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Development of Logic in Medieval Georgia: Contribution of Ioane Petritsi

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Abstract

Introduction. Ioane Petritsi (1055–1130) is considered to be the most original of those Georgian thinkers who carried out logical studies closely related to the development of logic in Syria and Byzantium. The purpose of the article is to show the contribution of Ioane Petritsi to the development of logic in medieval Georgia.

Materials and methods. The history of philosophical thought in Georgia begins no later than the 4th century, and the development of Georgian philosophy reached its most significant peaks in the 11th–12th centuries. The emergence of logic in medieval Georgia, which occurred in the 4th century, was associated with the needs for the development of oratory, the center of which was the Colchis rhetorical school. When studying this problem, general theoretical methods of scientific research are used, comparative analysis, historical approach, structural analysis method, etc. are in demand.

Results. Although the most influential philosophical trend among Georgian thinkers was Neoplatonism, Aristotle's works were also popular among them. Evidence of the great attention that Ioane Petritsi paid to the theoretical heritage of Aristotle is the translation of two treatises "Topics" and "On Interpretation" into Georgian. Ioane Petritsi understood logic as a science that aims to teach people to prove and disprove. He considered the central problem of logic to be the doctrine of categorical syllogism which he considered as the only scientific form of inference. Following the basic provisions of the Aristotelian theory of categorical syllogism, Ioane Petritsi disagreed with its author regarding the nature of concepts and judgments.

Discussion and conclusion. The logical and philosophical views of Ioane Petritsi always attracted the attention of Georgian intellectuals, some of whom unconditionally accepted them, while others reacted negatively to them. However, there is no doubt that he made a great contribution to the development of logic in medieval Georgia.

Keywords: logic, Aristotle, syllogism, tool of knowledge, proof, refutation.

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Научная статья

Развитие логики в средневековой Грузии: вклад Иоанэ Петрици

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Аннотация

Введение. Иоанэ Петрици (1055–1130) считается наиболее оригинальным из тех грузинских мыслителей, которые осуществляли логические исследования, тесно связанные с развитием логики в Сирии и Византии. Цель статьи заключается в том, чтобы показать вклад Иоанэ Петрици в развитие логики в средневековой Грузии.

Материалы и методы. История философской мысли в Грузии начинается не позднее IV в., а наиболее значительных вершин развитие грузинской философии достигло в XI–XII вв. Возникновение логики в средневековой Грузии, произошедшее в IV в., было связано с потребностями развития ораторского искусства, центром которого была колхидская риторическая школа. При исследовании данной проблематики применяются общетеоретические методы научного исследования, востребованы компаративистский анализ, исторический подход, метод структурного анализа и др.

Результаты исследования. Хотя наиболее влиятельным философским течением у грузинских мыслителей был неоплатонизм, произведения Аристотеля также пользовались у них популярностью. Свидетельством большого внимания, которое Иоанэ Петрици уделял теоретическому наследию Аристотеля, служат переводы на грузинский язык двух трактатов — «Топика» и «Об истолковании». Иоанэ Петрици понимал логику как науку, которая имеет своей целью научить людей доказывать и опровергать. Центральной проблемой логики он считал учение о категорическом силлогизме, который рассматривался им как единственно научная форма умозаключения. Следуя основным положениям аристотелевской теории категорического силлогизма, Иоанэ Петрици расходился с её автором относительно природы понятий и суждений.

Обсуждение и заключение. Логико-философские взгляды Иоанэ Петрици всегда привлекали внимание грузинских интеллектуалов, одни из которых безоговорочно их принимали, а другие относились к ним отрицательно. Однако несомненно, что он внёс большой вклад в развитие логики в средневековой Грузии.

Ключевые слова: логика, Аристотель, силлогизм, инструмент познания, доказательство, опровержение.

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Introduction. Logic as a science owes its origin to the outstanding Greek philosopher Aristotle. He was the first who drew attention to the fact that inference used to obtain new knowledge can be both correct and wrong. Therefore, science is needed to identify the principles according to which our inference should be built. Aristotle called it the doctrine of inference, and after Alexander of Aphrodisias, whose activities occurred at the end of the 2nd–beginning of the 3rd centuries, the name “logic” was assigned to it which eventually became generally accepted [1, p. 9].

Originating in Greece, logic began to spread to the countries of the Mediterranean and then the Black Sea region. Its spread was facilitated by the acquaintance of the thinkers of these countries with the ideas of Aristotelianism, which turned out to be the most suitable for ideological struggle in the conditions of feudalism, which arose and gradually developed in the bowels of the slave society already in the first centuries of our era. In the 5th century the study of philosophy and logic of Aristotle became widespread among Syrian thinkers, who later introduced the Muslim East to Aristotelian ideas. In Byzantium, the development of logic in the 11th century was primarily associated with the names of Michael Psellos, known not only as a commentator on the works of Aristotle, but also as an inventor of the so-called logical square, which is still used in logic, as well as his younger contemporary John Italus [2, p. 215].

Logical studies carried out by Georgian thinkers were closely related to the development of logic in Syria and Byzantium. Among these thinkers, the most original was Ioane Petritsi (1055–1130), who is known as a philosopher, poet and translator. He is characterized as an outstanding figure of ancient Georgian philosophy and culture in general, the inheritance of which is of great importance for establishing specific ways of philosophy development in the medieval East. The purpose of the article is to show the contribution of Ioane Petritsi to the development of logic in medieval Georgia.

Materials and methods. According to the modern research, the history of philosophical thought in Georgia, which was preceded by a mythological form of thinking, begins no later than the 4th century. In the development of Georgian philosophical thought, there is an undisputable merit of Peter the Iberian, who got philosophical, theological and medical education in Constantinople, and in Palestine was engaged in philosophical and theological activity, combining it with healing. His ideas became the source of Rustaveli’s poem “The Knight in the Panther’s Skin” which is considered to the masterpiece of the world literature.

The development of Georgian philosophy reached the most significant peaks in the 11th–12th centuries, characterized in science as the eastern Renaissance. Speaking of the Georgian Renaissance, A. F. Losev distinguishes its following features. Firstly, there is Neoplatonism, primarily Proclus’ philosophy at the heart of this Renaissance. Secondly, Neoplatonism was perceived in Georgia in connection with the Corpus Areopagiticum which is a Christian revision of

the dialectics of Proclus. Thirdly, the Corpus Areopagiticum contains the idea of a man's path of life on earth to salvation, allowing us to talk about the Renaissance. Fourth, Georgian thinkers turned out to be the pioneers of the Neoplatonic Renaissance in Western Europe, several centuries ahead of European philosophers [3, pp. 33–37]. During the Eastern Renaissance, there was an activity of Ioane Petritsi, whose philosophy is considered as a pre-renaissance phenomenon, which largely determined the content of not only Georgian Neoplatonism, but also the entire Georgian philosophy of the Middle Ages [4, p. 51].

According to G.M. Kalandarishvili, the emergence of logic in medieval Georgia dates back to the 4th century. It was associated with the needs of oratory, the center of which was the Colchis rhetorical school which existed in the 3rd–6th centuries in the city of Fazis (now — Poti). As in the educational institutions of Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, on the model of which this school was created, rhetoric, literature, astronomy, music, elements of mathematics, as well as the foundations of philosophy and law were taught in it [3, p. 93].

The culture of Georgia of the Middle Ages experienced a strong Byzantine influence, which was manifested in many of its spheres, including philosophy and logic. It was in Byzantium that Ioane Petritsi was educated, who struck up a friendship there with Michael Psellos and John Italus. He lived at the time when Georgia was freed from Arab domination and, under the leadership of King David IV, nicknamed the Builder, achieved great success in economics, culture, education, as well as the construction of roads, cities and temples. This time, called the eastern Renaissance, was marked by the opening of two academies: Gelat and Ikalto. Having received an invitation from David the Builder, since the beginning of the 12th century Ioane Petritsi began to conduct researches at the Gelat Academy, located in the West of Georgia [2, p. 217].

The works that compiled the literary heritage of Ioane Petritsi dealt with the problems of philosophy, didactics, rhetoric, history and other areas of knowledge. Written in prose and poetic form, they also included translations of works by classical authors and comments on them. The evidence of the great attention that Ioane Petritsi paid to the theoretical heritage of Aristotle is the translation of two treatises “Topics” and “On Interpretation” into Georgian. Experts attribute their authorship to him, although they have not been found yet [6, p. 60].

Results. Although Neoplatonism was the most influential philosophical trend in medieval Georgia, Aristotle's works were also popular. Georgian philosophers got acquainted with them to a large extent thanks to John of Damascus, a Byzantine thinker of Arab origin, who was already a recognized theological authority for his contemporaries. He is the author of a fundamental dogmatic essay entitled “Source of Knowledge”, as well as a number of small dogmatic-polemical works. However, John of Damascus was not only a theologian, preacher and hymnographer, but also a philosopher who in many matters distanced himself from Platonism, but in logic followed the Aristotelian doctrine of categories. In “Dialectic”, which is the first part of his treatise “Source of Knowledge”, he outlined not only this doctrine, but also Aristotle's teachings on judgment and on categorical syllogism. In the 10th–11th centuries in Byzantium, the dominance of the ideas of John of Damascus was noted which resulted in the fascination of many philosophers with the logic of Aristotle.

Another philosopher who influenced the formation of the logical views of Ioane Petritsi was Michael Psellos. But if John of Damascus, who lived several centuries earlier than John Petritsi, had influenced him indirectly, then Michael Psellos, being his teacher, directly. The large role in the scientific activity of Michael Psellos was played by commentaries on the works of Aristotle which served as the basis for its characterization as commentarial [7, pp. 130–131]. Moreover, the activity of all Syrian and Byzantine logicians of the era of early and developed feudalism in the Middle East is often called commentarial. In this era, Aristotelian logic dominated which turned out to be the most suitable for ideological struggle in feudal society. The first thinker who used it to systematize Christian doctrine was John of Damascus. The emergence of scholasticism, that is, the discipline that adapted some sections of Aristotle's logical doctrine to the needs of Christian doctrine, is associated with thinkers who lived in the 11th century, when university education appeared. Only after this teaching acquired a normative character in scholasticism did the original, non-scholastic logic appear. Its contours were outlined by Peter Abelard, but it finally was formed in the 13th–14th centuries [8, pp. 113]. Therefore, the commentarial nature of the activities of Michael Psellos, as well as Ioane Petritsi and his other students, seems quite natural.

The main philosophical work of Ioane Petritsi is “Consideration of Platonic Philosophy and Proclus Diadochus”, dedicated to the Neoplatonic system of views of Proclus, the Greek philosopher who studied Plato and Aristotle, and

after the death of Plutarch, headed the Platonic Academy and became its leader. If Ioane Petritsi saw, although brilliant, but a man in Aristotle, then he considered Plato a deity, and the desire to compare with him was perceived as blasphemy. Therefore, he had never called Aristotle great or divine, while these epithets were applied to Plato quite often. Ioane Petritsi shared the opinion of Michael Psellos, who argued that Plato is divine, but it is impossible to imitate him. In the polemic between Platonists and Aristotelianist, he was on the side of the former, although Aristotle's authority was enormous in medieval Georgia [9, p. 7].

The non-preserved translations of "Topics" and "On Interpretation", which are traditionally attributed to Ioane Petritsi, were made by him under the influence of interest in Aristotle, characteristic of his teacher John Italus [10]. As a younger contemporary of Michael Psellos, John Italus wrote comments on the Aristotelian treatises "On Interpretation" and "Topics", as well as a number of works on logic. In these writings, he talks about the purpose of logic which serves to exercise the mind. The benefit of logic to philosophy is that it makes the mind sharper and protects it from sophisms. Unlike representatives of the Stoic school, who considered logic to be part of philosophy, John Italus agreed with Aristotle, Theophrastus and their followers, who understood it as a tool of philosophical knowledge. He believed that logic exists not for philosophy, but for us. The easiest way to philosophy lies for us through logic, without which it is impossible to argue. Therefore, logic is a tool, not part of philosophy [11, p. 71]. Thus, the appeal of Ioane Petritsi to Aristotelian logic was largely due to the fact that his teachers Michael Psellos and John Italus became famous not only as experts, but also as excellent commentators on Aristotle's works.

The central position in the logical teaching of Aristotle is occupied by the concept of syllogism which is a kind of inference. It is considered by Aristotle in "Prior Analytics", written by him later than "Second Analytics", "Topics" and "On Sophistical Refutations". If "Prior Analytics" considers pure forms of syllogism, then "Second Analytics" considers syllogisms in evidence, "Topics" considers syllogisms in discussions, and "On Sophistical Refutations" considers syllogisms in disputes. Aristotle created logic as a science that helps solve problems that arise in mathematics, philosophy and law. With time, mathematics, philosophy and law began to be called three foundations on which logic is based.

Ioane Petritsi understood logic as a science that aims to teach people to prove and disprove. In the medieval education system, it composed together with grammar and rhetoric, the so-called trivium which was the lowest level of knowledge. Medieval authors saw the benefits of grammar in the ability to read scripture and other church books, the benefits of rhetoric in the art of preaching and the benefits of logic (usually called dialectics) in the ability to argue with heretics. The highest level of knowledge included arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy. It was called the quadrivium and together with the trivium amounted to seven liberal arts which were a list of disciplines that were allowed to be studied and taught during the Middle Ages.

Characterizing logic as the science of evidence, Ioane Petritsi essentially followed Aristotle, who at the very beginning of "Prior Analytics" noted that his study was a matter of proving science [12, p. 119]. He considered the central problem of logic to be the doctrine of categorical syllogism which he considered to be the only scientific form of inference. According to Ioane Petritsi, scholarly knowledge is knowledge of the cause of phenomena which in syllogism acts as a middle term. Thus, categorical syllogism is considered by him as reflection of the mediated connection of natural phenomena [2, p. 218].

Ioane Petritsi believed that the connection of objects of the outside world could be presented as a hierarchy of causes, the individual links of which obey syllogistic principles. He introduced the concepts of the boundaries of syllogism and *simperasma*, which are an application of the doctrine of unity and variety, which occupies a central place in his methodology [8, p. 110]. The concept of *simperasma* denotes the inference of syllogism which should not go beyond its borders. We consider that the idea of deductive reasoning can be found in works of Ioane Petritsi. In this inference, the information contained in inference is implicitly contained in his assumptions. But in order to make this information explicit, we turn to deductive reasoning that guarantees us the truth of inference, provided that the assumptions are true.

Following the basic provisions of the Aristotelian theory of categorical syllogism, Ioane Petritsi disagreed with its author regarding the nature of concepts and judgments. He considered the simplest form of thinking not a concept, but a judgment. Ioane Petritsi believed that the concept is a limited judgment. Therefore, it, like judgment, claims or denies anything about something, being either true or false [8, p. 441].

Discussion and conclusions. In medieval Georgia, in the field of philosophy, two directions occupied the dominant position: Neoplatonism and Aristotelianism. Being a Neoplatonist in his philosophical views, Ioane Petritsi tried to combine them with the logical teachings of Aristotle. He became acquainted with this teaching thanks to the original

Aristotelian treatises, some of which he tried to translate, as well as thanks to his teachers Michael Psellos and John Italus. The logical and philosophical views of Ioane Petritsi always attracted the attention of Georgian intellectuals, some of whom unconditionally accepted them, while others reacted negatively to them. However, it is certain that he made a great contribution to the development of logic in medieval Georgia. Thanks to his scientific, translational and teaching activities, Ioane Petritsi introduced many Georgian thinkers to the circle of logical problems. He thoroughly studied categorical syllogism, and also came to the idea of deductive reasoning. At the same time, V. P. Zubov, who is considered a classicist in the field of the world Aristotelian studies, draws attention to the fact that Aristotelian elements in the system of Ioane Petritsi have not become the subject of considerable research yet [13, p. 213].

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