

## In Search of Nature and Consciousness in Andrei Bialobotskii's *Pentateugum*: Classical Echoes and Modern Impulses

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### Abstract:

Through close reading and reference to the philosophies of the time, this paper demonstrates how the long poem *Pentateugum* (1690s) by Andrei Bialobotskii (ca. 1640-1720) offers us a dynamic picture of the tensions — between Classical and Orthodox cultures and between religious and secularized literatures—leading to the East Slavic Enlightenment. According to Andrei Bialobotskii, culture is vain because such is human knowledge. Simultaneously, culture triumphs because, through it, the subject acquires and expresses their consciousness in a summa that comprises the whole history of humankind. In this context, Classical culture provides a model for writing techniques and functions as the highest instance of punished vanity, while expressing the harmony between nature and the individual.

### Keywords:

Andrei Bialobotskii/Belobotskii, Jan Białobocki, Socinianism, Ramon Llull, reception of the Classics, Orthodoxy, East Slavic poetry, Enlightenment

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In *Pentateugum*, a long poem composed in the 1690s, Andrei Bialobotskii represents how East Slavic culture is bustling with ideas and experimentation at this time.<sup>1</sup> Although scholars started investigating the figure of Andrei Bialobotskii at the beginning of the twentieth century, it was in a 1962 article that Aleksandr Gorfunkel' solved the mystery surrounding the identity of this author.<sup>2</sup> His Polish name was Jan Białobocki, which he changed to Andrei Bialobotskii upon relocating to Muscovy. He was born in a small agricultural town in what is now Poland around the 1640s and died in Muscovy around 1720. From 1665 he traveled throughout Europe—especially, Brandenburg, France, Holland, Spain, and Italy—before moving to Muscovy in February 1681, where he lived for the remainder of his life.<sup>3</sup> Here Andrei Bialobotskii was tried for heresy, from which he was

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<sup>1</sup> Aleksandr Kh. Gorfunkel' discusses the date of composition of the long poem in his articles: "Andrei Belobotskii—poet i filosof kontsa XVII-nachala XVIII vv.," *Trudy otdela drevnerusskoi literatury* [hereafter *TODRL*], 18 (1962), 196; Aleksandr Kh. Gorfunkel', "'Pentateugum' Andreia Belobotskogo (Iz istorii pol'sko-russkikh literaturnykh svyazei)," *TODRL*, 21 (1965), 43. Throughout the article I adopt the name Andrei Bialobotskii, as this is how it is spelled in the only extant manuscript, *Sobranie Uvarova*, n. 472/268, ff. 355-369, Gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii muzei, Moscow. The Russian form "Andrei Belobotskii" is used when quoting other scholars' works, who adopt such a spelling.

<sup>2</sup> Gorfunkel', "Andrei Belobotskii," 188-213.

<sup>3</sup> Gorfunkel', "'Pentateugum,'" 39-40; Aleksandr Kh. Gorfunkel', "Jan (Andrei) Belobotski. Gli albori della tolleranza religiosa nella Russia del tardo Seicento," in *La formazione storica della alterità: studi di storia della tolleranza nell'età moderna offerti a Antonio Rotondò*, vol. 2, eds. Henri Méchoulan, Richard H. Popkin,

acquitted after he defended himself with the *Confession of Faith* (*Wyznanie wiary*), which Marina Ciccarini has analyzed in *The Last Stakes*, the only monograph to date on the author.<sup>4</sup> After this experience, Andrei established himself as an intellectual in Moscow, positioning himself as being in continuity with the existing literary tradition.

Notwithstanding Gorfunkel's statements that "the literary creativity of Andrei Khristoforovich Belobotskii has left a noticeable mark in the history of the Russian seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Enlightenment" and that "Andrei Belobotskii's *Pentateugum* belongs [...] to the number of the most meaningful works of Russian poetry at the end of the seventeenth century," scholars have not yet explored the novelty that *Pentateugum* constituted in East Slavic culture and its author is still little known in the field of Slavic studies.<sup>5</sup> Researchers have thus far analyzed Andrei Bialobotskii's thought by considering his prose, like *Confession of Faith* (*Wyznanie wiary*, 1681), *The Rhetoric of Ramon Llull* (*Ritorika*, 1690s), and *The Great Science of Ramon Llull* (*Velikaia nauka*, 1698-1699), without examining the cultural innovations and philosophical elements of *Pentateugum*. In this work, the poetic voice celebrates at once Classical culture's triumph and vanity by combining religious culture (especially Bible and Eastern Orthodoxy) and secular culture (particularly from Western Europe). In *Pentateugum*, Andrei Bialobotskii moves beyond the mere inclusion of external elements of Classical culture, thereby laying the foundations for a deeper reevaluation of earthly life, which is necessary for the subsequent affirmation of Enlightenment culture. Andrei Bialobotskii's views on nature and human ethical behavior indicate a proximity with the thought of Faustus Socinus (1539-1604) and his followers in Poland, where reformed Christian doctrines rapidly spread in the seventeenth century.<sup>6</sup> Hence, *Pentateugum* offers us a dynamic picture of the tensions characterizing East Slavic culture at the turn of the eighteenth century—those between Classical and Orthodox cultures, and religious and secularized literatures—and of Bialobotskii's way of negotiating their interaction.

### The Author in Context: Andrei Bialobotskii in Rus'

In the second half of the seventeenth century, Muscovy "began a westward movement" that saw territorial expansion as well as openness "to new people and ideas."<sup>7</sup> This change is marked by the Pereiaslav Agreement between the Hetmanate and Muscovy, signed in 1654 after the Cossack uprising led by Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kii; by the subsequent Don Cossack revolt led by Sten'ka Razin (1670-1671); and by the expansion toward Siberia

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Giuseppe Ricuperati, Luisa Simonutti (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2001), 787-788; *Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi XVII v.*, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg: Nauka, 1992), 128-131.

<sup>4</sup> Marina Ciccarini, *Gli ultimi roghi. Fede e tolleranza alla fine del Seicento. Il caso di Andrej Christoforovič Belobockij* (Rome: Armando Editore, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Gorfunkel', "Andrei Belobotskii," 188, 208.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Tworek, "Education: The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth," in *Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe*, eds. Howard Louthan, Graeme Murdock, vol. 61 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 360-389.

<sup>7</sup> Serhii Plokhy, *The Origins of the Slavic Nations: Premodern Identities in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 251.

that led to a conflict with China and lasted into the eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The 1650s are also characterized by the schism between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Old Believers, which started in 1652-1654 with Nikon's reforms and whose effects were felt in the subsequent decades, for instance in the years 1666-1667 and the tumultuous proceedings of the Great Moscow Synod.<sup>9</sup> Alongside the ongoing wars, schisms, and nationalist ambitions, in this period, East Slavic territories (comprising today's Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, and parts of Poland and the Baltic States) continued to have a unified literature, alphabet, and language, called Church Slavonic, which presented regional variations that were however mutually understandable.<sup>10</sup> Roman Jakobson points out the cultural and historical relevance of this phenomenon when observing that "the linguistic and folkloric proximity of these [Slavic] populations has continued to play an important role in the history of their mutual relations and has often encouraged their encounters, which have generated fruitful contaminations."<sup>11</sup> As Serhii Ploky writes:

The second half of the seventeenth century saw the beginnings of the first modern national project, that of Russian imperial identity, [which] was fully formed in the first decades of the [eighteenth] century, during the era of the Petrine reforms. The construction of Ukrainian Cossack identity, which laid the foundations for the Ukrainian national project of the modern era, was completed at about the same time. The Ruthenian identity that developed in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania prepared the ground for the nineteenth-century Belarusian national project.<sup>12</sup>

Ploky furthermore observes that "up to the late eighteenth century ethnonational identities were secondary to other types of identity and loyalty, such as those based on family, clan, social group, region, dynasty, and religion."<sup>13</sup> Hence, although we can "identify the roots of many features that define the 'national character' of modern-day Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians" in the pre-modern and early modern eras, the process of nation formation until the first decades of the eighteenth century was incomplete in these territories.<sup>14</sup> The use of the same linguistic variety further encouraged the circulation of peoples and ideas and innovative, creative exchange. Such phenomenon contributed to building a common cultural area, exemplified by the intellectual experiences of Simeon

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<sup>8</sup> Ploky, *The Origins of the Slavic Nations*, 241-249; Roland Mousnier, "Part Two: Russia: The Peasants in the Revolts of the 'Time of Troubles' and in the Anabasis of Stenka Razin," in *Peasant Uprisings in Seventeenth-Century France, Russia and China*, vol. 15 (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2023), 216-229; Alan Wood, *The History of Siberia: from Russian Conquest to Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>9</sup> Viktor M. Zhivov, *Razyskaniia v oblasti istorii i predystorii russkoi kul'tury* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2002), 319-363.

<sup>10</sup> Dmitrii S. Likhachev, *Poetika drevnerusskoi literatury* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1967), 6-7.

<sup>11</sup> Roman Jakobson, *Premesse di storia letteraria slava* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1975), 359.

<sup>12</sup> Ploky, *The Origins of the Slavic Nations*, 7-8.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 360.

Polotskii (1629-1680) and Andrei Bialobotskii himself.<sup>15</sup> Muscovy partook in the broader East Slavic culture, in which the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was the cultural and educational hub and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth the mediator between European and East Slavic cultures.<sup>16</sup> Notwithstanding the tensions between national identity and transnational culture, only "[b]y the end of the eighteenth century, literary works written in languages very close to modern Russian and Ukrainian had emerged from the cocoon of bookish Church Slavonic."<sup>17</sup> This is why I deem it appropriate to call this culture "East Slavic" up until the foundation of the Russian Empire.

Andrei Bialobotskii composed *Pentateugum* at a time when crucial changes in culture and literature were occurring in Muscovy. Daniel Waugh documents how "[o]ral transmission of knowledge continued to be essential for most of the population" until the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>18</sup> However, this was also the era in which the first state typography (*Verkhniaia Tipografiia*) and the first Muscovite academy (Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy) were founded. Their establishment was encouraged by Simeon Polotskii, who is widely recognized as the initiator of East Slavic authorial and literary poetry, as he introduced the syllabic meter and the stanzaic system, as well as composing *The Multiflowered Garden* (*Vertograd mnogotsvetnyi*, 1676-1680), the first collection of poetry in Muscovy.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, he also translated the *Psalter* (*Psaltyr'*, 1678), which inaugurated the tradition of spiritual poetry that became popular throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>20</sup> Simeon was also pivotal in shaping a literary community that fostered artistic creation and exchange, thereby exerting a remarkable influence on the next generation of poets. The literary community started to delineate a literary sphere that was distinct from the religious one and put an end to the tradition of the open text, or the practice of creating new texts by adapting excerpts from one text to another.<sup>21</sup> This is the period that scholars, including Anthony Hippisley, Lidiia Sazonova, and Viktor Zhivov, call the Russian baroque. This period is characterized by "eclecticism [...] typical of all writers and theoreticians [...]"

<sup>15</sup> Simeon, born Petrovskii-Sytianovich, adopted the toponym "Polotskii" upon being ordained. His name also exists in several variations: Simeon Polotskii is the spelling I use throughout the article as it is the transliteration of his signature in most of his manuscripts; Symeon Polotsky, Symeon of Polotsk, and Simeon Polockij are other existing spellings of his name.

<sup>16</sup> Svitlana R. Kagamlyk, "'Kyiv-Mohyla Academy Intellectual Space' as a Manifestation of Intercultural Communications (on the Basis of the Ukrainian Hierarchs' Epistolary Legacy)," in *Kyiv-Mohyla Humanities Journal* 5 (2018): 61-82.

<sup>17</sup> Plokhy, *The Origins of the Slavic Nations*, 8.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Waugh, "The Eighteenth Century: From Reading Communities to the Reading Public," in *Reading Russia: A History of Reading in Modern Russia*, eds. Damiano Rebecchini & Raffaella Vassena, vol. 1 (Milan: Ledizioni, 2014), 47.

<sup>19</sup> On his life and works, see Lidiia I. Sazonova, *Poeziia russkogo barokko: vtoraiia polovina XVII-nachalo XVIII v.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1991); and eadem, *Literaturnaia kul'tura Rossii. Rannee Novoe vremia* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskikh kul'tur, 2006).

<sup>20</sup> Sazonova, *Poeziia russkogo barokko*, 14-6; Nadezhda Iu. Alekseeva, *Russkaia oda: Razvitie odicheskoi formy v XVII-XVIII vekakh* (St. Petersburg: Nauka, 2005), 36-37; Mikhail L. Gasparov, *Ocherk istorii russkogo stikha: metrika, ritmika, rifma, strofika* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1984), 20-22, 29-31, 47-49.

<sup>21</sup> Harvey Goldblatt, Riccardo Picchio, "Old Approaches and New Perspectives: Once Again on the Religious Significance of the 'Slovo o Polku Igoreve'," in *Harvard Ukrainian studies* 28: 1/4 (2006): 129-154.

without exception [...] [by which] external elements were borrowed, but not the deeper context [...] As a result, these elements become liberated and acquire a completely new pedagogical function.”<sup>22</sup> By introducing new poetic techniques, themes, genres, and practices stemming from Classical to Renaissance to baroque literature, authors active between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries contributed to the extraordinary fervor of East Slavic culture.

Though not a pupil of Simeon, Andrei Bialobotskii was part of the cultural élite of the time and interacted with people belonging to his circle. Bialobotskii arrived in Moscow following archimandrite Simeon Smolenskii in order to teach at the newly established Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy. He entered the Zaikonospasskii Monastery and met such noteworthy figures as Pavel Negrebetskii, hieromonks Kozlovskii and Kudritskii, hierodeacon Manuil, archimandrite Gavriil Dometskii, and the Leichoudes brothers.<sup>23</sup> He was also acquainted with Sil’vestr Medvedev, the rector of the Zaikonospasskii Monastery, who was a pupil of Simeon Polotskii and court poet following the latter’s death. Moreover, he knew Evfimii Chudovskii, the hieromonk who belonged to the Grecophile faction that was at odds with the Latinophiles led by Simeon, yet had a relationship of mutual respect with him. Bialobotskii, who “[i]n Poland was persecuted by the Jesuits, who called him *Ketzermeister*, or ‘teacher of heresy,’” encountered similar treatment in Muscovy.<sup>24</sup> Soon doubts about Bialobotskii’s conversion from Catholicism to Orthodoxy arose, and Pavel Negrebetskii and Sil’vestr Medvedev accused him of Lutheran-Calvinist heresy, from which he successfully defended himself between 1681-2 with his *Confession of Faith*.<sup>25</sup> Gorfunkel’ explains the success of Bialobotskii’s defense as follows: “in formulating the main mistake of the novice, who was considered undeserving of being admitted to the Orthodox Church, the accusers encountered almost insurmountable challenges. They could not understand exactly which Western heresy Bialobotskii intended to spread in Holy Muscovy.”<sup>26</sup> After the trial, Andrei Bialobotskii continued to play the role of the mediator between cultures through his participation in Fedor Golovin’s diplomatic expedition to China as a translator (1686-1691) and through his writings, which testify to his knowledge of European thought.<sup>27</sup> We can even say that such a role goes back to his origins, since Bialobotskii was born in a liminal region, in a small town in the Polish district of Przemyśl that is close to the boundary with Ukraine. Hence, his education brought together elements of East Slavic culture and European philosophy and theology, and, through his life experience, he learned how to combine and adapt them to the cultural climate of turn-of-the-century Muscovite Rus’—something that *Pentateugum* represents in a masterful way.

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<sup>22</sup> Viktor M. Zhivov, “K tipologii barokko v russkoi literature XVII-nachala XVIII v.,” in *Chelovek v kul’ture russkogo Barokko* (Moscow: IF RAN, 2007), 26-27.

<sup>23</sup> Ciccarini, *Gli ultimi roghi*, 58-59.

<sup>24</sup> Gorfunkel’, “Andrei Belobotskii,” 199.

<sup>25</sup> Riccardo Picchio, Michele Colucci, *Storia della civiltà letteraria russa* (Turin: UTET, 1997), 189-190. Dmitrii V. Tsvetaev, “Na eretika Iana Belobodskogo,” in *Pamiatniki k istorii Protestanstva v Rosii*, vol. 20 (Moscow: Universitetskaia Tipografiia, 1888), 196-197, 219-240.

<sup>26</sup> Gorfunkel’, “Jan (Andrei) Belobotskii,” 792.

<sup>27</sup> Ciccarini, *Gli ultimi roghi*, 63. Gorfunkel’, “‘Pentateugum,’” 40.

## Is There an Author in this Text?

*Pentateugum*—an eschatological long poem of 1328 lines divided into five books of different length in syllabic verses organized in octaves with alternating rhymes—does so by placing itself in-between translation and adaptation. Little is known about the publication and circulation of this work, and the only existing version is in manuscript form in the archives of the State Historical Museum in Moscow.<sup>28</sup> Given the contemporaneous practice of writing original works in manuscript form and circulating them within a selected circle of fellow monks and pupils (such as those in the Moscow Academy where he wished to teach), we can hypothesize that the audience and circulation of *Pentateugum* was similar. Its first four sections are a translation-adaptation of *Funerary Lament* and *The Last Judgment* by Matthew Rader (1561-1634) and of *The Eternal Torments of Hell* and *The Eternal Happiness of the Blessed* by Johann Niess (1580-1640), as well as four odes contained in the eschatological work, *The Last Four Things* (*Quatuor hominis ultima*, 1647). The fifth section is a translation-adaptation of *On the World's Vanity* (*De vanitate mundi*, 1638) by Jakob Balde (1604-1668). It has now been established that Andrei Bialobotskii did not consult such texts in the original, but in the versions produced by the Polish Jesuit Zygmunt Brudecki (1610-1647), who published several versions of these works in Polish translation alongside the original Latin text.<sup>29</sup> Because of this structure, the long poem does not conform to the modern criteria of originality and authority and some view it as a mere transcription. However, Gorfunkel' demonstrates that *Pentateugum* "is drastically different from the [...] source text" and is "free and original," and Vladimir Toporov and Marina Ciccarini agree with such statements.<sup>30</sup> Bialobotskii's composition can be considered original not only because "each poetic translation is to a large extent a literary work" and

<sup>28</sup> See Gorfunkel', "Andrei Belobotskii," 203; Gorfunkel', "'Pentateugum'," 43; Aleksandr M. Panchenko, *Russkaia sillabicheskaia poeziia XVII-XVIII vv.*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1970), 382; Vladimir N. Toporov, "K istorii rannemoskovskogo barokko: 'Pervaia kniga o smerti' iz 'Pentateuguma' Andreia Belobotskogo," in *Barokko v avangarde-avangard v barokko: tezisy i materialy konferentsii Moskva, dekabr' 1993* (Moscow: Nauchnyi sovet po istorii mirovoi kul'tury RAN, 1993), 13. The poem's transcription has been published by both Gorfunkel' and Panchenko and I have consulted the latter's version in the current study.

<sup>29</sup> The term translation-adaptation is from Marina Ciccarini, "Le fonti latine e polacche del 'Pentateugum' di A. Ch. Belobockij," in *Plurilinguismo letterario in Ucraina, Polonia e Russia tra XVI e XVII secolo*, eds. Marina Ciccarini & Krzysztof Żaboklicki (Warsaw & Rome: Accademia Polacca di Roma, 1999), 22; Gorfunkel', "'Pentateugum'," 25-26, 41, 43.

<sup>30</sup> Gorfunkel', "'Pentateugum' Andreia Belobotskogo," 41-42. Toporov, in particular, has established that Bialobotskii's *Pentateugum* is an original work by closely analyzing the linguistic and rhythmic characteristics of the poem's fifth book. Toporov's work, however, focuses on only one of the long poem's five books and presents several inaccuracies due to the scholar not being able to consult the Latin and Polish originals, as Ciccarini shows. See Ciccarini, "Le fonti latine," 22-23, 27-30; Vladimir N. Toporov, "'Pentateugum V. Son zhizni cheloveka ili sueta.' Russkii iazyk-pol'skii iazyk: bor'ba i soglasie (stranichka iz rannykh russko-pol'skikh literaturnykh sviazei)," in "Put' romantichnyi soversil...": *Sbornik statei pamiati B. F. Stakheeva* (Moscow: Institut slavianovedeniia i balkanistiki Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk, 1996), 199-244, especially note 12 on page 235. Since the goal of the present article is to demonstrate the intellectual novelty brought about by *Pentateugum* within Muscovite culture, I will not engage in an analysis of the long poem to showcase its originality. This is a study that I aim to undertake in a future article.

because in seventeenth-century Muscovite Rus' translating and combining excerpts from distinct texts "was not perceived as an actual translation, but as incorporation and recreation of Western literature."<sup>31</sup> *Pentateugum* is an original work because Bialobotskii operates specific choices within it, such as translating the poems into a form of Church Slavonic that is rich with Polonisms and Russianisms. He also adapts the meter and rhyme scheme to the target language, as well as focusing on the themes of human nature and the destiny of human life and selecting which lines from the original poems to translate, omit and add in his poem. *Pentateugum*, hence, constitutes a unique, independent poem, distinct from those of the authors it drew upon.

Gérard Genette's definition of the paratext can help us to understand how Andrei Bialobotskii manifests himself as the author of *Pentateugum*. According to this concept, we can grasp an author's intention through elements posited at the threshold of the text; namely the epigraph, the notes, the dedication, the author's name, and the title.<sup>32</sup> The full title of Bialobotskii's work is *Pentateugum, or Five Books of Short Creations by Andrei Bialobotskii about the Four Last Things, Vanity, and Human Life. The First Book is about Death. The Second is about God's Last Judgment. The Third is about Gehenna and Infernal Torments. The Fourth is about the Eternal Glory of the Blessed. The Fifth is about the Vanity of the World, Called The Dream of Human Life*.<sup>33</sup> Bialobotskii defines the books as "creations of Andrei Bialobotskii." By signing his work, as Simeon and the poets in his circle had started to do about a decade earlier, Bialobotskii overcomes the principle of anonymity that characterized East Slavic culture until the seventeenth century, according to which, since written words are the direct expression of God's wisdom, the message that a text conveys is more important than the individuality of the author who composed it. Bialobotskii furthermore presents in the title the logical progression of the subject matter from one topic to the other, so that there is no doubt that he sees himself as the author of the long poem and that he sees *Pentateugum* as his own composition.

The very title *Pentateugum* (from the ancient Greek "pentateukhos," meaning "five cases"), chosen by Bialobotskii, points to his creative and communicative intentions. "Pentateugum" designates the first five books in the Hebrew Bible, which constitute the Torah, or the "teaching" that its readers are supposed to get from reading these texts. By entitling his poem *Pentateugum*, Bialobotskii shows that he ascribes a crucial role to the teachings conveyed in his composition and that he deems his inspiration faithful to divine revelation, both of which characteristics are shared with the homonym Biblical texts. Andrei Bialobotskii considered himself a religious writer, so much so that in the fourth book he affirms the superiority of the biblical psalmist David over the mythological poet Orpheus: "David, holding the lute, plays, cheering the prophets up, / The lute of the

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<sup>31</sup> Gorfunkel', "Andrei Belobotskii," 204. On the poem's linguistic features, see, A. Kamin'ska, "O iazyke perevoda *Pentateuguma* Andreia Belobotskogo (K voprosu o pol'sko-russkikh literaturnykh i iazykovykh svyaziakh)," in *Slavica Wratislaviensia*, XII (1977): 133-145. Also see Giovanna Brogi Bercoff, "La cultura letteraria barocca in Russia," in *Il Barocco letterario nei paesi slavi*, ed. Giovanna Brogi Bercoff (Rome: La Nuova Italia scientifica, 1996), 235.

<sup>32</sup> Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 81-89.

<sup>33</sup> Panchenko, *Ruskaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 218.

glorious Orpheus does not dare to stand with him" (book 4, st. 20, ll. 3-4).<sup>34</sup> If we consider that about a decade prior to the composition of *Pentateugum* Bialobotskii was tried for heresy, we may even interpret his choice of the title as a statement of his Orthodox faith.

The act of translating and adapting the German poems thus demonstrates what Andrei Bialobotskii's intellectual positions are and becomes a means for him to reflect on philosophical and theological themes that interest him. In this way, he contributes to introducing stylistic devices, themes, and the idea of authority by drawing on the words of authoritative intellectual figures in the contemporaneous literary and religious fields and by conciliating them with the culture of early modern Rus'.

### Pagan Culture can also Teach us Something

In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century East Slavic culture, translation was one of the main tools through which writers adopted thematic motifs and stylistic devices emanating from European literature.<sup>35</sup> Among the authors active at this time, Simeon Polotskii (1629-1680), Karion Istomin (1640-1718), and Antiokh Kantemir (1708-1744) dedicated a great deal of their literary activity to translation. The process of translating enabled writers to take from the authority of established European models, which helped them to distinguish the fields of literature and religion, to shape the literary sphere, and to introduce previously unexplored genres and themes into East Slavic space.

Yet, transposed in early modern Rus', the adapted work also acquired new traits. Gorfunkel', for instance, points out that Andrei Bialobotskii either omits Classical names and myths or replaces them with East Slavic concepts.<sup>36</sup> Bialobotskii translates the pagan expressions "Pluto" and "reign of Pluto" present in the original texts into the Christian phrase "door of Satan" (book 3, st. 16, l. 1), while omitting such pagan names as Croesus and Olympus.<sup>37</sup> These changes coexist with other instances in which Bialobotskii instead maintains the original Classical names, as we shall see below. The variety of techniques used to translate Classical myths and names testifies to Bialobotskii's effort to adapt traits typical of Classical and Western philosophy and lyric—which he read during his fifteen years in Europe—to East Slavic culture. In this way, Andrei Bialobotskii partakes in the process of reception of Classical culture in East Slavic literature, which Simeon Polotskii had started with the composition of his *Multiflowered Garden* in 1680 during the baroque period and which culminated in the 1730-1750s with the so-called age of classicism. Bialobotskii fostered the inclusion of the Classics into Orthodox culture by using pagan

<sup>34</sup> Panchenko, *Ruskaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 243. Throughout the article, when quoting Andrei Bialobotskii's *Pentateugum*, I indicate, respectively, the cited book (book), the stanza (st.), and the line(s) (l. or ll.).

<sup>35</sup> The phenomenon is analyzed in Giovanna Brogi Bercoff, Maria Di Salvo, Luigi Marinelli, eds., *Traduzione e rielaborazione nelle letterature di Polonia Ucraina e Russia del XVI-XVIII secolo* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 1999), 109-41, 187-197, 215-247, 267-289. A. V. Beliakov, A. G. Gus'kov, D. V. Liseitsev, S. M. Shamin, *Perevodchiki i perevody v Rossii kontsa XVI-nachala XVIII stoletii* (Moscow: IRI RAN, 2019).

<sup>36</sup> Gorfunkel', "Andrei Belobotskii," 205.

<sup>37</sup> Panchenko, *Ruskaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 233.



elements to convey Orthodox values and by mentioning Greek and Latin history as negative examples. Thus, Andrei employs Western literary traditions to develop his attacks on sinful life and its consequences on the afterlife, and simultaneously encourages the reception of these traditions in an area that used to condemn Classical culture, understood as superficial, external knowledge.<sup>38</sup>

Andrei Bialobotskii repeatedly mentions pagan culture throughout *Pentateugum*, using it to represent human vices and sins: Hades, the Greek God of the underworld, is asked to show “Gehenna’s passions” (book 3, st. 1, l. 1); the mythological monster Cerberus is portrayed as the guardian of hell who reveals “where the sinner’s dwelling with the demons is,” as in Dante’s *Inferno* (book 3, st. 1, l. 4); Gehenna is populated by mythological figures like Hekate (book 3, st. 2, l. 3) and Cupid (book 3, st. 6, l. 1); and those who are destined to eternal torments “sit in the vessel of the Acheron” (book 3, st. 5, l. 20).<sup>39</sup> The speaking voice realizes his educative goal by employing Classical culture as a negative ethical and spiritual example. The voice himself declares this: “Ancient Greeks and Romans, you will not tell your fables: / Having lived faithful to factual truth, you will listen to revealed truths” (book 3, st. 11, ll. 1-2).<sup>40</sup> The attack against Classical culture is expressed directly in *Pentateugum*’s fifth book, in which examples of vanity from antiquity are considered: “Where once was the capital city of Troy, they have sowed the earth with wheat” (st. 1, l. 4).<sup>41</sup> Throughout the fifth book, the history of Rome is highlighted, above all, as an instance of punished pride, confirming the critical lens through which the pagan past is portrayed.

To juxtapose the negative example constituted by Classical mythology and history Andrei Bialobotskii champions Biblical culture, which already appears as an ethical reference in the epigraph to *Pentateugum*’s first book: “Oh death! How bitter is the thought of you.”<sup>42</sup> The epigraph—a quotation from Sirach 41: 1 present in the original text—is an innovation within East Slavic culture that adapts well to the Orthodox tradition, functioning as a thematic clue typical of this genre of literature. The thematic clue consists in collocating a citation from the Bible or the writings of the Church Fathers in a predominant position within the text, which is usually the beginning. It recurs throughout the text like a leitmotiv in order to remind the audience of the ethical and religious message.<sup>43</sup> In the epigraph to *Pentateugum*’s first book, the thematic clue expresses the speaker’s awareness that death defines human identity. So, even in the epigraph, Bialobotskii mediates between the cultures of western Europe and eastern Slavdom.

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<sup>38</sup> Boris A. Uspenskii, “Otnoshenie k grammatike i ritorike v Drevnei Rusi (XVI-XVII vv.),” in *Literatura i iskusstvo v sisteme kul'tury* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), 123.

<sup>39</sup> Panchenko, *Russkaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 231-232.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 232.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 244.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 218. On the diffusion of the use of the epigraph in eighteenth-century Russia, see Laura Rossi, “Citazioni alloglotte in epigrafe nella letteratura russa del Settecento,” in *Esempi di seconda mano. Studi sulla citazione in contesto europeo ed extraeuropeo*, eds. Monica Barsi & Laura Pinnavaia (Milan: Ledizioni, 2019), 31-43; A. L. Grishunin, “Epigraf,” in *Kratkaia literaturnaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 8 (Moscow: Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1975), 516.

<sup>43</sup> Riccardo Picchio, “The Function of Biblical Thematic Clues in the Literary Code of ‘Slavia Orthodoxa,’” in *Slavica Hierosolymitana III* (1977): 1-31.

Zigismund Kržižanovskii has defined epigraphs as "light, movable bridges that are able to connect one language with another, and a culture with another."<sup>44</sup> In this instance, west European culture is represented by the introduction of the new stylistic technique of the epigraph, and the Biblical and Orthodox cultures are represented by the reference to the tradition of the thematic clue; their combination realizes a successful union between these cultures.

Within *Pentateugum*, Andrei Bialobotskii places Classical and East Orthodox cultures in a complementary relationship. Ancient Greek and Latin cultures deserve our attention because they provide important examples of civilization, and its extinction, together with their historical and mythological figures, which show us that the vanity of earthly life is only dust. Only through divine revelation, following the teachings of East Orthodox culture, can we overcome earthly dust and achieve salvation.

### "The Earth Calls the Sky"<sup>45</sup>

Throughout *Pentateugum*, however, Classical culture not only constitutes the negative example opposed to the salvation brought about by Orthodox spirituality, but it becomes a shared legacy when it names celestial bodies and depicts the beauty of the universe. We can see this function play out in *Pentateugum*'s fourth book, entitled *The Eternal Glory of the Blessed*. Here, the lyric voice addresses a "you" that corresponds with himself, as we learn in the fifth stanza: "My soul, elevate yourself" (book 4, st. 5, l. 1).<sup>46</sup> The "I" invites the "you" not to despair "in the repository of dry bones" (book 4, st. 1, l. 1) and to rejoice "of the conversation with the stars" (book 4, st. 2, l. 1):<sup>47</sup>

Let us look at these things, let's observe this, Boötes rules in the stellar place.  
Pollux and his brother Castor are standing, the seven sisters Pleiades are in one place.  
Orion shows the sword, Sagittarius stands out with the bow,  
A star overtakes another star, their path becomes bright.

Let us look at Arcturus at midnight, let us look at Diana here,  
The days are delimited by the night, Phōsphoros and Esper are wonderful (book 4, st. 3, ll. 1-4; book 4, st. 4, ll. 1-2).<sup>48</sup>

As is traditional for astrological language and poetic texts, the names of mythological figures denominate celestial corpses, but it is challenging to distinguish the name from the character who inspires it. Indeed, constellations are personified and described as the

<sup>44</sup> Quoted from Rossi, "Citazioni alloglotte in epigrafe," 34.

<sup>45</sup> Panchenko, *Russkaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 242.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 240.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 240. In the first quote, I translate "костех" ("kostekh") in locative case, as "костей" ("kosteĭ") in genitive case, because it seems the more correct understanding of the phrase.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 240.

corresponding mythological figures, as in the line: “Orion shows the sword.” In this “conversation with the stars” a unique radiance embraces all that exists and Classical figures, and the reader is involved in the movement by which the “earth calls the sky.” From this stems the appreciation of nature and the order of things in it.

The same occurs in the first three quatrains of the first book. Here, the speaker praises all that exists as a rich and various universe in which everything has its own place:

Lawns, little herbs, little flowers, orchards, fields, mountains, grapes,  
Earth and the fruits of the trees, yards, woods, gardens,  
Springs of clear water, gatherings of birds singing sweetly (book 1, st. 3, ll. 1-3).<sup>49</sup>

The speaker is aware of the transitoriness of human nature: “everything that is born, dies, in the world nothing lasts forever” (book 5, st. 4, l. 1).<sup>50</sup> The voice depicts the world in an apocalyptic light in the second book, which is in fact dedicated to the Last Judgment, but represents it as beautiful and gentle in the first book:

Stars, let us shine in the sky; planets, let us go in circles,  
Sisters Pleiades, please, let us send the rain to us on earth.  
Castor and Pollux, your kindness is clear to those who sail on the sea (book 1, st. 2, ll. 1-3).<sup>51</sup>

The poet praises every aspect of the universe and wishes that everything will be able to continue on this path: “Under the celestial sphere every creation, moving in its own space, / Be cherished by God now and forever” (book 1, st. 4, ll. 3-4).<sup>52</sup> This distich means that all that exists follows a dynamic order, regulated by rules inscribed in the tangible world and knowable to humans. The statement, which is one of Andrei Bialobotskii’s original insertions into *Pentateugum*, is reminiscent of the philosophy of Ramon Llull (1232-1316), one of his main philosophical references, to whom he dedicated two works. In the late Middle Ages, at a time when in Europe Scholastic analytical thinking held sway, Llull had expressed the ideal of a synthetic science of the sciences, which could gain insight into the essence of the natural world and help the progress of knowledge. As the distich cited above suggests, this corresponds to one of the cornerstones of Bialobotskii’s conception of nature.

Andrei Bialobotskii projects his reevaluation of the earthly dimension on to his anthropological thought. His sense of self constitutes an innovation with respect to the Hebraic and the Orthodox traditions. As Sergei Averintsev notes, “[i]n old Jewish literature there appear many most peculiar ‘personalities,’ but not even one ‘individuality.’ A person exists—or does not exist—as a ‘personality’ independently from what they think about themselves, but as an ‘individuality’ a person does—or does not— define themselves in their

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<sup>49</sup> Panchenko, *Russkaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 219.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 244.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 218.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

consciousness."<sup>53</sup> In *Pentateugum*, we witness one of the first instances of acquiring self-awareness within an East Slavic written text. Indeed, Bialobotskii deals with the human presence and final life events—death, divine judgment, hell, and paradise—as personal experiences: "You want not to be afraid of death, so be ready for the fight" (book 1, st. 21, l. 1).<sup>54</sup> The subject is not only a grammatical figure, but the protagonist of conscious behavior, as we see in the following distich: "Conscience reveals to you the essence of things, denounces your sins. / Truth pronounces a verdict on you, condemns you to eternal death" (book 2, st. 38, ll. 3-4).<sup>55</sup> Here, the voice is telling us that the Final Judgment occurs within one's consciousness. This is an innovation with respect to conceptions in other early modern East Slavic texts and is connected, at the historical level, to the call for individual awareness that developed after Nikon's reforms and, at the doctrinal level, to Andrei's familiarity with Catholicism and with Christian reformed groups.<sup>56</sup>

However, Andrei Bialobotskii's reconsideration of human nature goes beyond the system of belief of western strands of Christianity in the form of Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism. In explaining Bialobotskii's position, Gorfunkel' speaks "of the proximity of Belobotskii's views to the ideas of the 'natural' and bloodless religion of the Deists" and of the "pantheistic identification between God and 'nature'."<sup>57</sup> Such an explanation, however, emphasizes excessively the pantheist and enlightened aspects of Bialobotskii's thought. Elsewhere, Gorfunkel' briefly mentions the possibility that traces of Socinian thought are present in Bialobotskii's works.<sup>58</sup> This is a hypothesis that Ciccarini advances more convincingly and that I consider historically accurate.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, Socinianism is one of the movements that led to the Enlightenment philosophies mentioned by Gorfunkel'. For instance, thinkers who expressed positions close to pantheism, deism, and physicotheology, such as Baruch Spinoza, John Locke, and Isaac Newton, were to a certain extent inspired by Socinianism.<sup>60</sup> Similar to these authors, Bialobotskii conveyed positions close to Socinianism, especially those laying claims to religious freedom. Although Ciccarini notes that "we have not direct proofs that Bialobotskii knew the works by Socinus or later Socinian authors," we know that Socinianism was broadly popular both in Poland

<sup>53</sup> Sergei S. Averintsev, *Ritorika i istoki evropeiskoi literaturnoi traditsii* (Moscow: Shkola "Iazyki russkoi kul'tury," 1996), 20.

<sup>54</sup> Panchenko, *Russkaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 222.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 230.

<sup>56</sup> Zhivov, *Razyskaniia v oblasti istorii i predystorii*, 319-343.

<sup>57</sup> Gorfunkel', "Andrei Belobotskii," 212, 209.

<sup>58</sup> Gorfunkel', "Jan (Andrei) Belobotskii," 792.

<sup>59</sup> Ciccarini, *Ultimi roghi*, 107.

<sup>60</sup> Diego Lucci, "The Biblical Roots of Locke's Theory of Personal Identity," in *Zygon* 56:1 (2021): 168-187. John Marshall, "Locke, Socinianism, 'Socinianism', and Unitarianism," in *English Philosophy in the Age of Locke*, ed. M. A. Stewart (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 111-82; Victor Nuovo, *Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment: Interpretations of Locke* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 21-51, 36-43, 75-101; Ruth Savage, "Locke's Proof of the Divine Authority of Scripture," in *Philosophy and Religion in Enlightenment Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 56-76; Stephen David Snobelen, "Isaac Newton, Socinianism and 'the One Supreme God'," in *Socinianism and Arminianism. Antitrinitarians, Calvinists and Cultural Exchange in Seventeenth-Century Europe*, eds. Martin Mulso & Jan Rohls (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005), 241-288.

when he was born and in the Netherlands when Bialobotskii lived there.<sup>61</sup> The heart of the movement was the Polish city of Raków, in which Socinianism flourished at the turn of the seventeenth century. Throughout the century, however, the political and cultural climate in Poland changed with the reigns of the religiously zealous kings Sigismund III (1587-1632) and Jan III (1674-1696) and with the Swedish invasion of Poland (1655-1660). Socinians were persecuted until 1658, when the resolution of the Polish Diet condemned them to exile. A subsequent Diet in 1659 mandated them to leave Poland by 1660.<sup>62</sup> A Socinian catechism was even written and published in Raków in 1605 and 1619 and reprinted three times in the Netherlands (1665, 1666, 1667) and twice in German-speaking lands (1608, 1612), which were regions that Bialobotskii had visited.<sup>63</sup> Since Bialobotskii was born around 1640 and started traveling around Europe in 1665, during which he showed clear philosophical interests, it is entirely possible that he became acquainted with Socinian ideas at this time.

We can find traces of Socinianism in Andrei Bialobotskii's body of works. *Pentateugum* encompasses theological statements that are close to the Socinian notion of nature as eternal and uncreated.<sup>64</sup> In the first book, the speaker addresses the sun and the moon, saying: "The two of you shined day and night, your time does not know old age" (st. 1, l. 4). This statement is strengthened in the fourth book: "The sun in the sky is the most eternal" (st. 12, l. 4).<sup>65</sup> One may hypothesize that Rader, Niess, and Balde, the German authors of the original odes, or Brudecki, the Polish translator that Bialobotskii consulted when writing *Pentateugum*, were conditioned by Socinianism and that, hence, Bialobotskii indirectly drew elements of Socinianism from them. However, we know that both the German authors and the Polish translator were fervent Jesuits and strongly rejected Socinian thought.<sup>66</sup> In the *Confession of Faith*, Andrei acknowledges the Trinity, a position opposite to Socinian belief. The same occurs in *Pentateugum's* fourth book: "O sacred Trinity, let us rejoice, I, your servant, salute you. / One God in three persons, the eternal throne is your honor, your glory" (book 4, st. 15, ll. 1-2).<sup>67</sup> However, about a decade prior to this, Bialobotskii had to defend his notion of the Trinity and, in Muscovite Rus', "the accusation of anti-Trinitarianism was quite dangerous."<sup>68</sup> The coexistence of Christian dogmas and the typically Socinian way of understanding nature as uncreated, supported

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<sup>61</sup> Ciccarini, *Ultimi roghi*, 107, 109; eadem, "Racjonalizm humanistyczny w kulturze XVII wieku. O Janie Andreju Bialobockim i srodowisku socynian," in *Humanizm polski dlugie trwanie-tradycje-wspolczesnosc*, eds. Alina Nowicka-Jeżowa & Marcin Cieński (Warsaw: Neriton, 2008), 88.

<sup>62</sup> Stanislas Kot, *Socinianism in Poland: The Social and Political Ideas of the Polish Antitrinitarians in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Boston: Starr King Press, 1957), 130, 135, 204; Earl Morse Wilbur, *A History of Unitarianism*, vol. 1, *Socinianism and its Antecedents* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977), 459-509.

<sup>63</sup> Wilbur, *A History of Unitarianism*, vol. 1, 433, 822.

<sup>64</sup> This is one of the key principles of Socinianism and draws on the exegesis of Genesis 2. We can find this concept in Johannes Völkel's *De vera religione*, the first thorough explanation of Socinianism published five times between 1630 and 1642 by the Academy of Raków. We can also read it in Valentin Schmalz's notes of the lectures by Faustus Socinus, which have been transcribed and published in Delio Cantimori & Elizabeth Feist, eds., *Per la storia degli eretici italiani in Europa nel secolo XVI* (Rome: Reale Accademia d'Italia, 1937).

<sup>65</sup> Panchenko, *Ruskaia sillabicheskaia poeziiia*, 218, 242.

<sup>66</sup> Gorfunkel', "Pentateugum'," 41, 43.

<sup>67</sup> Panchenko, *Ruskaia sillabicheskaia poeziiia*, 242.

<sup>68</sup> Ciccarini, *Ultimi roghi*, 89.

by the theoretical statements in books 1 and 4 and by the numerous descriptions of nature throughout *Pentateugum*, reveals both Andrei Bialobotskii's closeness to Socinianism and the creative combination of distinct religious inspiration in his work.

What is more, several statements in *Pentateugum* highlight the importance of personal consciousness and moral behavior—cornerstones of the Socinian catechism of Raków.<sup>69</sup> The speaker expresses this idea in *Pentateugum*'s second book: "Let us disappear as you have lived" (st. 35, l. 4), and: "Consciousness reveals the essence of things, denounces your sins" (st. 38, l. 3).<sup>70</sup> For Bialobotskii, consciousness and virtuous behavior are the measure of eternal destiny, of which the individual is only responsible because "virtue is the coronation of everything" (book 1, st. 20, l. 2).<sup>71</sup> These verses convey a conception which is in line with the Socinian belief that God has put humans in the condition of shaping their own lives through free will, without being subject to predestination but following their consciousness. Contrasting Lutheranism and Calvinism, Faustus Socinus also emphasizes human responsibility and free will, rejecting original sin, as we can see in the Socinian catechism of Raków.<sup>72</sup> In this text, sin is not described as a legacy inherited from previous generations but as a "voluntary transgression" carried out by the individual; sinners are likewise "rebels" for Andrei Bialobotskii (book 2, st. 38, l. 2).<sup>73</sup> Bialobotskii, like Socinus, theorizes the identity of religion and ethics and conceives of Christianity as a method to achieve salvation. For both the Socinians and Bialobotskii, this method is based on the free choice of following Christ's example and the norms included in the Gospel. In *Pentateugum*'s second book, Bialobotskii posits the conduct illustrated by Jesus during the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 25: 34-45) as the criterion to attain eternal life. In the fourth book, he turns to individual choice and judgment: "Do not stand there, stupid man [...] Let us look at these things, let us observe this" (st. 2, ll. 1-2; st. 3, l. 1).<sup>74</sup> This address to individual will reveals that for both Bialobotskii and the Socinians individuals can make right choices by using the reason and the will that are present in each of us since divine creation. This echoes such statements on will in the Catechism of Raków as: "Commonly by nature there is very little power in people to do what the Lord God wants them to do; but the will to do it is by nature in everybody."<sup>75</sup> In reevaluating ethics, Bialobotskii and the Socinians reclaim tolerance, showing that they bear similarities on issues of religious politics as well. Johann Crell (1590-1633), a German theologian who lived and preached in the same Polish Unitarian environment in which Bialobotskii grew up, affirms that it

<sup>69</sup> Wilbur, *A History of Unitarianism*, vol. 1, 431-443. I refer to the Racovian Catechism published in 1619. See *Katechizm* (Raków: Rakówa Akademia, 1619), 2.

<sup>70</sup> Panchenko, *Ruskaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 229-230.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>72</sup> In it, for instance, we read: "Is not human free will corrupted by the original sin? You have no original sin. It could not destroy human free will. For even from the Holy Writings it is nowhere shown that there was original sin and the fall of Adam, since there was only one person, and he could not have such power that he spoiled the nature of Adam himself, and with preparation that of all his descendants." See *Katechizm*, 80.

<sup>73</sup> *Katechizm*, 80; Panchenko, *Ruskaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 230.

<sup>74</sup> Panchenko, *Ruskaia sillabicheskaia poeziia*, 240.

<sup>75</sup> *Katechizm*, 81.

matters more how a person lives and acts than their religious confession.<sup>76</sup> In his *Confession of Faith*, Bialobotskii also affirms that “although the regulations of the Holy Greek and Roman Churches differ, those who in any way cannot discern which faith is the more certain and pious, will be saved in both.”<sup>77</sup> According to Bialobotskii, obedience to God and to the model represented by Jesus Christ matters more than the blind obedience to dogmas, unintelligible to human reason. In the seventeenth century, when religious wars ravaged Europe, such principles often led to suspicions and accusations of infidelity and even persecution.

The conception of nature as uncreated and eternal and, above all, the centrality of individual and ethical responsibility bring Andrei Bialobotskii close to the Socinians and simultaneously lead to stark criticisms against his work. Yet, the idea of Socinians—and Bialobotskii—that righteous behavior matters more than adhering to one specific religious doctrine had the potential to lead to religious tolerance, thereby opening the path to the philosophies of Locke and Voltaire and to the reception of other religious movements in eighteenth-century Russia.

## Conclusion

*Pentateugum* testifies to an ongoing process at the turn of the eighteenth century in East Slavic territories; namely the beginnings of authorial and literary poetry and the opening to Classical and western European culture.<sup>78</sup> We have seen how, in many passages of *Pentateugum*, mythology and Rome’s past glory often function as negative examples of punished vanity. However, their inclusion within the poem allows for their reception within East Slavic culture. Such an interweaving of diverse elements demonstrates that the stark opposition between Orthodox religious culture and Classical and secular culture does not adequately represent the process of artistic creation and the sharing of knowledge in Muscovite Rus’ at the turn of the eighteenth century.<sup>79</sup> Instead, Andrei Bialobotskii welcomes elements that are foreign to the East Slavic cultural system and merges them with those that are foundational of this system. Bialobotskii especially welcomes and spreads the focus on the natural order and on the human self and reason that is typical of Classical and Renaissance philosophies, especially that of Ramon Llull, whose works have

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<sup>76</sup> Tworek, “Education: The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth,” 380. Kot, *Socinianism in Poland*, xxv, 156.

<sup>77</sup> Quoted from Ciccarini, *Ultimi roghi*, 171.

<sup>78</sup> This cultural phenomenon is analyzed in several works. See, for example, Alekseeva, *Russkaia oda*, 14, 33-52; Sazonova, *Rannee Novoe vremia*; Viktor M. Zhivov, “Religioznaia reforma i individual’noe nachalo v russkoi literature XVII veka,” in *Razyskaniia v oblasti istorii i predystorii russkoi kul’tury* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul’tury, 2002), 323-324, 328, 332.

<sup>79</sup> Among the recent studies on the religious roots of the East Slavic Enlightenment, see, Andrey Ivanov, *Spiritual Revolution: The Impact of Reformation and Enlightenment in Orthodox Russia 1700-1825* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2023); Olga A. Tsapina, “Pravoslavnoe Prosveshchenie—oksiumoron ili istoricheskaiia real’nost’?” in *Evropeiskoe Prosveshchenie i tsivilizatsiia Rossii*, eds. S. Ia. Karp & S. A. Mezin (Moscow: Nauka, 2004), 301-313. Elise Wirtschafter, *Religion and Enlightenment in Catherinian Russia: The Teachings of Metropolitan Platon* (DeKalb: NIU Press; 2014).

inspired trends of thought that eventually led to the Enlightenment.<sup>80</sup> These ideas, fostered by knowledge of Socinianism, are in tune with those that were then spreading across Europe, such as John Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689). At a time when religious controversies could culminate in accusations of heresy and death sentences—which Bialobotskii endured in the first person—his choice of proposing a cultural model based on the inclusion of diverse, apparently contradictory, cultural elements appears as even more brave and original. In this context, forging a poetic voice that speaks through the voice of other authors and men of letters allows him to foster the dynamism of early modern East Slavic culture and to promote ideas of religious tolerance and dialogue among cultures.

Although *Pentateugum* exemplifies phenomena that would become prominent a few decades later, its reception was limited to Muscovite elite circles. However, between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these are the circles where artistic and cultural experimentations were in full swing. Hence, further analysis and reflection on this work can enrich our understanding of the cultural milieu of the time and of the various paths that have brought to the East Slavic Enlightenment. At the literary level, studying Andrei Bialobotskii's literary endeavors provides a further tile to the mosaic leading to the establishment of the literary sphere and of authorial literature, specifically philosophical poetry.<sup>81</sup> At the historical level, examination of *Pentateugum* can significantly contribute to current debates about why only some of the possible realizations of the early Enlightenment ever took place in Muscovite Rus' and, later, Russia.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, throughout the eighteenth century, the ever closer contacts with west European culture help such movements as neoclassicism and Freemasonry and such philosophies as espoused by Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and the radical Enlightenment to take root and to

<sup>80</sup> Gorfunkel' points out that the "*Great Science* never reached printing press [...] [yet] throughout the eighteenth century, it remained a favorite reading within the democratic circles of readers." See Gorfunkel', "Andrei Belobotskii," 212-213. On Lull and the Enlightenment, see, Lola Badia, Joan Santanach i Suñol & Albert Soler i Llopart, *Ramon Llull as a Vernacular Writer: Communicating a New Kind of Knowledge* (Martlesham: Boydell & Brewer, 2016), 265-310; Josep Batalla, "Lull as Lay Philosopher and Theologian," in *A Companion to Ramon Llull and Lullism*, eds. Amy Austin, Mark D. Johnston & Alexander Ibarz (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 399-532; Mark D. Johnston, *The Spiritual Logic of Ramon Llull* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Teun Koetsier, "The Art of Ramon Llull (1232-1350): From Theology to Mathematics," in *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric: the Journal of University of Bialystok* 44:1 (2016): 55-80; Andranik Tangian, *Analytical Theory of Democracy: History, Mathematics and Applications*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Dordrecht: Springer Nature, 2020), 94-98.

<sup>81</sup> P. E. Bukharin, "O problematike dukhovnykh od M. V. Lomonosova," in *Russian Literature* 75, nos. 1-4 (2014): 57-71; Marcus C. Levitt, "The Ode as Revelation: On the Orthodox Theological Context of Lomonosov's Odes," in *Early Modern Russian Letters* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2009), 320-338; Lidiia I. Sazonova, "Ot russkogo panegirika XVII veka k ode M. V. Lomonosova," in *Lomonosov i russkaia literatura* (Moscow: Nauka, 1987), 103-126.

<sup>82</sup> On the early Enlightenment, see, Wayne Hudson, *The English Deists: Studies in Early Enlightenment*, vol. 7 (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); James R. Jacob, *Henry Stubbe, Radical Protestantism and the Early Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture: Religious Intolerance and Arguments for Religious Toleration in Early Modern and "Early Enlightenment" Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Jon Parkin & Stanton Timothy, *Natural Law and Toleration in the Early Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Ann Thomson, *Bodies of Thought: Science, Religion, and the Soul in the Early Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).



overcome the moderate mediation operated by Andrei Bialobotskii.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, his experimentations help us to complete the picture of the unique cultural vibrancy that characterized Muscovite Rus', as well as recognizing its original literary forms and its refined philosophical reflections.

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<sup>83</sup> I refer to the notion of radical Enlightenment as elaborated by Margaret Jacob in *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981). Also see, Margaret Jacob, "The Radical Enlightenment and Freemasonry: Where We Are Now," in *Philosophica* 88:1 (2013): 13-29; eadem, "How Radical Was the Enlightenment? What Do We Mean by Radical?," *Diametros* 40:40 (2014): 99-114.