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Editorial

The question of political theology, once posed, is likely to return as many times as we attempt to take account of the present-day politics on its most profound level. It is now connected with the two crucial problems that concern, respectively, a vivid change in the field of religion often labeled with the term “secularization” on the one hand, and a gradual development of new framework for politics usually named the “globalization process” on the other hand. When we look on the Western liberal democracies, we see the certainty of faith generally undermined and religious authority somehow diluted while at the same time it is easy to discern a decline in statesmanship and a want of political imagination.

That exercising politics largely depends on the ultimate beliefs of those who become decision-makers is beyond any doubt. It is even plausible to assert that any serious vision of social order can be traced back to some religious source of inspiration or theological dogma, however such a point of departure may be deliberately concealed or disguised. Now, apart from traditional religious faith we must thus consider some new forms of faith which seem to dominate the landscape of modernity. The adherents of the modern state, as democratic as liberal as secularized, are not impartial referees of the day; they share

a faith, and often very strong one, in the benevolence of progress towards a world in which the authoritative tradition is found completely obsolete and religion as such is finally removed from the public sphere. Since, however, they have already failed in their efforts to discover a substitution for Revelation as a moral guide, and this failure looks overwhelming to all thinking men, the true result of the modern “optimism” is a moral vacuum that lurks behind all the mediocrity of today’s Western politics.

The world is certainly changing now. There are many fears and relatively less hope about the future. We do actually not know what will emerge from the current movements in Islamic world and even poorer is our knowledge about prospects for China. Certainly, to understand all-too-complicated processes that shape the world we must be able to reflect on the religious visions of politics in their proper appearance. This is also important in regard to the Polish question, so to speak. Can we find in Poland a model of relation between religion and politics sincerely opposed to the Western pattern of secularization and nevertheless wholly relevant to the claims of modernity? Or, rather, can we try to propose such a model out of the unique common experience of our nation? In any case, the first step is to rethink the way we should speak of religion in the times of change.

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