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Eastern Orthodox Ecclesiologies in the Era of Confessionalism

"[I believe] in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church."
—Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed

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The Eastern Orthodox Church was a self-evident phenomenon in Byzantine society. It was the dominant religion and established church of the Byzantine Empire. This milieu did not further theological reflection on ecclesiology. St. John of Damascus (d. ca. 750), the most influential systematic theologian of the Byzantine era, did not treat ecclesiology at all in his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. The situation drastically changed, however, after the fall of the Byzantine Empire. The Eastern Orthodox Church became a tolerated religion, its members merely one of many officially protected religious minorities (Arabic: *ahl al-dhimma*; Ottoman Turkish: *zimmi*) among the sultan's subjects.[1] The Eastern Orthodox Church was also influenced by the drastic changes in the West that were caused by the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in the 16th century. The Roman Catholic Church influenced Eastern Christianity through the activities of *De Propaganda Fide* established by Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585) to promote uniatism among the Eastern and Oriental churches (i.e., subjection to papacy). The Protestants also took an interest in Eastern Christianity in their propaganda war with the Roman Catholic Church. The Eastern and Oriental Christians, furthermore, became pawns in the *Realpolitik* of the Western Roman Catholic

[1] On the concept of protected religious groups (*ahl al-dhimma*) in Islamic law see Joseph SCHACHT, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982) 130-133.

and Protestant powers.[2] This new situation confronted the Eastern Orthodox Church with ecclesiological issues. How should the four marks of the church (*notae ecclesiae*) found in the ninth article of the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan creed be understood in this situation?[3] This question was answered by various official and quasi-official Eastern Orthodox confessions and catechisms produced during the era of confessionalism.

The present study will analyze ecclesiologies found in a representative selection of these monuments of post-Byzantine Eastern Orthodox theology. The documents chosen for the present study are the *Confession of the Catholic and Apostolic Eastern Church* (1625) by Metrophanes Kritopoulos,[4] the *Orthodox Confession of Faith* (1653) by St. Petro Mohyla,[5] the *Confession of Faith* (1672) by Patriarch Dositheos II (Notaras) of Jerusalem,[6] and the *Longer Catechism* (1839) by St. Filaret (Drozdov) of Moscow.[7] The two most influential documents here mentioned are St. Petro Mohyla of Kiev's *Orthodox Confession of Faith* and Dositheos' *Confession of Faith*. Mohyla's *Orthodox Confession* is a catechism originally composed in Latin and later revised and translated into Modern Greek by Meletios Syrigos. The revised Greek translation was approved by the pan-Orthodox council of Jassy, 1633, and again by the council of Jerusalem, 1672. Dositheos' *Confession of Faith* contains the articles adopted by the same council of Jerusalem. These two theological monuments served as doctrinal norms (*norma normata*) for Eastern Orthodox theology until the beginning of the 20th century. The second most important document is the *Longer Catechism* of the Russian

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2 For a general history of the Greek Orthodox Church during the Ottoman period, see Steven RUNCIMAN, *The Great Church in Captivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968). For an overview of Greek Orthodox theology during the Ottoman period see Gerhard PODSKALSKY, *Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1453-1821)* (München: C. H. Beck, 1988). For a general historical overview of Eastern Orthodox theology, see Jaroslav PELIKAN, *The Christian Tradition 2: The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

3 It should be noted that "catholic" refers to the mark of catholicity in the Nicaeno-Constantinoplitan creed throughout the article and not to the Latin or Roman Catholic Church. The Eastern Orthodox Churches usually refer to themselves as "catholic" since they consider themselves to represent the Church mentioned in the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan creed.

4 The edition used in the present study is found in Ioannis KARMIRIS, *Ta Dogmatika kai Sumbolika Mnēmeia tēs Orthodoxou Katholikēs Ekklēsias 2* (Athens: 1953) 498-561.

5 The edition used in the present study is found in KARMIRIS, *Dogmatika 2*, 593-686.

6 The edition used in the present study is found in KARMIRIS, *Dogmatika 2*, 746-73.

7 The edition used in the present study is *Prostarnnyj Hristianskij Katihizis Pravoslavnyja Kafoličeskija Vosčnyja Cerkvi* (7th ed., Kiev: Tipografija Kievo-Pečerskoj Uspenskoj Lavry, 1907). English translation in R. W. BLACKMORE, *The Doctrine of the Russian Church* (Aberdeen: A. Brown & Co., 1845) 29-142.

Church, which was not received by the Greek-speaking churches but was used as doctrinal norm by the Slavic churches. The confession of Kritopoulos, a private document somewhat influenced by Lutheranism, has been influential as a theological monument among some Greek theologians. These theological monuments represent the most influential attempts at constructing Eastern Orthodox ecclesiology in the era of confessionalism.[8] As Professor Jaroslav Pelikan notes, the Eastern Orthodox Churches regard the symbolic books and their status with a certain ambivalence.[9] The symbolic books do, however, represent attempts by the theologians and the hierarchy to handle theological problems that confronted the Eastern Orthodox Churches.[10]

The Confession of Kritopoulos

The church is treated in the first part of chapter seven of Kritopoulos' confession.[11] The rest of this chapter deals with written and unwritten revelation (i.e., scripture and tradition) and baptism. Kritopoulos begins the chapter by stating that some people think that the church is the assembly of all those who in some way believe in the proclamation of the Gospel (*sustēma pantōn tōn tō euangelikō kērugmati hopōsoun peisthentōn*): both Orthodox Christians and heretics. He continues, however, by stating that others think that the church is only the assembly of the Orthodox Christians who are completely sound in their Christian doctrine (*sustēma monōn tōn Orthodoxōn kai peri ton Christianismon kata panta hugiainontōn*), for which reason the church is called holy.

After giving these two contradictory opinions about the church, he quotes the ninth article ("I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church") of the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan creed and proceeds to discuss the four marks of the church. He states that the church fathers call it "one" because of its uniformity and simplicity of faith (*dia to monoeides kai haploun tēs pisteōs*), and he quotes Ephesians 4:5 ("one faith, one baptism"). It is "holy" because of the saints who constitute it and are sanctified by the Holy Spirit (*dia to hagious einai, ex hōn sunistatai, hagiasthentas tō panagiō tou Theou Pneumati*). It is

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8 Jaroslav PELIKAN and Valerie HOTCHKISS have published English translations of these three Greek doctrinal monuments with introduction in *Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition 1* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003) 245-68. On the *Longer Catechism* of the Russian Orthodox Church and its author St. Filaret of Moscow, see Georgii FLOROVSKY, *Ways of Russian Theology 1* (*Collected Works*, 5), trans. Robert L. NICHOLS (Belmont, MA: Norland Publishing Company, 1979) 212-20.

9 PELIKAN — HOTCHKISS, *Creeds*, 246-51.

10 See PELIKAN, *Eastern Christendom*, 280-95.

11 *Homologia tēs Anatolikēs Ekklēsias tēs Katholikēs kai Apostolikēs*, 7 (KARMIRIS, *Dogmatika 2*, 527-31).

"catholic" because the unity of all the local churches spread out everywhere, through the bond of the Holy Spirit, constitute the one and universal church (*dia tēn henōsin tōn hapantachou diesparmenōn merikōn ... ekklēsiōn, hai pasai tō sundesmō tou panagiou Pneumatos mian kai katholēn apostelousin*). It is "apostolic" because it teaches the pure apostolic doctrine.

Kritopoulos finishes his commentary on the four marks of the church by stating that the church is not assembled by itself but by the one trinitarian God. He states that the aim of the church is for people to imitate Christ, and it is therefore that the church is said to be composed of saints and imitators of Christ and not of all people. He also quotes 2 Corinthians 11:2, 1 Timothy 3:15, and 1 Corinthians 12:27, and states that inspired scripture includes several titles for the church: the bride of Christ; the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of truth; the body of Christ. He continues to state that the Holy Spirit has given the church these designations and that it is necessary to believe in the holy church, which has received these designations from the Holy Spirit. He claims, however, that there is a difference between believing in God, as the omnipotent and truthful creator and ruler of visible and invisible creation, and in believing in the church: the church is not omnipotent, but she is truthful in everything and cannot deviate from goodness since she is directed by God.

Kritopoulos notes, however, that there is a great controversy in his time concerning the whereabouts of the catholic and apostolic church, a result of the aftermath of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. He states that people driven by controversy and strife divided themselves into many sects who lay claim to apostolicity and orthodoxy. How is one to find the true church?

Kritopoulos gives four criteria for recognizing the true catholic and apostolic church of antiquity: (a) that all her teachers and pastors are unanimous; (b) that she receives everything, which has been handed down by many and right-believing persons, without subtraction or addition; (c) that she is persecuted and survives persecutions; (d) that she faithfully and diligently serves the word of God (*to theion rēma*), which God has given through the prophets and apostles, and which the church guards as a great and heavenly treasure.

Kritopoulos then continues to make a distinction between the written (i.e., scripture) and unwritten (i.e., tradition) word of God. After discussing the canon of scripture, he states that sacred scripture has been entrusted to the church by God as a great treasure. He states that the church is the guardian of and guide to sacred scripture. The church is the guardian of

scripture since she guards it faithfully and diligently from additions and subtractions. The church is the guide to scripture since she interprets and explains obscurities in an orthodox fashion which is pleasing to God. Therefore, states Kritopoulos, the church is the pillar and bulwark of truth which upholds and defends the orthodox faith until death. After dealing with the written word of God, Kritopoulos turns to the unwritten word of God and states that this is the tradition of the church which the Holy Spirit has given her without writing in secret. The examples of the unwritten word of God given by Kritopoulos are the ritual form of the sacraments. He ends chapter seven by discussing baptism, and continues with the rest of the sacraments in the following chapters.

Kritopoulos adheres to an idealist ecclesiology, i.e., the church is not a concrete institution but an ideal which is realized in various Christian confessions. He presents two contradictory ecclesiological positions in the beginning of his treatment, but both are idealistic: the inclusive idealist ecclesiological position, which perceives the church as *congregatio christianorum*, and an exclusive idealist ecclesiological position, which perceives the church as *congregatio orthodoxorum*. The contrast to a realist ecclesiology becomes evident when it is noted that Kritopoulos does not mention apostolic succession when treating the apostolicity of the church, which is only doctrinal to him. Kritopoulos' ecclesiology could be defined as a moral-sacramental idealist ecclesiology: the church is the assembly of those who believe in the Gospel, imitate the moral example of Christ, obey the commandments of Christ, and are sanctified by the Holy Spirit through the seven sacraments (baptism, chrismation with myron, the Lord's supper, penance, the priesthood, the first marriage, and anointing with oil), which are visible and efficacious signs of God's promises.

The Confession of Mohyla

Mohyla treats the church in questions 82-96 (on the ninth article of the creed) in the first part of his catechism.[12] The ninth article is given in question 82. Mohyla states that this article teaches four things (questions 83-86). The first thing (question 83) this article teaches is that the church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. The proof-texts given by Mohyla are 2 Corinthians 11:2[13] and Ephesians 4:5-6.[14]

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12 *Orthodoxos Homologia tēs Pisteōs tēs Katholikēs kai Apostolikēs Ekklēsias tēs Anatolikēs*, 1.82-96 (KARMIRIS, *Dogmatika 2*, 629-35).

13 "...for I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (NRSV for this and for all subsequent biblical citations).

14 "...one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all."

The second thing (question 84) that Mohyla claims to be taught by the ninth article is that the catholic church receives its name from no place and that all the local churches within it are equal. He states, however, that Jerusalem is the mother church, because it first was filled with the presence (*parousia*) of Christ; it was Jerusalem that first received eternal salvation and the remission of sins, and it was there the Gospel was first preached. Mohyla supports this statement with references to Luke 24:46, 48; Acts 1:8; 11:2, 17-18, 22; 15:2, 28; 16:4. After proving the ecclesial motherhood of Jerusalem, Mohyla proceeds to refer to canon 3 of the first ecumenical council of Constantinople (381), which states that Rome and Constantinople have received primacy because of the empire, which is ruled from these cities. Mohyla finally states that the church is called catholic because its faith and teaching have been received by all nations.

Mohyla states that the third thing (question 85) taught by the ninth article is that Christ is the only foundation (*themelion*) of the church, and he quotes 1 Corinthians 3:11 as a proof-text.[15] Mohyla notes, however, that the apostles and prophets are called foundations (*themelia*) in some other places in scripture (e.g., Revelation 21:14 and Ephesians 2:20), but this does not mean that they are the simple and primary foundations of the faith (*den einai haplōs kai prōsōs themelia tēs pisteōs*) since only Christ is the simple and primary foundation, while the apostles and prophets are secondary foundations. Mohyla continues by stating that Christ did not found the church on any man but on himself, as true God, and on his teaching. The ninth article is said to teach that only Christ is the head of the church according to the teaching of the apostles, and Ephesians 5:23 and Colossians 1:18 are given as proof-texts.[16] He claims that the bishops are called heads of their own churches, but this only means that they are the vicars of Christ in their own eparchies and local heads according to Acts 20:28;[17] Christ is the true archpastor or chief shepherd according to 1 Peter 5:4.[18]

The fourth thing (question 86) said to be taught by the ninth article is that all Orthodox persons should be obedient to the church according to

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15 "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ."

16 "Christ is the head of the church" and "He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything."

17 "Keep watch over yourselves and the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [*episkopous*], to shepherd the church of God."

18 "And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades."

the teaching of Christ, and Matthew 18:17 is given as proof-text.[19] Mohyla states that the church exercises its power through ecumenical councils that examine scripture, judge popes and patriarchs, and impose penal sanctions and penances on delinquent persons according to the canons. Therefore, the church is the pillar and bulwark of truth, according to 1 Timothy 3:15.

Questions 87-95 deal with the nine precepts of the church (*hai entolai tēs Ekklēsias*): (a) to pray daily and go to church on Sundays and feast days; (b) to keep the fasts of the church; (c) to be respectful towards the clergy; (d) to go to confession four times a year; (e) to avoid heretical literature; (f) to pray for those in authority; (g) to observe special fasts and prayers prescribed by the local bishop; (h) not to appropriate ecclesiastical property and goods; (i) not to celebrate marriages on days prohibited by the church and to avoid unchristian forms of entertainment.

Question 96 is the last question on the ninth article, and it raises the issue of how one can believe in the church, which is a creature, when we are obliged to believe only in God. Mohyla answers that although the church is called a creature since she is composed by human beings, Christ, the true God, is her head and the Holy Spirit continuously teaches her and makes her the bride of Christ. Furthermore, the dogmas and doctrines of the church are not human but divine. Mohyla concludes that when we say that we believe in the church it means that we believe in her sayings handed over by God (*eis ta theoparadota tēs logia*) and in the dogmas inspired by God (*theopneusta dogmata*). Mohyla states that this not only means that we believe in the Gospel but also in the rest of scriptures and the conciliar decrees.

Mohyla adheres to a realist ecclesiology: the church is primarily a visible institution and not an ideological movement. Much of Mohyla's ecclesiology is a reaction against the claims of the papacy. Mohyla emphasizes the equality of all local churches and that all bishops are the vicars of Christ in their own eparchies. He does not think that primacy within the church is a divine institution but a political one. Mohyla's concept of church is also much more institutional than Kritopoulos' concept: the church is not merely the guardian and interpreter of scripture but also possesses real jurisdiction over her faithful. While Kritopoulos' concepts were influenced by Lutheranism, Mohyla's concepts are clearly influenced by Roman Catholic scholastic theology.

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[19] "If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."

The Confession of Dositheos

Dositheos treats the church in definitions (*horoi*) 10-12 of his confession.[20] Decree 10 begins by making a distinction between the militant church in this world and the triumphant church in heaven. Dositheos states that some heretics confuse the militant church and triumphant church, since both are the sheep of God, have the same Chief Shepherd, and are sanctified by the same Holy Spirit. The holy, catholic and apostolic church is the militant church on pilgrimage in this world towards the heavenly fatherland, while the triumphant church has already arrived; both the militant and triumphant church have Christ, and no mortal man, as their head. This distinction is meant to reject the doctrine that the church is only composed of the saved (i.e., the Protestant doctrine of *congregatio sanctorum*), maintaining instead that the militant church is composed both of sinners and saints while the triumphant church is composed only of saints. Dositheos expands on this topic in decree 11, where he states that the catholic church (i.e., the militant church) is composed only of all the faithful who have received and adhere to the immaculate faith which has been handed down, preached and interpreted by Christ, the apostles and the holy ecumenical councils. These faithful are members of the catholic (i.e., militant) church even if they are guilty of all kinds of sins. Decree 10 states that if they were not members of the catholic church, she could not judge them and guide them to repentance through her salutary precepts. Those who adhere to the faith of the church are still considered members of the church despite their sins, in order that they not fall into despair.

The second topic dealt with in decree 10 is the necessity of the episcopacy. Dositheos begins by attacking the Calvinists for claiming that there is no difference between priests and high priests (i.e., bishops). Dositheos states that bishops are necessary, and without bishops there can be no church and no Christians. The bishops are the successors of the apostles, who, in continued succession of the impositions of hands, have received the grace of the Holy Spirit from Christ (i.e., apostolic succession). The bishops are the instruments of the Holy Spirit; they are the fountain of all the sacraments of the catholic church through which salvation is imparted. Each bishop is the high priest in his own local church. After establishing the necessity of the episcopacy, Dositheos continues with the difference between bishops and priests: only bishops can ordain, and a bishop can be ordained only by other bishops. Priests, on the other hand, cannot impart to others the grace of orders they have received but only celebrate the other sacraments. Without a bishop there can be no priests.

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[20] *Homologia pisteōs*, horoi 10-12 (KARMIRIS, *Dogmatika 2*, 751-55).

Decree 12 deals with the authority of the catholic church. It is stated that the catholic church is taught by the Holy Spirit whom Christ sent from God the Father to teach the truth and illuminate the faithful. Dositheos states, however, that the Holy Spirit does not directly illuminate the church but does so indirectly through the medium of the holy fathers and leaders of the catholic church. Scripture is said to be the indirect word of the Holy Spirit spoken through the medium of apostles and prophets. Dositheos states that, in the same manner, the Holy Spirit speaks through the medium of fathers and doctors of the catholic church, who constitute the rule of faith together with scripture. The ecumenical councils are, furthermore, said to be the last criteria of the rule of faith. The Holy Spirit is said to continuously work through the medium of the church fathers and leaders in order to deliver the church and the faithful from every error.

Dositheos, just like Mohyla, adheres to a realist ecclesiology. However, Dositheos' ecclesiology reacts to Calvinism with a different emphasis than Mohyla's ecclesiology, which is a reaction to uniatism. Dositheos solves the problem of how the church can be called the assembly of the saved and saints when so many of its members are blatantly sinful by making a distinction between the militant church in this world, composed of both sinners and righteous, and the triumphant church in heaven, composed of the saints and saved. Both the militant church and the triumphant church have Christ, and not the pope, as their head, and are sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Dositheos' ecclesiology is markedly episcopo-centric: the bishops, the successors of the apostles, are the fountains of sanctifying grace – the instruments through which the Holy Spirit sanctifies and governs the militant church. The bishops are obliged to obey the canons and dogmatic definitions of the seven ecumenical councils, which are also seen as instruments, together with scriptures and the church fathers, through which the Holy Spirit governs the militant church.

The Longer Catechism of the Russian Church

The church is treated in the questions concerning the ninth article of the creed in the Longer Catechism of the Russian Church.[21] The church (*cerkov*) is defined as a divinely instituted society of people (*obščestvo čelověkov*) united by the orthodox faith, the law of God, the hierarchy (*svjaščennonačalie*), and the sacraments. After this general definition, the following issues are treated: belief in the church, the unity of the church, the holiness of the church, the catholicity of the church, and the apostolicity of the church.

21 *Prostrannyj Katihizis*, 43-51.

According to the catechism, to believe in the church is to honour the true church of Christ, and to obey her teaching and precepts from a conviction that the salvific grace from her only and eternal head, the Lord Jesus Christ, always abides in her and operates, teaches, and governs her. The reasons given for why one believes in the church, despite the fact that she seems to be a visible object, is, firstly, that the grace which abides in her and in those sanctified by her is not visible and, secondly, that she is composed both of the visible church of all Orthodox Christians on earth and of the invisible church of the saints in heaven.

After treating the definition of the church and belief in the church, the catechism treats the unity of the church. The church is said to be one since she is one spiritual body, has one head, Christ, and is animated by the one Spirit of God; the church is the body of Christ and Christ is her only head.[22] A distinction is made between the unity of the church and the organizational division of the church into particular churches, e.g., Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Russia. These particular churches are parts of the one catholic church. Although they have separate organizations, they are spiritually members of one body of the catholic church, which has Christ as its only head and has one spirit of faith and grace. The spiritual unity of the particular churches that compose the one catholic church is said to manifest itself in their having one single creed and communion with one another in prayer and the sacraments.

After treating the union of the particular churches, the catechism addresses the union of the militant church and the triumphant church. The church on earth and the church in heaven are said to be united with one another since they have both the same head: Jesus Christ. The mutual communion between the militant church and the triumphant church is said to manifest itself through the invocation of the mediatory prayers of the saints and through the miracles and apparitions of the saints, and especially by miracles worked through relics.

The *Longer Catechism* continues to treat the holiness of the church. The church is said to be holy since she is sanctified by the passion, teaching, and prayer of Christ, and by the sacraments. The issue of how the church can be holy when she has sinful members is solved by stating that sinners who purify themselves by true repentance do not affect the holiness of the church, but impenitent sinners are cut off from the body of the church either by the visible church authority or by the invisible judgment of God.

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22 *Prostrannyj Katihizis*, 44; *Doctrine*, 77.

Thereafter the mark of catholicity is treated. The Russian words used to render the Greek adjective *katholikě* are *sobornaja* ("conciliar") and *kafoličeskaja* ("catholic"), and these words are glossed as *vselenskaja* ("universal"). The church is said to be catholic since she is not limited to any place, time or people but contains true believers of all places, times, and people. Infallibility in matters of faith is said, with a reference to the confession of Dositheos, to be a privilege of the catholic church. It is finally stated that it is necessary for salvation to belong to the catholic church since she keeps the true faith and is the body of Christ which contains all true believers. Three reasons are given for the name *Eastern Church*: (a) Paradise was planted in the East; (b) it was in the East in Judea where Christ appeared and completed the work of salvation; (c) it is the churches of the East that have kept the orthodox, catholic and ecumenical faith of the seven ecumenical councils pure and unchanged.

Finally, the mark of apostolicity is treated. The church is said to be called apostolic since she has received in uninterrupted succession her teaching and the gifts of the Holy Spirit from the apostles. It is stated that it is also for this reason the church is called *orthodox* (*pravoslavnaja*) or *right-believing* (*pravověrujuščaja*). The ecclesiastical hierarchy (*cerkovnaja ierarhija*) is said to be the institution through which the apostolic ministry is preserved. Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles are said to be the origin of the hierarchy that the Orthodox Church has received through an uninterrupted succession of the laying on of hands in the sacrament of orders.

After deriving the hierarchy of order from the apostolicity of the church, the catechism addresses the hierarchy of jurisdiction. A universal council (*vselenskij sobor*) is said to be the only authority with jurisdiction over the whole catholic church. The main parts of the catholic church are, furthermore, said to be under the hierarchical authority of the Orthodox patriarchs and the Most Holy Synod. The various regions and the cities are said to be under the hierarchical authority of the metropolitans, archbishops, and bishops. Finally, it is stated that the Most Holy Synod holds the same rank in the hierarchy of the church as the patriarchs.

After treating the definition and marks of the church, it is stated that those who wish to fulfill their duty of obedience to the church may learn what she requires from her children by studying sacred scripture and the canons of the apostles, the canons of the ecumenical councils, the canons of the local councils, the canons of the church fathers, and the ecclesiastical statutes.[23]

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[23] *Prostrannyj Katihizis*, 43-51; *Doctrine*,75-83.

The ecclesiology of the *Longer Catechism* is interesting since, on the one hand, it sums up the preceding development of ecclesiology within the paradigm of confessionalism, and, on the other hand, shows a great influence of popular piety in its treatment of the unity between the militant church and the triumphant church. The *Longer Catechism* is not as polemical in its tone as are the confessions of Mohyla and Dositheos. The Orthodox Church was the established church in Imperial Russia, and was protected by the state and a constitutive element of the Russian national consciousness, which made a popularization of controversial theology less relevant in Imperial Russia than it had been in the Ottoman Empire and the Polish commonwealth, where Roman Catholic missionaries were spreading uniatism. However, the strong focus on obedience, authority and hierarchy indicates a certain influence of the structure of Russian autocratic society on the ecclesiology of the *Longer Catechism*.

Conclusions

The Eastern Orthodox ecclesiologies that developed during the era of confessionalism were strongly influenced by two historical factors: (a) the paradigm of confessionalistic theology, and (b) the cultural, historical, and political contexts in which these theological monuments were composed. The three monuments first examined were all composed in the 17th century by Eastern Orthodox ecclesiastics living and working in non-Orthodox states (the Ottoman Empire and the Polish commonwealth). Two of these ecclesiastics – Kritopoulos and Mohyla – had studied at universities in the West, and were influenced by Protestant scholarly theology and Catholic scholarly theology, respectively; the third – Dositheos – was an autodidact.

The Confession of Kritopoulos was not composed within the context of theological controversy but was an exposition of Eastern Orthodox doctrine composed in answer to the inquiry of some Protestant friends. The almost agnostic ecclesiology of Kritopoulos was partly due to the influence of his studies at a Protestant university, but also to the fact that he did not compose his confession in response to a theological controversy; he had no theological adversary to trump. For these reasons, Kritopoulos could afford to be vague in his ecclesiology. The three other theological monuments that have been analyzed in the present study did not have that luxury; they were the products of controversy.

The confessions of Mohyla and Dositheos were composed in the context of controversy with Catholicism, Calvinism, and Lutheranism. They not only give an exposition of the teaching of the Eastern Orthodox Church but also define this teaching against other Christian confessions (Catholicism,

Calvinism, and Lutheranism). Against Protestantism, they emphasize the institutional aspects (hierarchy and sacraments) of the church, and at the same time, against Catholicism, they emphasize that Christ is the only universal head of the church. Furthermore, they emphasize the equality of order within the episcopacy and the autonomy of the bishops in their own eparchies against the papacy's claim of universal jurisdiction.

The *Longer Catechism* received much from the preceding ecclesiological development of the confessions of Mohyla and Dositheos, but it was composed in a very different context. The Orthodox Church was the established church of the Russian empire and enjoyed the protection of the state; it had no acute need to define itself in the presence of other Christian confessions. The ecclesiology of the *Longer Catechism* is also influenced by the social structure of the Russian autocracy: it does not emphasize the equality of order of the episcopacy or the autonomy of the bishops in their own eparchies, but emphasizes hierarchy and obedience. The claims of the papacy are principally met by emphasizing that Christ is the only head of the catholic church and that only an ecumenical council has universal jurisdiction over the catholic church. It is also interesting to note that the treatment of the relationship between the militant church and the triumphant church in the *Longer Catechism* does not seem to be directed primarily against Protestantism but rather to be an attempt to give a theological interpretation of the manifestation of popular piety, i.e., the veneration of saints and relics.

The development of ecclesiological reflection on the ninth article of the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan creed in Eastern Orthodox Christianity is a good example of the relationship and tension between the received tradition of the church and the kerygma of the church in an ever-changing socio-cultural experience: the recurrent issue of *interpretatio duplex* – how must a normative document be interpreted in the light of its historical context and what does this normative document mean for the historical period in which it is interpreted?