
REFORMATORY TRENDS IN ORTHODOXY IN THE WORKS OF PRINCE ANDREY KURBSKY

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the works of Andrey Kurbsky and their role in reforming Orthodox theology and religiosity through achievements of ancient culture and rationalist methods. The processes of Orthodoxy renewal were triggered by new historical conditions accompanying the establishment of the Moscow State. The author analyzes well-studied texts of Kurbsky from a new perspective with due account to renewal processes that started in the Orthodoxy and application of ancient heritage and rationalistic methods. The author concludes that Kurbsky selected ancient materials following certain criteria that can be deduced from the analysis of his texts. The author's reasoning is based on thorough analysis and deep insight into Kurbsky's texts from the perspective of new ideas of the Orthodox theology contained therein. The article considers new criteria developed by Andrey Kurbsky to master the achievements of ancient philosophy, including social, ontological and gnoseological ones. Analysis of social criteria suggests that Kurbsky's idea of the state structure contained ideas of a free equal right for all the citizens to a common law. The social criterion implies the need to study and revive the ancient heritage in order to renew the clergy, public education, to create a free civil system in Russia, and to strengthen its economic, political and cultural power. Ontological views of Kurbsky involve rational reflection as an inherent, natural element of Orthodox theology. The gnoseological criterion means development and accuracy in application of conceptual and terminological framework for adequate translation of ancient philosophical terminology. The author recognizes a shift from Orthodox theology to rationalist methods that used to serve a means of overcoming the crisis that occurred in Russian intellectual and theological practice amid changing sociocultural environment and upon final formation of the Moscow State in the context of philosophical discourse of the epoch.

Keywords: Orthodoxy, Andrey Kurbsky, ancient heritage, humanism, criteria

1. Introduction

The span of the XV-XVII centuries witnessed a transition, a shift in ruling ideas, a clear trend towards ideological secularization, emerging philosophical and rationalist trends [1]. Religion renewal was triggered by state centralization and establishment of the Moscow State. New environment ensured a lasting

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impact on renewal processes in both the Orthodox Church and Orthodox theology. A long-standing criterion of consistency between the author's considerations and the truths of the Holy Scripture and the Sacred Tradition gradually ceased to suffice East Slavic thinkers [2]. Raising Orthodoxy to the level of the Moscow State ideology that was meant to consolidate Russia's greatness, prove the sanctity and purity of the ancestral faith required a constant confirmation that its liturgy standards, as well as church and monastery customs, and dogmatic statements fully met the original, inevitable canon. Evidence of this kind required a skilled and painstaking philological work, translations and comments of religious texts [3].

Speculations of the Orthodox clergy and intellectual elite on the place of the Church in Russian society and on the content of the Orthodox faith unfolded discernable trends of referring to methods and content of ancient philosophy [4]. This tendency manifested itself in the works of most prominent Russian statesmen and clergymen of the epoch, including Maximus the Greek, Joseph Volotsky, Philotheus, as well as in the ideology of Russian heresies. Cultural contacts with Western Europe gained unprecedented momentum: foreign experts (architects, cannon founders, doctors, translators) were now eagerly invited and flocked to Moscow. Foreign languages were studied with renewed vigour, Latin and German complemented traditional Greek. A new generation of intellectuals who graduated from West European schools were emerging, Russians developed particular interest to secular science and philosophy [5]. Extensive knowledge of ancient philosophy came into fashion among representatives of the Russian aristocracy and high-ranking managers. Erudition became valued as such, not just in relation to Theology or in order to back up the Holy Scripture texts [6]. It all lead to a stronger ancient tradition dating back to pre-Mongolian epoch, the times of Vladimir II Monomakh and Kliment Smoliatich when Russian philosophy fostered early humanistic ideals.

In this respect still relevant and understudied remains the issue of criteria that were used to select ancient materials to reform Orthodox ideology. The works of Andrey Kurbsky, a politician and intellectual of his time, are of academic interest to those willing to tackle this issue. His works help to trace criteria used to select ancient materials in terms of development and renewal of the Russian Orthodox intellectual tradition.

2. Method

The author offers his reasoning based on careful analysis and deep insight into Kurbsky's texts from the perspective of new ideas of the Orthodox theology contained therein. Theoretical thinking of medieval Russia is known to represent a specific phenomenon of spirituality, the ideas and concepts of which seem to be dissolved in a certain integrity of verbal and tangible monuments, they are inherently present in those ideas and concepts, get their expression in the general idea of 'wisdom' and find some confessional specifics in the category of 'Sophia' or 'the wisdom of God'. Such latency of theoretical thinking actually

means perception by spirituality of itself, of its substantial self, its potencies with regards to other spiritual systems and the world in general. It means development of a certain mindset. Martin Heidegger notes that “in general this word (*Sophia – M.S.*) means being astute about something, being consciously skilled at something”. Heidegger points out that Sophia or astuteness “is not the equivalent of merely possessing knowledge”, yet he stresses out that it “has a hold in what perdures” [7].

Medieval Russian philosophy (Sophia meaning ‘wisdom’) seems to be consistent with the subtle characteristics provided by Martin Heidegger. Hiddenness, latency, reliance on Christian dogmatics and omnipresence in the spiritual world of the East Slavs, all this was present in Russian philosophy at its early stages of development (XI – early XVI century): Byzantine-focused method of immanent philosophizing is due to the same features of Russian philosophy.

Transcending the limits of hiddenness, of dynamics in statics, and stepping into the mobility of the explicitness, variability of the externals – this is the beginning of a new stage in the development of human thought, the emergence of philosophy proper as “thinking about the being of beings” [7] in the form of logically interrelated judgments, i.e. using a special theoretical (philosophical) language limited by the scope of disciplinary requirements.

This perspective shall be applied to the criteria developed by Andrey Kurbsky to master the ancient heritage. Being a thinker Kurbsky was standing between two periods in the evolution of ancient thinking in East Slavic spirituality and Orthodox theology. This fact explains why his works are characterized on the one hand by latent philosophizing, but on the other hand by conscious attempts to reach out beyond the latency and to move towards rationalist methods.

According to Martin Heidegger, the “‘doctrine’ of a thinker is that which remains unsaid within what is said”, and “in order to experience and to know henceforth what a thinker left unsaid, whatever that might be, we have to consider what he said” [7, p. 345]. The philosopher thuswise expressed the essence of hermeneutics as a research method. Since Kurbsky gave no wordings to verbalize his criteria, but the latter are still present in his artistic legacy, the hermeneutical method shall be attempted to develop some ideas in order to perceive the content-related aspect of criterial activity of Kurbsky.

3. Results

Most of his works Kurbsky wrote after escape to Lithuania. The writer spent over 20 years in foreign lands where he engaged in diverse literary work. Speaking about criteria that Kurbsky used for selecting ancient materials, his translation works are of outstanding interest.

The following trends of criterial activity can be distinguished in the works of Kurbsky depending on the nature of issues that those criteria were supposed to tackle, namely social, ontological and gnoseological criteria.

Social criteria are manifested in socio-political views of the humanist and serve a precise expression for the criterion of social benefits of knowledge once proposed by Francysk Skaryna. Kurbsky's appeal to the past stemmed from his Renaissance thinking. An attempt of philosophical comprehension of the place and role that Russia played in the history of human society can be identified as a specific feature of such appeal.

In his 'Epistles to Vasyan Muromtsev' Kurbsky rhetorically asks the aged man why such world powers as the Roman Empire and the Byzantine Empire, Bulgarian and Serbian Kingdoms are already the powers of the past. According to the Prince, they all collapsed because they abandoned their true faith. He contraposes Russia to those states as he sees this country as the ultimate outpost of genuine faith [8].

What is the theoretical meaning of this extended antithesis? The thinker here raises the problem of the right to obtain the sacred truth. The first part of the antithesis that characterizes the situation in most ancient Christian countries that came under the yoke of Islam leads the author to the conclusion that they have lost their faith, as 'people of faith there were constantly tempted and tormented'. The second part provides the writer's vision of the Western Christendom that although claimed its monopoly on possessing the truth, yet was torn by deeply rooted contradictory heresies so that Protestants and Catholics that both deemed themselves genuine Christians or 'faithful believers' actually turned into sworn enemies.

And finally Kurbsky turns his 'thinking eye' to Russia, the last to be baptized. This is where the humanist tends to see the spiritual focus of the Christian truth consolidated by the advanced Church and abundance of religious literature in Russian. Consequently, makes the thinker a logical conclusion, Russia is entitled to the divine truth. However, the writer firmly believes that social factors (political and confessional independence, national sovereignty, strong churchdom with plenty of parishioners) are scarce to establish and spread the truth. The truth cannot be established unless clerical and secular authorities start enlightening the people.

In the given respect it is noteworthy that Kurbsky's reasoning combines the spheres of earthly existence and knowledge. His thinking focuses on tackling issues related to material existence on the one hand, and to the spirit, on the other. This syncretism is featuring medieval thinking in general [9], still Kurbsky's works show an overriding trend of bringing all the issues into the field of Gnoseology while proving his own views through comprehending the life of society. Being an outspoken critic of the level of education in Russia [8, p. 395; 10; 11], and acting as a consistent advocate of knowledge dissemination, he actually proposed a criterion of relevance of science for the Russian society. The humanist was convinced that only Science and education could guarantee proper understanding of the Orthodox truth, strengthen and promote the Church system destined to unite Russians in combating Catholic expansion. Thus, according to Kurbsky, the veracity of acquired knowledge is gauged by the need for such knowledge required for successful development of Russia.

What kind of knowledge should it be and what is the primary consequence of its dissemination? Answers to these questions are to be found in the passage from Cicero's 'Paradoxa Stoicorum' (Stoic Paradoxes) quoted by Kurbsky in his Third Epistle to Tsar Ivan the Terrible (*Perepiska Ivana Groznogo s Andreem Kurbskim [Correspondence between Ivan the Terrible and Andrey Kurbsky, 1993, 111-113]*).

Dmitry Likhachov remarks that when Kurbsky translated 'Stoic Paradoxes' he found not only consolation, but also excuses for his own behaviour [12]. We support these words, although note that Kurbsky resorted to lengthy quoting of the ancient writer not just to justify his treason. Being a man of the Renaissance, the humanist referred to 'Stoic Paradoxes' not so much to justify his actions, as he could easily find excuses in the universals of the Holy Scripture, and least of all to air his knowledge in front of the opponent [12]. Appeal to Cicero had much broader goals.

The reason why Kurbsky referred to 'Paradoxes' seems to lie in one of the basic forms of mastering the ancient material, a parable that expresses the author's ideas in a figurative, metaphoric, symbolic way and bears a certain functional load in the text of his works. According to Alexander Zamaleyev, parabolic knowledge of God is a kind of philosophical (allegorical) rationalism which serves a framework for primitive accumulation and systematization of secular knowledge in the Kievan Rus [13]. Philosophical comprehension of the world through the symbols of parabolic allegories is also characteristic of much later stages of development of the East Slavic spirituality. Kurbsky's contemporaries and he likewise readily applied this method in their works. Andrey Kurbsky however changed the long-standing tradition of Old Russian allegorism dramatically.

By including a vast passage from 'Paradoxes' into his Epistle Kurbsky is thus assumed to have introduced a new perspective from which he formulated his worldview and political attitudes with an ancient focus, rather than justified his treachery by drawing an analogy with long-ago events or flaunted his erudition in front of a high-brow opponent. Cicero's text in the works of Kurbsky is an equivalent of a parable transformed to fit new conditions through which the author of the Epistle seeks to prove his views on the social order. Kurbsky actually gives no comments on the quoted paragraph which in our opinion serves a sufficient proof of his perfect consent with the Roman philosopher. Noteworthy is the fact that the Orthodox writer appealed to the Latin authority, as it is hardly typical of the Russian spiritual tradition which is known to prefer Greek secular philosophy. This outright preference can be explained by the fact that Kurbsky not only had a clear and correct vision of the cult of ancient philosophy prevailing in educated society of South-West Russia, but likewise sought to comprehend and use the best of what the cult implied. This passage also plays a crucial role in Kurbsky's developing a social criterion of reception of antiquity which can be shown in the text.

‘So which is the city?’ asks Kurbsky together with Cicero. “Can any... meeting at one place be considered a forum?.. As that was not the city then when laws had no power there, when courts were overridden, when domestic customs were rejected, when authorities were expelled with a sword and had yet no common name of a senate” [*Perepiska Ivana Groznogo s Andreem Kurbskim (Correspondence between Ivan the Terrible and Andrey Kurbsky)*, 1993, 238].

The above quote shows that Kurbsky’s vision of the state structure (i.e. the city) primarily implied the idea of a free equal right for all the citizens to a common law. It can hardly serve a sufficient ground for saying that Kurbsky was a committed Republican, however the fact that he obviously sympathized with the republic was undeniable, otherwise he would hardly put Cicero’s reasoning about the advantages of the republican democracy over tyranny of Emperor Claudius (‘common thing’ in Kurbsky’s translation) forward as a solid argument to persuade tyrant Ivan the Terrible. The essence of allegorism lies in identifying the images of Claudius and Cicero with Ivan the Terrible and Kurbsky respectively. When including the passage from the ‘Paradoxes’ into his Epistle the writer realized that the Tsar who was well aware of parabolic thinking would definitely see what his opponent meant. The Renaissance ideal of Kurbsky by no means involved former operation of the Stoglavy Sobor (translated as the Council of a Hundred Chapters) and the Select Council, as Solomon Lurye claimed [14], neither his ideal involved administrative management of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth through the Szlachta Seym electing the king. Kurbsky’s ideal was to revive the best of the former state structure of Russia with regard to new conditions and based on the experience of the world history, including ancient republican Rome. This standpoint was not retrograde, but the one of a person who was far ahead of time, and Andrey Kurbsky was such a man.

Proclamation of a genuine civil freedom rather than allegiance to the state is the top principle of ethical and political views of Kurbsky. This principle is not only directly related to the ancient Roman philosophy, but is actually borrowed from it. This full-scale acceptance triggers the following conclusion made by Kurbsky: ancient philosophical wisdom can and shall help positive changes of the social system as well as changes in the level of culture and education in Russia. Being an experienced politician Kurbsky was perfectly aware of the political situation, being a Russian patriot he wished prosperity to his homeland that he was forced to leave, being an outstanding philosopher he saw future well-being of his country in referring to ancient knowledge in East Slavic theology.

Based on the above views of Andrey Kurbsky regarding ancient ‘love of wisdom’ we shall now try to focus on the social criterion of applying ancient philosophical material developed by the thinker in his literary and cultural practices, namely the need to study and revive the ancient heritage in order to renew the clergy, public education, to create a free civil system in Russia, and to strengthen its economic, political and cultural power.

Another trend of criterial activity of Kurbsky involved development of ontological criteria. The social criterion also determined an ontological criterion group the principles of which were proposed by Kurbsky based on clear gnoseologization of Eastern Christian ideas about the nature of the world, the place and role of a man in it. The humanist tried to outline his human spiritual and philosophical element in the Orthodox worldview. To achieve this he started with ‘rehabilitation’ of early Byzantine patristic understanding of ancient philosophy. In his arguments he relied on the authority of the Cappadocians, John Chrysostom and John of Damascus in particular, who are known to consider a philosophizing mind the supreme gift of God to a man [10, p. 164].

A man who knows nothing of ancient wisdom “gets corrupted and lured and loses the way of the Lord” [10, p. 164], becomes an instrument for fools and liars seeking pastorship [10, p. 154]. Therefore, the way of philosophical thinking rather than blind faith in religious dogmas is ‘the way of God’, i.e. a natural phenomenon of human spirituality from the perspective of medieval thinking. In the above quoted Epistle to Ivan the Terrible Kurbsky reinforces philosophical arguments in favour of the proposed criterion in a laconic but convincing statement following the passage from Cicero: “Look, O Tsar, even pagan philosophers by natural law were wise enough to achieve fairness and justice in relations with each other. God gave us the right to own the universe, and although we call ourselves Christians we fail to grasp wisdom of the scribes and Pharisees or the wisdom of people obeying natural laws. What shall we say to our Christ the Lord when we stand before Him for the Last Judgment?” [*Perepiska Ivana Groznogo s Andreem Kurbskim (Correspondence between Ivan the Terrible and Andrey Kurbsky)*, 1993, 113]

Thus trying to synthesize the ancient philosophical discourse and the Orthodox doctrine Kurbsky fills gnoseological concepts with Christian ontologism by introducing means of philosophical reflection and asserts the revived principle of early Byzantine attitude to ancient philosophy – naturalness of the philosophical discourse as God’s supreme gift to a man. Such immanentization of philosophical knowledge in the Orthodox doctrine is no longer focused on the knowledge of God or the disclosure of God in a man, but on perception and explanation of the spiritual and material existence by means of rational thinking. That is why Kurbsky logically complements the proposed criterion with the principle of organic unity of philosophical and religious reflection, such unity being supported by the New Testament postulate: “observe those who live according to the example you have in us” (Philippians 3.17), i.e. philosophize, believe in God, meditate, and be true Christians [8, p. 373]. So Kurbsky sought to legalize ancient philosophy as an integral organic element of the Orthodox theological system. Kurbsky sees faith devoid of any philosophical content as a departure from the way of the Lord, delusion of an ignorant mind influenced by religious and secular cheaters.

Thus, ontological views of Kurbsky imply rational reflection as an inherent, natural element of Orthodox spirituality based on which he forms his criteria of attitude to ancient heritage.

Kurbsky recognized the unity of two spiritual pillars, Philosophy and religion, but refused to contrast them which used to be typical of the Orthodox dogmatics and proposed a number of gnoseological criteria for mastering ancient philosophy. As such criteria he developed some principles expressed in his reflections on the value of philosophy and logic, and supported them with his thoughts on social being. In his works the humanist created an impressive picture of the socio-cultural situation in Russia that consistently proved the benefits of philosophical knowledge for the development of Orthodox theology and education, for building ideology strong enough to compete with the increasingly growing influence of a highly developed, but religiously alien spiritual system of Western Europe seeking greater political leverage through religious and cultural expansion in the East Slavic region. Kurbsky primarily emphasizes ignorance and mendacity of church teachers of the people, their downright reluctance to spread knowledge and education among Russians [10].

Unlike Orthodox clergy with their highly critical attitude to secular wisdom Kurbsky referred to an intensive activity of foreign ‘false teachers’ and made derogatory reviews of their books that obtained wide circulation among Russian population in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and even Muscovy. He was concerned that people would take those books for God-inspired truth and be deceived and plunge into heresy [8, p. 427]. He also claimed that Russian books that could teach people proper doctrines were scarce, whereas many works of Eastern Church fathers were translated incorrectly by poor translators [10, p. 164]. Thus Kurbsky concludes that Russian Orthodox Church failed to resist to foreign expansion of Catholic and Protestant culture with traditional means. That’s why Eastern Slavs, in his opinion, should seek assistance of overseas philosophy which other Christian denominations gladly turn to good account. The thinker however realized that Catholic writers used ancient philosophy for their own benefit to provide sophistic arguments in favour of Roman hegemony.

That is why Kurbsky is so cautious and consistent when developing gnoseological criteria: he always bears in mind, firstly, the negative attitude of Orthodox clergy to ancient philosophy caused on the one hand by its ambiguous perception in Byzantine patristics, and on the other hand by its foremost authority in Catholicism, and secondly, the discrepancy between ancient philosophical worldview and Christian one, since the former is perceived outside Christian ontological and socio-ethical context.

Anyway, the need to support Orthodoxy that Kurbsky was well aware of predetermined another gnoseological criterion, equivalence and interdependence of religious and rationalist means of pursuing the truth, which was repeatedly put forward in statements saying that ancient teachers of Christian theology venerated in the Orthodox Church were equally competent in ancient philosophy and Christian doctrines [8, p. 422; 10, p. 165]. Unchallenged authority of patristic attitude to overseas philosophy triggered another conclusion of Kurbsky underlying the following criterion: religious dogmatics unsupported by

Philosophy loses its credibility, whereas Philosophy void of religious content loses its spiritual value.

The writer's desire to pursue an absolute divine truth rather than a false or perverse one explains his scrupulous adherence to precise linguistic means of conveying it, use of correct terminology as well as adequate translation of theological and philosophical sources. Distorted intentionally or for translator's ignorance these sources inevitably lead from Orthodoxy and apostolic dogmas to semi-faith, obscurely reinvented and lame philology [8, p. 368]. Having carefully studied the content of translated literature that used to circulate in the East Slavic region he concluded that most books were mistranslated, with translated texts and originals being a total mismatch.

Thus, the logic Kurbsky followed in his reasoning allows for the following gnoseological criterion: accuracy in development and application of conceptual and terminological framework for adequate translation of sources.

Dissatisfaction with the quality of the book stock in Russia, constant comparing of educational levels in the East and the West, simple lack of essential books, it all made him search for new sources of knowledge outside the opportunities offered by the Orthodox culture. Even the 'Dialectic' by John of Damascus so ardently recommended to Andrey Kurbsky by his teacher Maximus the Greek as a model of Christian interpretation of ancient knowledge and no less passionately praised by Kurbsky himself could not offer him that integrity the writer was striving for in search of the synthesis of philosophical and religious truths. Moreover, the works of Aristotle were available neither in Greek nor in Russian, but in Latin, a widely recognized language of medieval European science, they were plentiful both in translation of Aristotle himself, as well as in scholastic revisions and comments. That is why he turned to a 1544 treatise by Johann Spanenberger published in Cracow [13, p. 236; 16]. Thus the thinker set up a new tradition of mastering ancient heritage in Russia via the West European translator. He himself explained his Latin studies based on the authority of the church fathers: 'And those like Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom and many other outstanding men traveled to Athens to meet pagan philosophers..., but finally returned to their fatherland' [8, p. 453]. Kurbsky is convinced that Orthodox Christians need to learn Greek, but also Latin [10].

Analysis of Kurbsky's stance regarding the positive experience of Europe helps to single out such a gnoseological criterion as the need to use Roman philosophical heritage as well as scholastic treatises in Latin for theoretical schemes in Orthodoxy. At the same time the humanist was well aware of the risks posed by 'poisonous sophisms' of scholasticism. In one of his letters the Prince referring to the authority of the Scripture (Sirach 12.10) said that the Orthodox Christians would never benefit from misinterpretation of the Scripture [8, p. 374, 368]. The evidence of the enemy could not suffice, he added.

Thus, the next gnoseological criterion of selectivity is proposed by Kurbsky based on the adopted principle of philosophical knowledge which commits the thinker to pay maximum attention to new information, to be ready

to discard the unessential and to embrace the essential, i.e. to show great professional skills in finding grain seeds in vast fields of tares [10]. According to Kurbsky, only strict adherence to these criteria enables recourse to gnoseological sources created by writers belonging to denominations hostile to the Orthodoxy.

The knowledge contained in the ‘Dialectic’ by John of Damascus could no longer satisfy the Renaissance thinking of Kurbsky [15]. The scholastic method of applying ancient logic and dialectics (the latter understood as an art of resolving a scientific dispute) involved mastering various logical means of proving developed by founder of logic Aristotle. Logical reasoning assumed crucial importance when religious disputes involving different denominations showed that the audience found that those who were more skilful in building cause-and-effect relations were more convincing than those who were closer to the truth [15]. Educational institutions in Western Europe offered special programs aimed at studying dialectics. Therefore, it is not surprising that arguments put forward by their graduates in disputes with the Orthodoxy sounded far more convincing than repeated postulating of the Scripture dogmas and traditions. It all made Kurbsky pay close attention to logic. However when starting to master the weapon approved by his enemies the writer made pursuance of truth that so often eluded a man as a result of sophistical tricks his top priority rather than proving of anything including lies.

This standpoint of Kurbsky is clarified in his introductory texts prefacing his article on the treatise of Johann Spanenberger. They contain three reasons that prompted his theoretical generalization of Spanenberger’s treatise. 1. Reader’s insight into the status and functional essence of syllogisms, as well as into proofs obtained therewith. 2. Reader’s ability to distinguish between logical proofs and sophistical or false ones. 3. Polemical skills, ability to defend one’s beliefs through logic [15].

Mastering ancient logical knowledge (mainly Aristotle’s syllogistic), according to Kurbsky, is a key to understanding the cultural and historical situation of the era and to overcoming intellectual and religious crisis in Russia. No wonder he compares logical expertise with tongs that the smith uses to forge things he needs from softened iron. Logic is such ‘verbal tongs’ that the thinker uses to create ‘philosophical things’ [15]. Now we can single out the last gnoseological criterion developed by Kurbsky in his works on logic: theorizing subject to mandatory application of Aristotle’s logical methods backed by verified facts.

4. Conclusion

The works of Andrey Kurbsky were the first in Russian philosophical discourse to show a shift from mystical and symbolic means of mastering ancient heritage characteristic of the Byzantine tradition to rationalist means. The latter at that time used to help in overcoming local and provincial nature of Russian intellectual and theological practice so that it acquired a universal status amid the philosophical discourse of the epoch. Kurbsky’s work appears to raise

awareness of the need not only to find support in the national, but also to establish a dialogue of cultures as a prerequisite for sustainable development.

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