**Summary**

This volume contains an annotated Russian translation of a culminating Christological work by Maximus the Confessor: Opuscula Theologica et Polemica (Opusc.). The translation was made by Arkadi Choufrine (Princeton University) and Dmitry Chernoglazov (St. Petersburg State University) and edited by Grigory Benevich (Russian Christian Academy for the Humanities), who also wrote an introduction and commentary to the text. This edition represents the most detailed analysis of the work to date. The book can be treated as a continuation and a development of the work written by Benevich and Choufrine that is represented in a monograph, St Maximus the Confessor. Refutation of Origenism and Monoenergism, published by St Petersburg University Press in 2007.

In the previous work, the two major contributions made by Maximus Confessor to the theological tradition, namely his refutations of Origenism and Monoenergism, were studied as belonging to the same context. In the present work, the main emphasis is on Maximus’s polemics against the Monoenergists and the Monothelites. However, his works of the previous period are also taken into consideration as an important basis for the development of his thought. Maximus’s views in the *Opusc*. are shown to be a reformulation and development of his views from the previous period; though some tensions between them (especially in the context of the last period of Maximus’s polemics against the Monothelites) are also noted.
In the introduction, G. Benevich gives an overview of the historical and theological context of *Opusc*., taking account of the most recent scholarship in patristics and church history. The main themes of the introduction to the present translation can be seen from the titles of its chapters: *Opusc*. 1 and the combination of *Ambigua ad Thomam* and *Ambigia ad Iohannem*; Prehistory of the Monoenergist Union of Cyrus; Monoenergist Union and St. Sophronius’s reaction; Letter 19 of Maximus the Confessor; Patriarchate of St. Sophronius and the question of “the Council of Cyprus” (an alternative history); “God-man activity” in the *Ambigua ad Thomam* in the context of the Monoenergist crisis; Prehistory of Monothelitism and of the polemics against it; Special features of the *Ecthesis*; After the *Ecthesis*; Theological and polemical writings of 640−643, their order and main themes; On the interpretation of the unitary formulas in *opusc*. 7, 8 and 20; Interpretation of the Gethsemane prayer and the problem of the relative appropriation; Opinions and hypotheses on what was new in St Maximus’s position after 643; *Opusc*. 16 and the issue of natural and gnomic will; Maximus’s refusal of γνώμη and προαίρεσις in Christ, philosophical and theological aspects; Alliance with Rome; Dispute with Pyrrhus, historical reality and text; On the way to the Lateran Council; Historical events and St. Maximus’s works of 645−648; *Opusc*. 11 and the status of the Lateran Council; In lieu of a conclusion, Problems in the current discussions of the Opusc.

In the wake of P. Sherwood and D. Bathrellos, a new attempt is made to suggest the order in which the Opusc. were written. In this, not only textual and historical data has been taken into consideration, but also the novelty and complexity of the issues that were, according to our hypothesis, more and more complicated with the growth of the controversy. In the discussion of Maximus’s interpretation of the Gethsemane prayer, emphasis is placed on the importance of his theory of Christ’s relative and compassionate appropriation of our disobedience. Only within a complex understanding of the two dimensions of the Maximus’s interpretation of the Gethsemane prayer (essential or “physical” appropriation of the human will and relative appropriation of our disobedience) can his view of this issue be properly understood. The process of Maximus’s formulation of the relative appropriation concept in the context of his polemics against the Monothelites is analyzed starting with its possible background in *amb*. 7.
Deification of the human energy and will in Christ from the moment of the Incarnation is treated in this study as the foundation of the whole of Maximus’s teaching on Christ’s two energies and wills. This deification was expressed differently in different periods of Maximus’s life. One way of expressing it was the use of the unitary formulas in Christology. However, when polemics against the Monothelites reached a climax after 643, Maximus avoided using these formulas. The same concept of deification, however, was expressed by the notion of the human will’s σύμφυσις (symphysis) with God’s will, which presupposed that from the moment of Incarnation it was shaped and moved by God without losing its freedom. This deification kept both God’s and human freedom, though Maximus’s Christological model was fundamentally different from that of the Nestorians and the semi-Nestorians among the Chalcedonians.
His view was not that the two constituents implied by the Areopagite’s expression “theandric energy” were not united in any real way (as a too literal reading of the Tome of Leo might suggest); but that they were united in two ways. For Maximus, (as seen particularly from Ambigua ad Thomam), there were two “theandric” energies in Christ, one of them being manifested in His miracles and the other in His voluntary passions; rather than just two natural energies and wills (one purely human and one purely divine). Even if some of the Monoenergists did have the same idea (as Richard Price had recently proposed), only in Maximus do we find the most clear and elaborate expression of this teaching.
In our discussion of Maximus’s refusal of γνώμη and προαίρεσις in Christ, we stress that these notions in his later works were used with a different meaning compared to that of his works written before the controversy against the Monothelites. We do not agree, however, with modern attempts to reject or underestimate Maximus’s later teaching as occasional and purely polemical. Refusal in Maximus’s later works of γνώμη and προαίρεσις in Christ and in the saints expressed an important idea of an absence of the choosing process in a state of deification. In our study a parallel is drawn between the Neoplatonist’s statement (beginning with Iamblichus) that προαίρεσις is absent in gods and godlike souls and Maximus Confessor’s statement (made in his polemics against the Monothelites) that προαίρεσις is absent in Christ and the saints. Our understanding of Maximus’s interpretation of this matter presupposes particularly that in Gethsemane Christ made a choice without choosing. In the last chapter of the introduction, noting a set of problems in current discussions of the Opusc., we touch upon some papers delivered at the International Symposium on Saint Maximus the Confessor (Belgrade, October 18−21, 2012). We focus particularly on those in which a concern was raised about the need to save Orthodox teaching from a “totalitarian” holistic interpretation that would abolish the difference between God and His creatures, as well as between the saints. In this context we emphasize that Maximus’s late teaching, especially expressed in *opusc*. 1, put equal stress on the need for a total deliverance of the human will to God (according to the pattern compassionately given to us by Christ in Gethsemane), and on the personal difference between the saints in their way of being and movement in God, which corresponds to the measure and character of their love for Him. There is no need to keep deliberate choice and gnomic will in heavens for the preservation of these personal differences.

An addendum to the present translation of the *Opusc*. contains a paper by G. Benevich: “St Maximus Confessor in Russia.” This is a longer version of an article written in English for the Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor (forthcoming), an observation of translations of Maximus and scholarship on him in Russia. In this paper it is particularly noteworthy that many views found in modern “personalistic” interpretations of Maximus’s teaching on Christ’s wills had already been expressed in 1933 by Fr. Sergey Bulgakov. Bulgakov, however, was critical of Maximus and openly rejected some of his ideas, (particularly, regarding the absence of a gnomic will in Christ). On the other hand modern personalists, though they are also unhappy with this teaching, often say that they are following Maximus’s thought.