

An Introduction to Petro Bilaniuk's Theological Work

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Foreword

As shown below in „A Systematic Abbreviation of Bilaniuk's Works in English“, Petro Bilaniuk's works can be divided by and large into two areas: historical and theological¹. It is true that these two domains often overlap inextricably each other². I do not intend to spend the rest of this brief essay discussing the proper drawing line between the two. Rather, my principal focus is to construe some cardinal attributes from the latter³ as an introduction to Bilaniuk's theological achievement on the eve of his 60th birthday.

Let there be no misunderstanding. The sheer title, presence and order of this essay in this *Festschrift* should in no way even hint at our rarefied respect and appreciation of Prof. Petro Bilaniuk as a top-notch historian of the Eastern Orthodox tradition and the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The following fact speaks for itself. At the formal request of the Most Reverend Archbishop Angelo Palmas, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in Canada, Bilaniuk completed a report on June 19, 1989 entitled „The Church in Ukraine and the USSR — 1989“ for His Holiness Pope John Paul II⁴.

Infrastructurally, this essay has three simple parts. It begins with an overview of Petro Bilaniuk's works, which is followed by a discussion of some major features found in his theological work, and concluded with a final remark.

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¹ It appears about half of his works in English is related to Eastern theology and the other half related to history of the Christian East, as found listed under „A Systematic Abbreviation of Bilaniuk's Works in English“, despite a thin line existing between the two.

² This seems confirmed by Toronto School of Theology: The Bulletin, 1991–1992, which put the two theological courses he taught during that academic year for Theological Department as „cross-listed courses to Historical Department“. They are SMT 3259 F: „The Mystery of Christ in Eastern Orthodoxy“ and SMT 3319 S: „Theology Anthropology in Eastern Orthodoxy“. See *ibid.* 47 Queen's park Crescent, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 2C3, 70. This bulletin is issued each year by Toronto School of Theology, an affiliated school of The University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

³ The author seems more familiar with Bilaniuk's theological work than with his historical work, as he has recently completed a Th. M. thesis entitled *Familization of the Totality of Reality: An Interpretation of Petro Bilaniuk's Concept of Eschatological Fulfilment*.

⁴ This is taken from Prof. Petro Bilaniuk's own unpublished List of Workshops and Panels attended and of Papers, Lectures, and Addresses delivered (dated from Autumn, 1962 to March 31, 1990), 28.