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THE RELIGIOUS AND THEOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION OF PROTOPRESBYTER GAVRYIL KOSTELNYK

The first half of the twentieth century was a tumultuous era for Ukraine, characterized by wars, revolutions, and significant socio-political changes. Havryil Kostelnyk, a notable philosopher, theologian, and writer, played a significant role in these events, particularly as the organizer of the Unifying Council in Lviv in 1946, which dissolved the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC). His legacy is complex, often interpreted through varying ideological lenses. This article aims to clarify Kostelnyk's intellectual stance, exploring whether he was a neo-Thomist, a modernist, or something else entirely.

Several scholars, including Myroslav Oleksyuk, Yulian Tamash, Iryna Mirchuk, and Pavlo Sodomora, have categorized Kostelnyk as a neo-Thomist. They argue that his work demonstrates a reconciliation of faith and knowledge, a hallmark of Thomistic philosophy.

Despite this classification, a deeper analysis suggests that Kostelnyk's views do not align well with neo-Thomism. Critics like Ihor Zahrebelnyi argue that the label of neo-Thomism has been applied too simplistically, based on a narrow understanding of Thomistic philosophy. Kostelnyk himself was skeptical of scholasticism. His divergence from Thomistic theological aspects and his critical stance towards Catholic doctrines further question his classification as a neo-Thomist.

Scholars like O. Hirnyk and I. Zahrebelnyi propose classifying Kostelnyk as a Catholic modernist instead. Kostelnyk's later works, particularly his energetic cosmology and unusual views on the soul, support this position and show his further distance from Catholic teachings. His concepts often verge on Orthodox theological principles, particularly evident in his later manuscript «Logic». This progression shows a shift to ideas more aligned with Eastern Orthodoxy.

Havryil Kostelnyk's intellectual journey defies simple classification. While some scholars classified him as a neo-Thomist, this view does not withstand deeper scrutiny. His theological explorations and criticisms align more with Catholic modernism, yet his evolving ideas eventually resonate strongly with Orthodox Christianity. Kostelnyk's legacy is thus one of a thinker who transcended traditional Catholic frameworks, ultimately advocating for a theological synthesis closer to Orthodoxy. This nuanced understanding challenges previous simplistic categorizations and highlights the complexity of his intellectual contributions.

Key words: Havryil Kostelnyk, Christianity, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, Neo-Thomism, Catholic modernism, scholasticism, faith and knowledge, religious faith, religion and science, mysticism, soul, religious conflicts, religious security.

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РЕЛІГІЙНА ТА БОГОСЛОВСЬКА ІДЕНТИФІКАЦІЯ ПРОТОПРЕСВІТЕРА ГАВРІІЛА КОСТЕЛЬНИКА

Війни, революція, значні соціально-політичні зміни – ось неповний список того, через що пройшла Україна в першій половині ХХ ст. Гавриїл Костельник, видатний філософ, богослов та письменник, відіграв не останню роль у цих подіях, зокрема як організатор Об'єднаної собору у Львові в 1946 р., що ліквідував Українську Греко-Католицьку Церкву (УГКЦ). Спадщина протопресвітера Гавриїла є складною і часто

інтерпретується через різні ідеологічні призми. Ця стаття має на меті прояснити інтелектуальну позицію Костельника, досліджуючи, чи був він неотомістом, католицьким модерністом чи кимось зовсім іншим.

Деякі вчені, зокрема Мирослав Олексюк, Юліан Тамаш, Ірина Мірчук та Павло Содомора, класифікували Костельника як неотоміста. Вони вказують, що Костельник у своїх працях часто займається примиренням віри і знання, що є характерною рисою томістичної філософії.

Попри це глибший аналіз свідчить, що погляди Костельника з неотомізмом узгоджуються погано. Критики цієї позиції, такі як Ігор Загребельний, стверджують, що Костельника неотомістом було названо помилково, базуючись на вузькому та спрощеному розумінні томістичної філософії. Сам Костельник скептично ставився до схоластики. Його свідомо опозиція до схоластики та критичне ставлення до католицьких доктрин ще більше ставлять під сумнів його класифікацію як неотоміста.

Учені, такі як О. Гірник та І. Загребельний, пропонують альтернативну точку зору: Костельник є католицьким модерністом. Пізніші праці отця Гавриїла, зокрема ті, де описана його енергетична космологія та незвичайні погляди на душу, підтримують цю позицію і показують значну віддаленість Костельника від католицького вчення. Концепції пізнього Костельника часто мають багато спільного з православними богословськими принципами, що особливо видно в його рукописі «Логіка». Ця еволюція показує перехід до ідей, більш узгоджених зі східним християнством.

У цілому інтелектуальний шлях Гавриїла Костельника не піддається простій класифікації. Хоча деякі вчені зараховували його до неотомістів, цей погляд не витримує глибшого аналізу. Богословські дослідження та критика отця Гавриїла більше підходять католицькому модерністу, проте кінцевий стан його ідей більше схожий із православним віровченням.

Ключові слова: Гавриїл Костельник, Українська Греко-Католицька Церква, католицизм, православ'я, неотомізм, католицький модернізм, схоластика, віра та знання, релігійна віра, релігія та наука, містика, душа, релігійні конфлікти, релігійна безпека.

The first half of the twentieth century was an extraordinarily dramatic period for Ukraine. It was marked by two world wars, a revolution, the collapse of the Russian Empire, the bloody creation of the Soviet Union, numerous armed conflicts, and famine – just to name a few of the challenges Ukrainians faced during that era. A direct witness and participant in these events was protopresbyter Havryil Kostelnyk – a philosopher, theologian, writer, and remarkable thinker. His intellectual stature and authority were recognized by both friends and foes; however, Havryil Kostelnyk is primarily known as a public figure. He was the initiator and organizer of the Unifying Council (or Pseudocouncil, as Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics call this assembly) in Lviv in 1946. While smaller in scale compared to the aforementioned events, this council remains memorable to many Ukrainians because its decisions touched on sensitive aspects of human life: religion, ideology, and politics.

Conflicts on religious grounds are particularly painful, and the effects of such conflicts are remembered for a long time. The Unifying Council in Lviv in 1946 legally dissolved a Christian denomination – the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), which is why religiously oriented people remember this event. However, as often happens with events that bring about painful changes in the religious sphere, the attitude

towards the Council and its main organizer, Havryil Kostelnyk, is shaped not by factual factors but by the positions formed within various groups based on religious, ideological, and political views. In other words, the average Ukrainian's knowledge about the Council and Father Havryil is largely shaped depending on whether they belong to the Catholics (RCC or UGCC) or any of the Orthodox churches in Ukraine (UOC, UAOC, OCU, UOC KP). Catholics tend to view Kostelnyk as a traitor and generally perceive all his activities through this prism. Orthodox followers, on the other hand, do the opposite and try to depict every element of Father Havryil's biography as a sign of his sincere conversion to the Orthodox Church. Fortunately, modern Ukrainian scholars have moved away from such a simplified perception of this complex figure and have tried to give a more profound evaluation of Kostelnyk's theological views.

Speaking more specifically, in Ukrainian and global religious studies, there are several positions regarding Father Havryil. The most numerous and historically first is the opinion that includes Kostelnyk among the neo-Thomist philosophers. Myroslav Oleksyuk, Yulian Tamash, Iryna Mirchuk, Pavlo Sodomora, and many others – all these scholars called Kostelnyk a neo-Thomist. The reasoning behind this position varied among the thinkers, but all four pointed to the special attitude towards the process of cognition

and the connection between cognition and faith as the main (or at least one of the main) reasons for including Kostelnyk in neo-Thomism. This presents a certain trap for Kostelnyk's researchers, but we will talk about this later.

Myroslav Oleksyuk, a Soviet scholar and philosopher, was perhaps the only scientist who examined Kostelnyk's work in the Soviet Union. Myroslav Myronovych explores the philosophical and theological system of Father Havryil in several works, among which the most notable is "The Struggle of Philosophical Currents in the Western Ukrainian Lands in the 1920s and 1930s". The author, in a manner characteristic of a Soviet scholar, considers the achievements of Ukrainian thinkers, including Kostelnyk, through the dichotomy of "materialism/idealism". According to the scholar, neo-Thomism was the main direction to which the members of the UGCC and leading religious thinkers of Western Ukraine in the 1920s and 1930s, including Kostelnyk, belonged (Oleksyuk, 1970, p. 217). It is clear that Kostelnyk's studies are subjected to criticism and evaluated as hostile and incompatible with the prevailing Marxist-Leninist paradigm of the time (Oleksyuk, 1970, pp. 220–223). However, such an attitude did not prevent Oleksyuk from, albeit somewhat superficially, outlining the specifics of Kostelnyk's philosophical and theological system: substantial energy of being, critique of atheism on various levels, reconciliation of faith with scientific ideas (Oleksyuk, 1970, pp. 227, 234), etc.

The next scholar who attempted to evaluate Father Havryil's philosophical achievements was Yulian Tamash, a famous Rusyn scholar, poet, literary critic, and prose writer. He made the first thorough attempt to analyze Kostelnyk's system of views, focusing mainly on his theological expositions. As a conclusion of his work "Kostelnyk between Doctrine and Nature", Tamash calls Father Havryil a theological "easterner", and his philosophical and theological system a specific version of neo-Thomism (Tamash, 2005, pp. 25–27).

Iryna Mirchuk, another Ukrainian researcher of Havryil Kostelnyk's work, comes to similar conclusions. In her work "Havryil Kostelnyk: Philosophical Views", she examines Father Havryil's main ideas, tries to find their origins, and demonstrates his wide acquaintance with the achievements of practically all European philosophical trends: from Antiquity to

contemporary socialists of Kostelnyk's time. Ms. Iryna shows how Father Havryil combines faith with knowledge, how he builds a theistic consciousness based on the scientific method of cognition, and reconciles the achievements of contemporary science with Catholic doctrine (Hlynka, 1934, pp. 125–129). From this, Mirchuk concludes that Kostelnyk is a neo-Thomist, as the doctrine of the reconciliation of faith and knowledge is most characteristic of this philosophical direction. This same argument – about the reconciliation of faith and knowledge – is used by Pavlo Sodomora (Sodomora, 2016, p. 368).

However, despite the prevalence of the position that Kostelnyk is a neo-Thomist, upon deeper analysis, it does not hold up to criticism. For instance, O. Hirnyk and I. Zahrebelnyi in many works criticize this paradigm and offer an alternative point of view – that Kostelnyk should rather be classified as a Catholic modernist.

Why Kostelnyk should not be considered as a neo-Thomist? There are several reasons. The main one is revealed by Ihor Zahrebelnyi. As part of his critique of the aforementioned paradigm, he claims that Father Havryil was classified as a neo-Thomist due to a simplified, stereotypical understanding of Thomism and the ideas of Thomas Aquinas himself (Zahrebelnyi, 2019, p. 55), the belief that the defining feature of Thomism is the reconciliation of faith and knowledge, and thus religion and science. In reality, however, the theology of Thomas Aquinas and his followers do not have a monopoly on the relationship between faith and knowledge. Yes, this issue is one of the main ones in Thomistic philosophy, but every significant philosophical trend that has existed or still exists in human history provides its own solution to the problem of the relationship between faith/knowledge and science/religion. And the fact that Kostelnyk devotes so much attention in his works to reconciling religion and science does not make him a neo-Thomist.

The second main reason why Father Havryil is unlikely to be called a neo-Thomist is the content of his ideas, among which neo-Thomist ideas are practically absent. On the contrary, scholasticism, including Thomas Aquinas, was evaluated by Kostelnyk with a significant degree of skepticism. For example, in "Three Treatises on Cognition," Kostelnyk criticizes scholasticism for "excessive systematization of cognition" (Kostelnyk, 1925, p. 151).

The attitude towards Thomas Aquinas and the question of his role in the Greek Catholic theological tradition even led to a conflict – first scholarly, then personal. Yosyf Slipyi, another notable Greek Catholic religious figure of this era, was an apologist for the ideas of Thomas Aquinas. He wrote several scholarly works in which he tried to demonstrate the significant role of Thomistic theological ideas (and, more broadly, scholasticism in general) for the orthodox theological tradition. His most comprehensive work was the treatise "Outline of the History of Medieval (Scholastic) Philosophy". Briefly, in the "Outline", Slipyi presents the history of scholastic philosophy and theology. He then describes the prejudice that had formed against scholasticism in the Orthodox environment (Slipyi, 1991, pp. 105-106) and uses past examples to show the way to unite the two traditions, Catholic and Orthodox, in the Union of Brest (Hlynka, 1934, p. 57). Besides this work, on December 19, 1924, Yosyf Slipyi presented a lecture "On the Influence of Saint Thomas on Oriental Theology", which develops the idea of the "Outlines."

Kostelnyk responded very vividly to both the treatise and the lecture. Less than a month later, on January 4, 1925, Father Gavryil presented a lecture "Saint Thomas Aquinas and Scholasticism" (Hlynka, 1934, p. 46), where he criticized the aforementioned ideas. Subsequently, the debate moved to the pages of periodicals. Kostelnyk published in "Niva", where comprehensive reviews of Slipyi's works "De principio spirationis in SS. Trinitate", "Saint Thomas Aquinas and Scholasticism", and the work "Let There Be No Misunderstanding" (1926) appeared. Yosyf Slipyi himself was published on the pages of the newspaper "Theology" – the works "Yet on Scholastic-Dogmatic Themes (Regarding Reviews by Father Dr. Kostelnyk)" and "In Response". Later, in "Memoirs", Slipyi sought the origins of the polemic launched against him by Kostelnyk, primarily in his intellectual envy (Slipyi, 2014, p. 132).

The aforementioned conflict can be called a classic example of the polemic between "Westerners" and "Easterners". These two directions within Greek Catholicism differed significantly, and the main difference in views lay in the question of the Latinization of the Union. "Westerners" advocated for the maximum convergence with

Roman Catholics in everything, primarily in religious cult (appearance of churches, form and order of services, celibacy of the clergy, etc.) and theological tradition. Conversely, "Easterners" stated the opposite – maximum defense of the UGCC's uniqueness: maintaining the Orthodox external rite, continuing the practice of married white clergy, and creating their own unique theological tradition. Father Havryil, as a prominent representative of the "Easterners", found himself in conscious opposition to the scholastic part of the doctrine in the Union. Such sentiments in principle do not allow Kostelnyk to be classified as a representative of neo-Thomism. From the perspective of Catholicism, Kostelnyk more likely belongs to the stream opposed to neo-Thomism, namely to Catholic modernism. I. Hrynioch believed this, for example. Kostelnyk "was known for his liberal and modernist theological convictions" (Zahrebelnyi, 2019, p. 167).

However, before discussing this position, it is worth highlighting two assumptions that lie between these two poles. The first, asserted by B. Dombrovsky and S. Ivanyk, is that Kostelnyk is a disciple of Tvardovsky and belongs to the Ukrainian branch of the Lviv-Warsaw Philosophical School. In his work "The Lviv-Warsaw Philosophical School (1895-1939)", Dombrovsky claims that Kostelnyk attended Tvardovsky's lectures, benefited from his advice, and used similar research methods. (Dombrovsky, 1989, pp. 13–18) S. Ivanyk continues this idea and asserts the similarity in the "philosophical style" of thought between Tvardovsky and Kostelnyk. As an example, Ivanyk offers the work "On the Notion of Negation and Nothing in Human Cognition". The common analytical method, the logical-psychological perspective on the problem, and the clear "logicality" of thought – these features, according to Ivanyk, are shared by both thinkers, (Ivanyk, 2012, p. 114), and therefore Father Havryil can be considered a member of the Lviv-Warsaw Philosophical School. However, this thesis seems weak. Is the fact that a student attended lectures by a famous thinker and used a similar method in his own research sufficient to be called a disciple and member of a philosophical school, especially when this method is widely accepted? Probably not. Undoubtedly, interest in logic and the laws of thought is characteristic of all periods of Kostelnyk's creative path, but it's

challenging to determine how much of it is due to Tvardovsky's influence, how much to his education at the University of Freiburg, and how much to his specific Rusyn background. And there are quite a few influencing factors like these. Therefore, the thesis that Kostelnyk was under some influence of Tvardovsky seems more plausible. Again, the question of the significance of this influence remains open – it requires further research.

The second position, articulated in the works of O. Sheremeta, posits that Kostelnyk is a liberal Catholic. The scholar largely agrees with the statements of Oleg Hirnyk, that the thesis of Kostelnyk's Catholic modernism is the most convincing. She then adds that "his appeal to scientific discoveries was also dictated by the desire to find scientific arguments in favor of religion and to defeat materialism in the field of natural sciences" (Sheremeta, 2015, p. 60). Kostelnyk's religious philosophy was "an apology for experience, intuitionism, vitalism, idealism, criticism of materialism based on modern physics and biology" (Sheremeta, 2015, p. 61). And although both theses may be agreed upon, they cannot serve as arguments in favor of Kostelnyk's Catholic liberalism. Catholic liberalism focuses on the church-state relations, freedom of conscience, religious rights of individuals, and other socio-political aspects of Catholic Church life. Ontological questions of being or the interaction of faith and reason are related to liberal Catholicism only indirectly.

If we delve into this issue, it's possible to consider Kostelnyk a liberal Catholic. Father Havryil often touches upon the social dimension of UGCC life and raises questions about the interaction of religious organizations with the state government. Few of his works, are dedicated to these issues – for example, "The Boundaries of Democracy" (1919). However, there is a lack of analysis of such works by Ms. Oksana. Unfortunately, Ms. Oksana Sheremeta has published only two short articles in which she attempted to portray Kostelnyk as a liberal Catholic. And while this position raises scholarly interest and claims to be credible, the level of development of the theme does not allow us to fully assert or refute this position. This position requires further research.

O. Hirnyk provided the most detailed argumentation in favor of the thesis about Kostelnyk's modernism (Hirnyk, 2008, pp. 66-83).

He identifies three characteristics of Catholic modernism reflected in the priest's works. The necessity of adapting Christian religious-philosophical thought to the modern achievements of natural sciences (especially physics and biology); the need to democratize the Catholic Church (in Kostelnyk's case, this involved the autonomy of the cultural and religious life of the Ukrainian Church, and the idea of the "restoration of old Byzantium"); and the socio-political aspect (Hirnyk, 2008, p. 68).

In response, first, it is true that protopresbyter Havryil, in his efforts to combat atheism and reconcile science with religion, indeed goes beyond the bounds of Catholicism. A prime example of this is Kostelnyk's teaching on spiritual energies and everything that follows from it – understanding of the soul, a specific cosmology, the defining role of knowledge and information perception in a person's spiritual life, etc. More details can be found in the article "The personal gnoseological theory of Havryil Kostelnyk and its place in his theological views". In short, in his search for tools to defend theistic consciousness against atheism, Father Havryil transfers some contemporary physicists' conceptions to the realm of the spirit. He begins to view the universe and the spiritual dimension through an "energetic" prism. Everything spiritual is energy of certain types, including the soul. This energy affects all being and humans, creating Kostelnyk's scheme of consciousness-knowledge-spiritual energy. It is from here that Father Gavryil builds his gnoseological theory, which plays one of the main roles in forming and changing human psyche.

Kostelnyk demonstrates this side of his intellectual legacy in many works, among which the most important are "De principiis Cognitionis Fundamentalibus" (1913), "Philosophical Natural Conception" (1914), "Space and Universe. A New Metaphysical Theory" (1916), "The Limits of Democratism" (1919), "Three Treatises on Knowledge" (1925), "Das Princip der Identitat – Grundlage aller Schlusse" (1929), "Ordo logicus" (1931), and "Logic" (1945, manuscript). The last manuscript is particularly interesting in the context of this article, as in "Logic", Kostelnyk formulates his "spiritual-energetic" views into a final version. And this version, unquestionably going beyond the bounds of Catholic doctrine, is very close to Orthodox views. For example, let's consider

the doctrine of the soul. In "Three Treatises on Knowledge", the energetic understanding of the soul is clearly visible, but in "Logic", it changes. The soul is now connected with consciousness, not energy. Kostelnyk comes to believe that a conceived human receives a soul from the parents just as they do a body – through union, effectively repeating the doctrine of Traducianism. This doctrine, according to Catholic dogmatics, is erroneous, yet it is entirely acceptable in Orthodoxy.

Thus, some of Kostelnyk's ideas from the perspective of Catholicism are indeed modernist, especially everything related to "spiritual energetics". These expositions by Father Havryil are largely beyond the scope of Christianity and more reminiscent of occult teachings. However, the evolution of the priest's views, mainly recorded in the manuscript "Logic", stands very close to Orthodox theological thought. It is not yet clear whether all the views of the "late" Kostelnyk conform to Orthodox canons, as research in this direction continues. However, both the "late" and the "early" Kostelnyk undoubtedly go beyond the bounds of Catholic doctrine. This creates an interesting situation – from the perspective of Roman Catholicism, Father Havryil is indeed a modernist, but from the perspective of Orthodoxy, his views, though extravagant, are not heretical. In the person of Father Gavryil, Catholic modernism becomes equivalent to Orthodoxy. Quite an amusing situation.

Secondly, the "autonomy of the cultural and religious life of the Ukrainian Church" for Father Havryil is by no means a reform of the Catholic Church, since he did this already being Orthodox. Regarding the "restoration of old Byzantium", such an argument can hardly be seen as proof of Kostelnyk's modernist position, as Kostelnyk in his theological searches concludes that the ideal Union is the state of the Church before the split into Eastern and Western. An important clarification – initially, just beginning to review Catholic dogmatics, Father Havryil does not equate "old Byzantium" with Orthodoxy.

Practically all scholars dealing with Kostelnyk's intellectual legacy mark an important date – 1925. It was then that the nature of Father Havryil's research changed. Before this, his main interest was in criticizing atheism, but after a trip to Rome in 1925, Kostelnyk begins a critical review of Catholic doctrine. The concept of the "restoration

of old Byzantium" first appears in the small brochure "The New Era of Our Church" (1926), in which the author calls for a return to the roots of the Union and to find such a foundation that will fulfill its main task – the union of Eastern and Western Christianity (Kostelnyk, 1996, pp. 13–14). It is here that the concept of a "new" or "correct Union" first appears. Under this concept, the priest envisions bringing Greek Catholicism to a point of subjectivity equal to that of Christianity during its unity of East and West. In other words, in "The New Era of Our Church", the protopresbyter declares the need for a "new Union" and begins its development. And the key to the "restoration of old Byzantium" for Kostelnyk was to review the existing doctrine of Greek Catholicism, to isolate everything that was superimposed after the 1054 Schism, and to bring the Union to a state that would make possible the union of Eastern and Western Christianity. (Kostelnyk, 1996, p. 6)

After "The New Era of Our Church", Father Havryil consistently reviewed all areas of Catholic dogmatic teaching. As a result of this process, Kostelnyk delineated everything he considered erroneous. For example, he called the practice of celibacy unevangelical – Kostelnyk even supported the protest of the Stanislav seminarians against the mandatory implementation of celibate clergy (Perevezziy, 2003, p. 432). Father Havryil criticized Catholic liturgical theology and defended the Orthodox-origin practice of performing the epiclesis. He concluded that the following doctrines were heretical by nature: the primacy and infallibility of the Bishop of Rome; the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son (Filioque); the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary; the doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage. Additionally, Kostelnyk was very critical of visions experienced by nuns, which had prompted the introduction of the feasts of Corpus Christi and the Sacred Heart.

Putting these views together, it is quite clear that Kostelnyk considered all the most significant innovations in Catholicism that appeared after 1054 to be erroneous. And returning the Union to such a state, the state of the undivided Church of the first millennium, is for Kostelnyk the "restoration of old Byzantium" and a necessary condition for the union of all Christian denominations. Another matter is that the actual state of "old Byzantium", as formed by Father Havryil, is identical to

Orthodoxy. However, Kostelnyk conducted his theological explorations not with the goal of uniting with Orthodoxy, or more precisely, this idea did not arise immediately. Initially, Havryil Kostelnyk's criticism of Catholicism was a tool for seeking subjectivity for Greek Catholicism. He aimed to transform Greek Catholicism from within so that the UGCC would no longer be just another division of the Roman Church, but would start to fulfill its original function – the union of Eastern and Western Christianity. For this, Father Havryil began a systematic review of Roman Catholic doctrine to identify what he considered to be true, undivided Christianity. Later, in the 1930s and especially the 1940s, this theoretical drive changed – Kostelnyk became disillusioned with the idea of uniting all branches of Christianity here and now. This motif is evident, for example, in his article "Mission" (1942). Instead, he came to the conclusion that true Christianity remained in the form of Orthodoxy, and became the initiator and main participant in the process of uniting the Galician Metropolia and the Orthodox Church. In 1943, the protopresbyter publicly declared his position. At the diocesan council in Lviv, Father Gavryil openly criticized the "Latin" tendencies of Greek Catholicism and called for the rejection of Catholic dogmas in the Union, which were unknown to the Universal Church in the first millennium of its existence (Petruk, 1995, pp. 4–5). Thus, the idea of "old Byzantium" can hardly be a reason to identify Kostelnyk as a Catholic modernist. And even if it were, since the desire to review the dogmatic teaching of the UGCC led the protopresbyter to Orthodoxy, we again face a situation where Catholic modernism is equivalent to Orthodoxy.

Third, the socio-political aspect, although often used by theologians, is not exclusively reserved

for them. Not all Catholic theologians who write on socio-political themes are Catholic modernists. And in the case of Kostelnyk, not all Catholic modernists who write on socio-political themes are Catholic theologians.

Thus, towards the end of his life, Kostelnyk took up a modernist position that was little different from Orthodoxy. Here, there is more likely an ambiguity of the term "Catholic modernism", which if desired, can be used to describe a great many things. Including the views of protopresbyter Havryil, which by the end of his life were practically identical to Eastern Orthodoxy, albeit with some specific nuances.

Conclusions. The scholarly depiction of protopresbyter Gavryil Kostelnyk as a neo-Thomist and a Catholic modernist requires reconsideration. While his intellectual pursuits and critiques initially align with modernist attempts to update Church doctrine, a deeper analysis reveals that Kostelnyk's theological journey veers significantly towards Eastern Orthodoxy. His critiques of Thomism and later Catholic doctrines post-1054 highlight his departure from Western theological frameworks, advocating for a return to the Christian practices prevalent before the Great Schism. Ultimately, Kostelnyk's theological views and reforms align more closely with Orthodox Christianity than with the Catholic modernism label suggests. Labeling him as a Catholic modernist does not fully capture the Orthodox essence of his final theological positions. His work exemplifies not merely a modernist revision within Catholicism but a profound reorientation towards the ancient traditions of Christianity. This reevaluation helps to clarify Kostelnyk's legacy as one that transcends simple categorizations, positioning him as a bridge between Eastern and Western Christian traditions, yet fundamentally rooted in Orthodoxy.

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