

DAVID NOVAK

## RELIGION AND NATIONALISM\*

It is not hard to see why the question of the relation of religion and nationalism is of great interest in Poland today. For fifty years the Polish nation was without national sovereignty, having been ruled by foreigners: by Germans or by Russians during the years 1939-1945, and by Russians during the years 1945-1989. Neither German Nazism nor Russian Communism was ever chosen by the Polish people as the form of government under which they wanted to live. Both systems of government were tyrannies imposed on Poland by outside powers. During that period of general political persecution, religion – indeed, all religions – were regarded as enemies of the state. The most that any religion could hope for in those dark days, even Roman Catholicism as the religion of the vast majority of Poles, was to be barely tolerated as a private nuisance.

As for the Jewish minority in Poland, the aim of the Germans was the physical annihilation of the Jewish people and their Judaism with them. The aim of the Russians was the annihilation of Judaism. Because of that policy and its effects, many Polish Jews who survived the German occupation of Poland chose to leave Poland following the defeat of the Germans in 1945. One significant question today facing Polish nationalism and religious Poles, most of whom are Catholics, is whether there is a place for Jews and their Judaism in the new Poland.

---

Prof. Dr. DAVID NOVAK – kierownik J. Richard and Dorothy Shiff Chair of Jewish Studies na Uniwersytecie w Toronto (Kanada).

\* This paper is based on a lecture he gave at the Catholic University of Lublin on 11 May 2001.

Even in the days of prewar Polish sovereignty (1918-1939), especially after the death of Pilsudski in 1935, most Polish Jews did not feel welcome in Poland, at least those who practiced Judaism. The place of Jews and Judaism in Poland is very much part of the question of religion and nationalism since religion and nationalism were so closely related the last time Poland was a self-governing nation. As a Jew who is very much concerned with the survival of my brothers and sisters in Poland, both physically and spiritually, I hope that Poles today will deal with the question of religion and nationalism better now than was the case in the past, whether a sovereign past or an occupied past. To better deal with this question now will be good for my own people here in Poland and good for the whole Polish nation who have been blessed with their political sovereignty being at long last restored to them. In the past, when nationalism and religion were over-identified, or when nationalism obliterated religion, the Jews suffered. I think all Poles – Christians and those of no religion – also suffered when the relation of religion and nationalism was improperly understood and improperly practiced politically. Hence a new and better understanding of the relation of religion and nationalism is good for Polish Jews, good for Polish Christians, and good for Poles who are neither Jews nor Christians.

The return of political sovereignty to the Polish nation and the return of religion as a fully public presence have been simultaneous. In fact, one of the most important, perhaps the most important, motivation for the Polish nation to work to regain its political sovereignty has been the need of many Poles to practice their religion in public. Most evidently, practicing one's religion in public is the right to celebrate religious rituals in public, like the impressive parade I saw in Cracow on St. Stanislaw's Day on Sunday, 13 May 2001, a parade that vividly showed me a particularly Polish expression of Catholic piety. But it is more than that. The right to practice one's religion in public means that one can look to his or her own religion as the primary source of moral convictions, and these moral convictions have a direct effect on what one proposes and supports in and for the political life of one's nation. In other words, the relation of religion and nationalism concerns both culture and morality, or as Jews would put it: "what pertains to the relationship between humans and God, and what pertains to the relationship between humans themselves" Certainly, the career of Pope John Paul II, the most famous Pole in history, illustrates this point most vividly.

But who am I to discuss this vital question with you? First, I am not a citizen of Poland. I am a citizen of the United States, who is a permanent resident of Canada where I now live and work. Second, I do not share the

Catholic religion of the vast majority of Poles. Third, I am not even of Polish Jewish origin. So, it seems I am at a triple distance from you here today, almost all of whom are Polish Catholics. My ties to Poland are quite indirect. They are only ties to today's Polish Jews since we are both living members of the Jewish people. They happen to live in Poland just as I happen to live in Canada. Yet, since many of today's Polish Jews have chosen to remain in Poland, even though most of them could emigrate to other countries, that means they see a future for themselves and their children in the new Poland. If people like yourselves are telling my people in Poland that they are now welcome in this country, then you and I have some important interests in common. Furthermore, this distance might enable me to bring to you a different perspective, one that could contribute to your thinking about what some philosophers like to call the "theologico-political question"

First, I come from countries (the United States and Canada) where, for the most part, to be religious – or, therefore, not to be religious – is seen to be a natural right of all the citizens. That does not mean that the state allows its citizens to be religious in the way that earlier regimes in Poland occasionally tolerated your religious practices as a private matter. It also does not mean that the state enforces some religion or other as a public duty. Instead, by recognizing the practice of religion to be a natural right, the state recognizes that the religious identity of its citizens is something prior to their identity as citizens. Religion, then, is older than the state in the same way that what is divine is prior in time and in significance to what is human. In other words, the state does not allow its citizens to be religious; instead, the citizens of the state do not allow it to control their religions. A purpose of the state is to respect all religions and even encourage their flourishing, and make sure that one religion – however many adherents it has – is not allowed to put any other religion at a political disadvantage. The only requirement the state could make of any religion is that this religion be able to respect its limited secular authority to govern most interhuman situations occurring within its realm. I might add, though, that how that relation between religion and the state actually works in society is one of the most debated issues in political, legal, and theological discourse in North America today.

Second, like almost all Jews I fully support the State of Israel, where Jews are, of course, the majority of the population. Nevertheless, since I live in the diaspora (outside of Israel), I can never assume that my people's religion could ever be taken to be the official religion of the state in which

I live. Because of this minority status, any over-identification of religion and nationalism or antagonism between religion and nationalism would hardly be in my self-interest as a Jew. So, for these two reasons, I might be able to bring to you a perspective that is different. Yet, that perspective comes from one who has members of his own people here in Poland who are concerned with the question of religion and nationalism as it arises here in Poland today. Thus I hope I am far enough from you to bring a different perspective, yet near enough to you to share some of your concerns.

Let us now define our terms. What is religion? What is nationalism? Religion is the relationship of a persons, who are members of a particular communal tradition, with their God. (It would seem that most atheists, who have rejected a dead god rather than a non-existent god – the latter being too abstract to explain the anger of most atheists – also have a religion inasmuch as one can certainly still have a relationship with a dead god in much the same way one can still have a relationship with a dead parent). Nationalism, on the other hand, is the relationship of a person with his or her own nation. Since humans are both religious and political beings, there is always some relation or other between one's religion and one's nationalism. Looking at past history, there seem to be five options as to how this relation is constituted: 1) religion and nationalism are identical; 2) religion authorizes nationalism; 3) nationalism authorizes religion; 4) nationalism and religion are totally separate; 5) religion both influences and limits nationalism. I want to argue that the fifth option is the best option, but that argument can be best made after we have examined the first four options and discovered why they are inadequate intellectually and even dangerous politically.

## I. THE IDENTITY OF RELIGION AND NATIONALISM

When religion and nationalism are identical, the inevitable result is that the nation becomes god to its members. Since the nation is governed by the state, and since the state is too abstract to be the object of worship, the leader of the state becomes the object of worship. He is taken to be the embodiment of the state, the incarnation of the national spirit. The national leader is taken to be a god because he rules but is not ruled; he judges but is not judged. It would seem that the minimal definition of anyone's god is

the one whom humans are to obey rather than rule, the one to whom we submit ourselves for judgment but whom we do not judge.

This identification of religion and nationalism would seem to be a problem for a people, like the Jews, for whom being a member of the Jewish people and a member of the Jewish religion are one and the same thing. Since being a member of the Jewish people is regarded as being a matter of divine election, even secular Jews, who claim not to be part of the Jewish religion, are still Jews. (Jews are elected by God either by their birth or by conversion through a personal experience of rebirth). However, the Jewish God is certainly not identical with the nation, the state, or its leaders. The nation, the state, the leaders, and all the people are to be ruled by God's most specific law and judged by God as to whether they have accepted or rejected that law. This is further emphasized by the teaching that the God of Israel is the ruler and judge of the entire universe. So, even though Jews believe God has a special relationship with the Jewish people, the biblical prophets clearly taught that the God of Israel also has a relationship with other peoples as well, and that they too can understand how they are bound by God's more general law and subject to God's judgment. And, in the eschatological future – the “End of Days” – the righteous of Israel (those who have affirmed God's law and judgment) and the righteous of all peoples will be fully joined together in one kingdom. In other words, religion and nationalism will cease to exist when God will enable humans to transcend all religious and national differences.

The most horrendous example of the total identification of religion and nationalism that history has ever seen was during the regime of Hitler and his Nazi followers. In this case, the German nation in the person of its leader was taken to be divine. Occasionally, Hitler would speak of a higher destiny of the German people, but that higher destiny was always to function in his interest and that of his own people. That destiny neither ruled nor judged anyone. Like everything else, it was seen to serve the nation in the person of its leader. It was, in effect, a projection of the national spirit (*Volksgeist*), the true object of the nation's worship. Here religion and nationalism became identical in the total divinization of the national spirit of Germany. The Nazis spoke of “one people, one state, one leader” (*ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Fuehrer*). They never spoke of “one God” (*ein Gott*) however. Since a nation that cannot see itself subordinate to anything that transcends itself, the German nation during the Hitler period had no positive point of reference outside of itself by which to identify itself. Instead, it required a demonic “other” through which to define itself negatively. No other people

suffered from this idolatry more than the Jews; no other nation-state suffered from this idolatry more than Poland. Thus any attempt to identify religion and nationalism in a self-justifying way has no answer to the charge that it is essentially a repetition of Nazi ideology, even if it does not yet have the power to commit atrocities on the scale on which the Nazis committed them. For this reason, both Jews and Poles must actively resist any temptation to identify religion and nationalism. We both know – through the destruction of so many of our bodies and, perhaps, even the destruction of some of our spirit – the dangers of this type of identification of religion and nationalism, where the nation becomes one's religion. The result of this seems to be that this identification leaves one with a bloodthirsty god in the end.

## II. THE AUTHORIZATION OF NATIONALISM BY RELIGION

When religion authorizes nationalism, a particular nationalism sees itself as functioning for the sake of a God who is more than a merely local deity. Only a religion that has adherents in many different nation-states can possibly authorize a particular nationalism without becoming totally identified with it. The religious authorization of nationalism occurs when a particular nation-state seeks the approval of a universal religion (like Judaism, Christianity, or Islam) that worships one universal God. That approval is sought because that nation-state is convinced that it is the best example of a polity dedicated to the God that religion worships. Unlike the total identification of religion and nationalism we examined above, nationalism here does not see itself as divine. Rather, this kind of nationalism sees itself as a human means to a divine end. This type of nation-state never denied that it is to be ruled by God not itself, and this type of nation-state certainly affirmed that it was under divine judgment, especially if it did not live up to its essentially religious purpose. In the history of Europe one sees several nations, like Spain at one time and Poland at another time, which were convinced that they were the best national embodiments of what a Catholic political order is supposed to be. The Prussian state frequently saw itself as the best national embodiment of what a Protestant political order is supposed to be.

The problem with this view of the religious authorization of nationalism is that it requires that all its full citizens are to be of the same religion.

Members of other religions, and certainly members of no religion, can only be, at best, second-class citizens of such a religiously constituted state. This was, of course, what was supposed to be the case during the period when European nations saw themselves as parts of "Christendom" especially when Christendom saw itself to be the "Holy Roman Empire" However, four historical events changed this situation radically.

First, there was division of the Christian Church into a western Catholic Church and an eastern Orthodox Church. For all intents and purposes, all the Christian nations could no longer regard themselves as parts of the same Christian religious community. Furthermore, many Christian nations now had significant minorities of Christians who belonged to churches different from the church of the majority. Perhaps the most vivid example of this is how Poland had a significant Orthodox minority when it ruled most of Ukraine, and how Russia had a significant Catholic minority when it ruled Poland a large part of Poland.

Second, there was the Protestant Reformation. Here the western Church became divided into the Roman Catholic Church on the one side, and several Protestant Churches on the other side. This division was so deep and so bitter that it led to two centuries of constant warfare among most of the Christian nations of Europe. This not only led to the problem of Protestant minorities in Catholic countries and Catholic minorities in Protestant countries. Over and above this problem, which had precedents in the Catholic-Orthodox schism and its political effects, the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic reaction to it led to the growing conclusion in Europe, especially in western Europe, that the religious authorization of any society was itself inherently divisive and politically unsettling.

Third, in the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation, during the so-called "wars of religion" more and more Europeans began to conclude that the state would be far better governed if its authorization was secular rather than religious. Thus no democracy in the west since the American Revolution of 1776 and, especially, since the French Revolution of 1789, has looked to a particular religion for its authorization. This is best symbolized by Napoleon's side-stepping the Pope to crown himself at his coronation as emperor of France in 1804. In this growing political secularism since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, even nations like Britain and Sweden, which still have state churches, have hardly looked to these churches for their political authorization, even though because of their being Christian churches they claim to be part of a universal religion. Thus nation-states like Britain or Sweden are no more Christian polities than are the United States, Canada,

or France. Indeed, few religious people today in Europe and the Americas would want to actually live in an officially religious state. The question for all religious communities is how they can best survive in such secularly authorized states.

Fourth, the political emancipation of the Jews, which began in western Europe in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, made the full religious authorization of modern nation-states a political anachronism. That is because the fully religious authorization of any nation-state requires that all those who are full citizens of the state are members of the same religious communal tradition. Thus in those states where all of the citizens were of the same religion, the Jews were not citizens but members of an essentially foreign community, who usually were allowed to live in these particular countries (that is, tolerated there) by virtue of a social contract between themselves and the monarch. As such, if the Jews were to be made full citizens of any nation-state, that meant two major political changes. One, the communal privileges and responsibilities of the Jews had to be ended. Thus the Jewish community changed from being a semi-autonomous polity within a polity (*imperium in imperio*) and became a merely voluntary association of like-minded individual citizens. Two, the state had to become officially secular, making no religious requirements for full citizenship. To be sure, there was residual Christian resentment over what was perceived as the loss of Christian political hegemony for the sake of the Jews. This led to all kinds of fantasies about Jewish designs on political power, which became manifest in the Dreyfus Affair in France in the 1890's, and the publication of the spurious tract, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Truth be told, though, the de-Christianization of political authority would have probably taken place anyway, whether there were Jews in Europe or not. But, there is no doubt that Jews were primary beneficiaries of this whole process of political secularization. Indeed, aside from some ultra-traditional Jews who would rather have the old Jewish communal independence in lieu of a secular polity based on individual rights, the vast majority of Jews – even the vast majority of religious Jews – saw this political secularism, despite all its risks, as being in the best interests of the Jewish people. The best proof of this overall Jewish acceptance of political secularism is the fact that when Jews regained their political sovereignty in the State of Israel, they chose to have for themselves an essentially secular democratic polity there. Thus, even in the State of Israel, Jews have had to deal with the theologico-political question in much the same way people in other democratic polities have had to deal with the question.



### III. THE AUTHORIZATION OF RELIGION BY NATIONALISM

After the breakdown of any real presence of Christendom in the real world of politics (*Realpolitik*), the relation of religion and nationalism did not end. The attempts of the radical French revolutionaries at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to eliminate the political and even the cultural role of religion could only be regarded as failures. What one began to see, however, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the reverse of what had been the case in the period before the French revolution. Instead of religion authorizing nationalism, nationalism was now taken to be that which authorizes religion.

The most important example of this historical shift took place in the new unified Germany under Bismarck after 1871. There, more and more, one's highest allegiance was to be given to the state. Religion was to be encouraged as something that prepared people to be good citizens of the secular polity. One did not have to be a member of the majority religion, or any religion, to be a full citizen of the state as was the case in the past. Nevertheless, the majority religion, as was the case with the official state Protestant Church in the Protestant provinces of Wilhelmine Germany, was given all sort of preferences. However, that did not preclude certain privileges being given to minority religions like Judaism. Thus many German Jews in the period of 1871-1933 went to enormous lengths to show how being Jewish made one a good German. That is why so many German Jews could hardly believe how quickly their newly won equal citizenship was torn away from them by the Hitler regime. They thought that the German people had accepted them as equally patriotic Germans. They thought the majority of Germans actually believed the propaganda some of their most prominent spokespersons had written for the Fatherland during World War I.

Nevertheless, without a transcendent source of both law and judgment, the God of Christianity (and Judaism) became, in effect, a civil servant of the essentially secular state. Much the same could be said of what has become to be known as the "civil religion" of America. Religion is useful to the secular state since many of its citizens still look to their religion for the moral authorization of their individual actions. At times of crisis, especially, the state needs the type of patriotic enthusiasm that is close enough to religious enthusiasm to be confused with it. So, even such an avowed atheist as Stalin had to revive the image of "Holy Mother Russia" to rally the Russian people (as distinct from the Soviet republics) around his efforts to

fight back the German invaders in World War II. Yet, Poles know all too well how those who were faithful to Christianity as a higher order of truth, and those who were faithful to Judaism as a higher order of truth, how true believers both Christian and Jewish were seen as enemies of the self-justifying secular state. And that was the case whether the secular self-justification was by communist ideology or fascist ideology. Any religion that requires the authorization of a secular state has already compromised its truth claims to such an extent that it loses any real credibility with its own adherents.

#### IV THE TOTAL SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND NATIONALISM

For many liberals, especially in North America, religion and nationalism are to be kept totally separate from each other. But if nationalism is another name for one's political affiliation, then how can religion and politics be kept totally separate from each other when the majority of the citizens (certainly in the United States or Canada or Poland) also have a religion? The usual liberal answer to this question is that religion is a private matter and nationalism or national politics is a public matter. (All politics in the contemporary world is ultimately a nationalism of one sort or another inasmuch as the only sovereign political entities that exist today are nation-states). In fact, many liberals argue for this position by showing the political evils that have emerged from regimes in which religion and nationalism are identical, or in which religion authorizes nationalism, or in which nationalism authorizes religion. Religion, for many liberals, is what the philosopher Spinoza called "the business of the private man" (*officium viri privati*). They think that only when religion is kept as far away from nationalism as possible is nationalism able to be less excessive and less oppressive than it has been in most of the past.

What this view of the relation of religion and nationalism forgets is that religion is not a private matter. In fact, a private religion is as impossible as a private law or a private language. It is a mistake, stemming from the excessive individualism of Anglo-American culture, that led philosophers like William James and Alfred North Whitehead to see religion as the supreme example of what a person does with his or her privacy. Religions like Judaism and Christianity (and Islam) are founded in public revelations, which gives them their ubiquitous public character. These revelations become the

basis whereby a community is either formed or transformed. Thus the receptacle for Jewish revelation is the Jewish people (*am yisrael*), the receptacle for Christian revelation is the Church (*ekklesia*), and the receptacle for Muslim revelation is the nation of Islam (*umma*). Religions cannot even be merely private associations of like-minded individuals since religions like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam proclaim a morality that not only applies to their own adherents but, also, to all human beings. In other words, these religions are not only concerned with how their own adherents treat each other but, also, how their own adherents treat everyone else, and how everyone else treats them. Indeed, at the most universal level, religious moralities are concerned with how everyone treats everyone even if the particular religious community were not present at all.

This universal horizon is what makes religions like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam the most public phenomena possible. For this reason, more than any other, the relation of religion and nationalism cannot be thought of as a relation between the public realm and various forms of privacy that the public realm allows. Furthermore, it is a fallacy of much of liberalism to assume that people can get all the morality they need by simply spelling out the implications of membership in a secular civil society. The fact is, though, that people actually get their morality from cultures that are much older and much more substantial than the type of procedural thinking used to justify democratic politics. It is a mistake of many liberals to assume that the type of social agreement or contract that characterizes the self-definition of democratic societies is solid enough to be able to produce its own culture. Rather, democratic societies themselves are only viable when their citizens come to them with culturally formed moralities already in hand. The reason for this is that cultures answer the questions human beings inevitably ask about how their lives are part of some larger reality than that of a mere society of their own making. Indeed, we find morally uninspiring those ethical systems like Utilitarianism that treat the interpersonal crises that call for moral deliberation to be so many problems of economic calculation. These ethical systems inspire no moral passion because they ignore or deny the transcendent thrust of all true human striving both moral and religious. These issues are not only the concern of private philosophical meditation; they are, instead, the concerns of all historically continuous cultures. Understood this way, it is not hard to see that all true cultures are religious, even those cultures like Buddhism in which there is no personal God like there is in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

## V RELIGION INFLUENCING NATIONALISM

Unlike many liberals, who see the relation between religion and nationalism to be a contest between the public and the private, it is far wiser to see the relation of religion and nationalism to be a genuine dialogue between two different but overlapping public realms. Religions must be able to both inspire their adherents to enthusiastically participate in the life of the nation-state in which they find themselves and, also, to limit the excesses which any nation-state is always capable of committing.

Human beings today need to be active members of nation-states. That is because only nation-states are capable of exercising justice in both civil and criminal matters. It is only in nation-states that one can be assured of any real rule of law in interhuman affairs. Thus any nation-state that exercises the due process of law, providing the means for justice among all those who live under its jurisdiction, is worthy of the enthusiastic support of all its citizens, and is also worthy of the respect of other nations as well. In today's world of basic political options, it seems that only something like a secular democratic state is capable of effecting the minimal justice that human persons have a right to require of the society in which they have to live. In this type of society one can certainly look to its state and government to be models of what a just society ought to be. Certainly Poles, who have now regained the sovereignty they lost more than once in history, can hope that Poland will set a high example of what a truly just society can be in today's world, which means a society that is just in its dealings with all its citizens and a society that is just in its dealings with other nations and their citizens. That is how the religious commitment to justice in this world can inspire a type of nationalism that can successfully avoid the extremes of anarchy on the one hand and political fanaticism on the other hand. Such nationalism is worthy of both national and international respect.

Religion properly limits nationalism when it does not allow nationalism to present itself as the fulfillment of any person's deepest existential needs, even one's deepest social needs. For Jews, that fulfillment comes from our being part of the Jewish people. It comes when we are part of the Jewish people who is not only a people *of* the world but even more so a people rooted in a revelation that comes from beyond this world and who is attempting to survive and even thrive in faithful anticipation of the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth. The Jewish people is the people whose covenant with God enables us to look for redemption only with the coming

of the Messiah, not with any political order at work in the world today, not even our own political order in the State of Israel however important it is to us and however much we love it as a human reality. For Christians, that fulfillment comes from being part of the community who is the Church, who is also a people who is attempting to live for the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth. That future event is what Christians understand to be Christ's second and final coming into the world in order to totally transform it. Thus when Jews and Christians, whether in the United States, or Canada, or Poland, or wherever we find ourselves, recognize that the various national places we have to live, even want to live, have a limited but nonetheless important function to play in this world, then and only then can we understand the proper relation of religion and nationalism. That means not asking religion to simply use the state as an extension of its own power and not asking the state to provide salvation, even the guarantee of salvation.

I wish you God's blessing in your noble effort to make the new Poland a place where one can serve God first and then be loyal to the nation and its state second. May the deeply religious traditions of most Poles enable them to look to your nation-state with pride not arrogance, with hope not triumphalism, by asking the new Poland for neither too little nor too much. I also wish God's blessing on my fellow Jews in Poland, who have chosen to live in this country and make their contribution to its economic, social, and cultural life. May the new Poland enable them to be full Jews in every way, and may the Polish nation see its acceptance and encouragement of their living Judaism to be a strength of a truly free and just society

## RELIGIA A „NARÓD”

## S t r e s z c z e n i e

David Novak starał się nakreślić zasadnicze relacje między religią a narodem. Cały problem sprowadza się do określenia angielskiego terminu „Nationalism”. Wydaje się, że Autor rozumie ten termin bardzo oryginalnie, a mianowicie jako: naród, duch narodowy, więź narodowa czy wspólnota narodowa. Religię pojmuje on jako relację osoby ludzkiej, będącej członkiem tradycji swojej wspólnoty, do Boga. Z kolei „Nationalism” jest dla niego relacją osoby ludzkiej do jej narodu jako wspólnoty. Przy tym uważa, że nie tyle sam naród czy świeckie rządy tą wspólnotą, ile właśnie religia tejże wspólnoty stanowi właściwą treść życia człowieka. Powstałe stąd napięcie polityczno-teologiczne ma wielkie znaczenie dla dzisiejszego człowieka. Skupia się ono wokół pytania: czy bycie człowiekiem „religijnym” jest prawem naturalnym, czy jest tylko „sprawą prywatną”? Czy religia ma i może mieć wpływ na życie publiczne? Czy dziś można w ogóle mówić o religii państwowej?

Profesor z Toronto omawia pięć zasadniczych relacji między religią a narodem: 1) religia i naród są tożsame; 2) religia uzasadnia naród; 3) naród tworzy religię; 4) naród i religia są całkowicie od siebie oddzielone; 5) religia wpływa i ogranicza naród. Najbardziej odpowiednia jest – zdaniem Autora – opcja ostatnia. Chodzi w niej o prawdziwy dialog między dwoma rzeczywistościami życia społecznego. Religia – jako starsza niż wszelkie struktury narodowe (i państwowe) – wpływa na poczucie narodowe, kształtując i jednocześnie ograniczając ambicje narodu. Zachowane są wówczas właściwe proporcje, że z jednej strony religia nie sprawuje kontroli nad narodem (i państwem), a z drugiej naród (i państwo) nie próbuje „zbawiać” człowieka. Profesor Novak kwestionuje tym samym liberalny model życia amerykańskiego, w którym religia i naród są całkowicie od siebie oddzielone, a przy tym religia jest traktowana wyłącznie jako „sprawa prywatna”

*Streścił ks. Krzysztof Góźdź*

**Słowa kluczowe:** religia, naród, nacjonalizm, relacja między religią a narodem, człowiek religijny, religia państwowa.

**Key words:** Religion, Relationship with Religion and Nationalism, man as religious being, the established Church.