity) and *Zapiski Akademii Nauk* (Notes of the Academy of Sciences), *Philological lessons of Catherine the 2<sup>nd</sup>* in "*Russkii Arhiv*" (Russian Archive) (Grot, 1875, p. 110-125; Grot, 1877).

In 1883 – 1885 Yakov Grot completed his works on the history of the Russian language with a publishing of *Filologicheskie Razyskaniia* (Studies on Philology) and *Russkoe Pravopisanie* (Russian Grammar). In 1886-1891 he completed the work of V. I. Dal' on *Slovar' Literaturnogo Russkogo Yazyka* (Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian Language).

Yakov Grot died on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1893 in Saint Petersburg. His former pupil, Alexander the 3<sup>rd</sup> in his letter to Grot' family wrote: *I was sorry to hear on the death of Yakov Karlovich Grot. I've known him for 25 years. I loved and respected this outstanding person* (Grot, 1912, p.48).

### **Yakov Grot as a tutor of the Grand Dukes Nikolai Alexandrovich and Alexander Alexandrovich**

Enlightenment epoch developed the conception of enlightened ruler which was based on his positive role as benefactor of his nation, responsible for prosperity of his people and state, person of high moral and ethical principles. A tutor of future rulers usually was chosen with accuracy and should suit the strict demands of the court. A tutor bears heavy responsibilities for development of the leader qualifications of the future ruler, his proper behavior in different situations concerning everyday performance of his duty, his world-view and development of abilities to study, analyze and concentrate.

Yakov Grot deserves a special mention as one of the outstanding top-level aristocracy family tutors. He developed his own vision on tutoring and education and was sure that future rulers should acquire a good basement of general knowledge and as future public figures, learn different methods and methodic of public behavior. At the same time the positive influence of personal example should be accepted as the most important factor of education. To his opinion, knowledge of world and native history and literature can provide young people with sufficient examples of real or imaginary heroes (Grot, 1858, p.1-4). Grot wrote a lot about the importance of such universal values as love, charity, honesty, duty, good deeds and intentions. The task of a tutor is to help his pupils to find a proper balance between his real and imagined perception of reality. Imaginary world is full of good intentions and great expectations which easily may disappear while meeting with a necessity to solve quite real problems. Intensive reading of history books and literature should be combined with everyday analysis of real situations and work over models of appropriate public behavior. As experienced teacher, researcher and tutor Yakov Grot understand that education of Grand Dukes is far from being perfect and tried to improve it by writing his own programs, lesson's plans and exercises on different academic disciplines. He led a diary where he wrote and analyzed in detail the process of study and progress made by the Grand Dukes from day to day (RGIA, Fund 878, Inventory 1, File 17, p.5-6). Inspired by the spirit of Enlightenment, Yakov Grot composed a unique Day Prayer for the Grand Dukes. They should begin their day with this prayer instead the regular religious one: *In order to rule the others, I should learn to rule myself, overcome my foibles and keep my passion under the control. My Lord help me not to fell a victim of laziness, love for luxury and idleness. Pray You provide me with love for intellectual occupation and intellectual curiosity, desire to study and read. Provide me with a love for truth and ability to define right-minded people from the vicious and evil ones. But above all, pray you my Lord, kindle in my heart an*

*overwhelming love for human beings. Provide me with a loving heart full of suffering and care for my nearest and dears. On the peak of power, surrounding by plenty and luxury, I must not forget about everyday misery and sufferings of my subjects. Provide me with reason to understand that my duty is not to maintain my own wealth and prosperity but to spread wealth and prosperity among the others. Help me to become a justice tool of Your wish and create in my country a kingdom of good and truth (Grot, 1895, p.147-151).*

### **Young generation: Nikolai and Konstantin Grot**

Yakov Grot was happy in his family life and had four sons and three daughters. Three of his children died in childhood but his two sons, Nikolai and Konstantin, became distinguished personalities by their own.

Nikolai Grot (1852-1899) got excellent and at the same time strict home education. Yakov Grot taught his children Classic and Russian literature and philology, Natalia Grot taught them French language and Russian history and geography, sister of Yakov Grot, Roza, taught her nephews mathematics and German language. Both sons, Nikolai and Konstantin, accompanied their father in his numerous trips in Russia and abroad and became familiar with specification of academic research from their early ages. Yakov Grot decided to send his children to non-classical secondary school and gymnasium of Videman that considered the best educational institution in Saint Petersburg. Later they continue their education at the classical gymnasium of P.N. Larin. In this classical gymnasium studied children of Russian nobility and high officials, further ties for successive state or academic career were also established there.

Under the strong influence of his father, Nikolai Grot decided to enter faculty of History and Philology of Saint Petersburg university. At the university he became interested not only in history and philology but ancient philosophy and languages, studied Sanskrit and archaeology. After graduating from the university, he decided to continue his education in Germany. There he studied philosophy and medicine at the universities of Berlin and Strasbourg and in 1875 was appointed as an extraordinary professor of Philosophy at the institute of History and Philology in Nezhinsk. During his study in Berlin Nikolai Grot became a guest-member of Berlin Philosophic Society and even hold a title of a sole representative of Russian philosophical school in Berlin (Shenrok, 1911, p.27-82). As a subject for his Master thesis he chose to write about dreams as a subject for scientific research and explanation the psychological nature of feeling. After successive defense of his Master thesis Nikolai Grot immediately proceeded for Doctorate. Materials for his doctorate degree he collected at the universities of Leipzig and Tubingen, a copy if his Doctorate is still available at the library of Tubingen university. In 1883-1886 he became a full professor of philosophy at the university of Odessa. In 1886 he got an appointment as an ordinary professor at the chair of Philosophy of the Moscow University. In 1887 he was elected a member of the Society of Lovers of the Russian Literature and the Head of the Russian Society of Psychology. He became familiar with Leo Tolstoy and Vladimir Solov'ev, both share similar philosophical views. In 1889 he founded the journal of the Russian Society of Psychology *Voprosy Filosofii i Psihologii* (Philosophical and Psychological Questions). His death in 1899 at the age of 47 was unexpected and caused a shock for his family and students.

Konstantin Grot (1853-1934), like his elder brother, also entered the faculty of History and Philology of Saint Petersburg university. He chose Slavonic studies as a main subject for his research interest. His Master thesis he devoted to Medieval history and literature of Western Slavs and successfully stood for his exams in 1879. In 1880 he was awarded by Golden medal for his work on

the history of Southern Slavs, which was published as a book under the auspices of the Russian Imperial Geographic Society (Grot, 1880). During 1882 Konstantin Grot collected materials and sources on the history of Western Slavs in the libraries, museums and archives of Prague, Vienna and Budapest. In 1883 he became an extraordinary professor at the chair of Slavic Studies of the Warsaw university. In spring 1885 he worked with the Slavic collection of the British Museum library and wrote a comprehensive article about collections of Slavic ancient manuscripts in Britain (Grot, 1887, p.1-30). After the death of his father, Yakov Grot, Konstantin Grot decided to commemorate his academic activity to publishing and spreading of academic heritage of his deceased father. Publishing and maintenance of Yakov Grot archive became available with generous financial support of Alexander the 3<sup>rd</sup> who always kept warm feelings toward his tutor. Since 1896 Konstantin Grot began a publishing of multi volume academic works of Yakov Grot with expanded commentaries. First two volumes were published in 1899, every year a new volume was published. Complete edition of Yakov Grot academic works was completed in 1903. For his distinguished public and academic activity Konstantin Grot was awarded the rank of councilor of State in 1901. Since 1905 Konstantin Grot fulfilled the duties of the Head of the General archive of the Ministry of the Imperial Court. He was responsible for keeping, preserving and publishing of Russian historical heritage manuscripts that composed considerable part of the archive. He was the editor in chief of academic publications of the archive *Kamer-fur'erskii Zhurnal* (Journal of the Court ceremonies) and *Alfavitnyi Ukazatel' Obshchego Arhiva* (Alphabetical Index of General Archive). He continued to fulfil his duties as the Head of the General archive till the Soviet archival reform of 1923. Simultaneously Konstantin Grot was the head of the *Society of Lovers of Historical education* and initiated publishing of Russian historical books series.

Particular attention of Konstantin Grot was attracted to the history of Tsarskoe Selo Lyceum, literary works of Alexander Pushkin during his Lyceum period, biographies of Pushkin's friends and teachers, Lyceum manuscripts, documents and papers. In 1911, the year of 100 anniversary of Lyceum foundation, a Jubilee publication of the history of Lyceum was released (Grot, 1911). Konstantin Grot was a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, honorary member and corresponding member of the Czech and Serbian Academies of Sciences, Czech Museum and institute of Slavic Studies, honorary member of St. Petersburg and Moscow Archeological Societies and Lyceum Pushkin Society. He died in Leningrad in 1934 and buried on the cemetery of Novodevichii monastery.

## Conclusion

The story of four generations the Grot family is not something that stands out of the row of similar stories of foreigners, who decided to settle in Russia and find here their new homeland. Despite their high social mobility and strong desire for integration, they nevertheless represented a separate group within the Russian society. In the eyes of the high Russian nobility they represented an educated group whose task was to satisfy Russian aristocracy needs in European-style education, services and culture. On the other hand, in the eyes of the vast uneducated masses they definitely were accepted as foreigners, who kept their foreign family names, religious attitudes and different family values based on protestant individualism. Partly because of their dual position this group of foreigners often chose occupations which can benefit their new homeland economically, socially, politically and scientifically. Russian society was ready to accept their contribution by defining them as outstanding Russian geographers, historians, philosophers, linguists, mathematicians and doctors

but at the same time emphasizing their foreign origin which could successfully developed only on Russian fruitful soil.

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