

Gordon Preece, 'Re-Tayloring Time: Trajectories Towards Transcendence from within the Secular Self and Age', Zadok Paper S212, Autumn 2016

Introduction

1. Nicholas H. Smith, *Charles Taylor: Meaning, Morals, and Modernity*, Cambridge, Polity, 2002, 10.
2. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, Cambridge MA, Belknap/Harvard, 2007.
3. Quoted in Smith, *Charles Taylor*, 1, cf. 18.
4. On my three visits to Canada and upon reading of novelist Margaret Atwood, philosopher John Ralston Saul and sociologist Michael Adams (*Sex in the Snow: Canadian Social Values at the end of the Millennium*, Penguin Canada, 1997), I have felt kinship between Australia and Canada as more secularised Commonwealth countries compared with the US. This adds to Taylor's pertinence to a secularising Australia.
5. Taylor is more comprehensive than conservative Wollongong University historian Greg Melleulish's disparagement of the more radical and abstract French and German Enlightenments (compared with the more moderate and pragmatically liberal English Enlightenment) that Melleulish sees dominating our universities. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/model-academics-tend-to-be-driven-to-abstraction/story-e6frg6zo-1226645474666>.
6. A brief biography of Taylor can be found at http://onlyagame.typepad.com/only_a_game/2008/08/a-secular-age-1-charles-taylor.html. Taylor's mother was Catholic, father Anglican and grandfather an anticlerical Francophile.
7. Note The Age's sustained attack on Special Religious Education (SRE) and public school chaplaincy, but equally the defensive Christian culture war responses. My experience with the NSW debate on teaching ethics in schools on John Cleary's ABC Sunday Night show was one of deep dissatisfaction with defensive, aggressive and sometimes misleading responses from some Christian organisations, which added fuel to the fire of the hard-line secularists by alienating moderates like Simon Longstaff and his St. James Ethics Centre (now The Ethics Centre) in self-defeating ways.
8. To contextualise the sound bite: 'When one gives up the Christian faith, one pulls the right to Christian morality out from under one's feet. This morality is by no means self-evident: this point has to be exhibited again and again, despite the English flatheads. Christianity is a system, a *whole* view of things thought out together. By breaking one main concept out of it, the faith in God, one breaks the whole: nothing necessary remains in one's hands. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, *cannot* know, what is good for him, what evil: he believes in God, who alone knows it. Christian morality is a command; its origin is transcendent; it is beyond all criticism, all right to criticism; it has truth only if God has truth—it stands or falls with faith in God.' Friedrich Nietzsche, critiquing George Eliot in 'Twilight of the Idols', in ed. and trans. Walter Kaufman, *The Portable Nietzsche*, New York, Penguin Books, 1976, 515–516.
9. See Richard K. Fenn, *Time Exposure: The Personal Experience of Time in Secular Societies*, Oxford University Press, 2001, 21-23, 32-34 for a critique of providential perspectives of time. 'Thus, the need to see that societies reflect the mind and will of God allowed the Church also to sustain a narcissistic viewpoint about its own society – for instance, to see it as guaranteeing the believer's

own place in history and thus see other classes, communities, or peoples as being on the losing side of time' (22-23).

10. 'Refugee Crisis: Dial Down the Rhetoric', *Guardian Weekly*, 29.01.16, 22.

11. See Michael Burleigh's magisterial history of how 20th century totalitarianisms secularised Christian concepts in *Sacred Causes: Religion and Politics From the European Dictators to Al Qaeda*, Harper Press, 2006. Cf. William T. Cavanaugh, *Migrations of the Holy: God, State, and the Political Meaning of the Church*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2011.

Taylor's Epistemology and the Background of *Sources of the Self*

12. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1989, 217.

13. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 218.

14. Frances Adeney, 'A Response to *Sources of the Self*'. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Christian Ethics, Culver City, January 13, 1991, 2.

15. Taylor, *SOS*, 3.

16. Gordon Carkner, 'Charles Taylor and the Recovery of the Qualitative Good for Renewal of Ethical Dialogue', *Crux*, 44 (2), Summer 2008, 22. Much of this section is from Carkner.

17. Taylor, *SOS*, 5, 7, 14, 15, cited in Carkner, 'Charles Taylor', 22.

18. Taylor, *SOS*, 27, cited in Carkner, 'Charles Taylor', 22.

19. Carkner, 'Charles Taylor', 63-73, 100-102, 104-106, 495-521.

20. Taylor, *SOS*, 503-507, 63.

21. Taylor, *SOS*, 36-37.

22. Carkner, 'Charles Taylor', 23.

23. I've equated hypergoods and constitutive goods, contrary to many commentators who distinguish them, following Deane-Peter Baker, *Tailoring Reformed Epistemology: Charles Taylor, Alvin Plantinga and the de jure challenge to Christian belief*, London, SCM, 2007, 118.

24. Taylor, *SOS*, 516, 264. Taylor also argues, controversially, for an internal relation between personhood and strong evaluation. See his 'Self-interpreting Animals', in *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985, 60. Cf. Taylor, *SOS*, 27: 'The claim is that living within ... strongly qualified horizons is constitutive of human agency, ... integral, ... undamaged human personality. An understanding of what is of crucial importance to us ... to know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand. My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I ... determine from case to case what is good, or valuable In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand.'

25. Carkner, 'Charles Taylor', 23.

26. Carkner, 'Charles Taylor', 27, citing Charles Taylor, 'What's Wrong with Negative Freedom?', in ed. Charles Taylor, *Philosophy and the Human Sciences: Philosophical Papers*, vol. 2, Cambridge University Press, 1985, 99. But not making strong evaluations of every consumer choice.

27. Taylor, *SOS*, 518-521.

28. Adeney, 'Response', 3-4.

29. Adeney, 'Response', 4.

30. Baker, *Tailoring Reformed Epistemology*, 123, citing Quentin Skinner, 'Who are 'we'? Ambiguities of the Modern Self', *Enquiry*, 34, 1991, 133, and William Connolly, 'Catholicism and Philosophy', in Ruth Abbey ed., *Charles Taylor*, Cambridge University Press, 2004, 172. Cf. his *Why I am not a Secularist*, University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Adding to the Subtraction Account of Secularisation

31. Taylor examines the holistic context, 'pre-ontology' or 'conditions of experience' behind religious belief. Cf. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann on 'plausibility structures' in their *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, Garden City NY, Anchor Books, 1967. Cf. Ed Shaw, *The Plausibility Problem: The Church and Same-Sex Attraction*, Leicester, IVP, 2015, for one application of such an approach.

Part I: The Work of Reform

32. Cf. the constant reminders of Christendom in English street and town names and the reference at the crown jewels display of the monarch's orb testifying to the whole world being in God's hands.

33. Edward Paice, *The Wrath of God: The Great Lisbon Earthquake of 1755*, London, Quercus, 2008.

34. See Tim Winton's short story 'More' in his *Minimum of Two*, London, Picador, 1991. For further contemporary cultural resonance of Taylor's notion of fullness, compare Juliet B. Schor, *Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth*, Penguin, New York, 2010.

35. Cf. pioneer secularisation theorist Peter Berger's recantation of his previous position that all societies would inevitably secularise following the western European model, in his ed., *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1999, especially Ch. 1.

36. Note Goethe's wonderful supporting quote: 'One who does not know the past 2000 years of one's cultural heritage is living from hand to mouth.'

37. Cf. Tim Jackson, *Prosperity Without Growth*, Sustainable Development Commission, UK, 2009, http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/data/files/publications/prosperity_without_growth_report.pdf, which sees that a spirituality is needed to counter a consumeristic theodicy seeking heaven on earth, which is killing the planet.

38. From the album 'Life Short Call Now', True North. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwZZf5oB4l4>.

39. See Harvey Cox, *The Feast of Fools: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1969. Cf. Adrian Franklin on the return of the Medieval carnivalesque in many vibrant cities, in his opinion piece 'Myth thing in action, the buzz that gives a city its X appeal', *The Age*, December 2011, <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/myth-thing-in-action-the-buzz-that-gives-a-city-its-x-appeal-20111230-1pfgq.html>. Most recently, New Year's Eve mass attacks on women in Cologne by largely North African youths, including some refugees, were followed by traditional pre-Lenten traditional German celebrations reversing women's and other's traditional subordinate roles.

40. See Lyn McCredden, *Luminous Moments*, Adelaide, ATF Press, 2010, 17, 22, 24.
41. Fenn, *Time Exposure*, 53-54, citing Claus Offshe, *Modernity and the State: East, West*. Cambridge MA, MIT Press, 1996, 7.
42. Fenn, *Time Exposure*, 38.
43. Fenn, *Time Exposure*, 49.
44. Cf. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1961. Cf. Ernst Becker, *The Denial of Death*, New York, The Free Press, 1973, and John Bottomley, *Hard Work Never Killed Anybody*, Melbourne, MorningStar, 2015, Ch1: 'Subduing death: modernity's heroic intent'.
45. Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2011.
46. *The Future of Work*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1984, 164.
47. Vernon White, *Identity*, London, SCM, 2002, 137.
48. Ronald Conway, *Land of the Long Weekend*, Melbourne, Sun Books, 1978.
49. See my 'Save Our Weekend' submission to the Fair Work Commission in Engage.Mail, March 2016, www.ethos.org.au. For the Productivity Commission's Harper Review on Competition Policy, see www.australiancompetitionlaw.org › Reports.
50. See Rodney Croome, 'The promise of belonging', *Griffith Review*, Edition 41, Spring 2016.
51. *Kairos* - or qualitative, spiritually or eschatologically significant time - is often contrasted with the more *quantitative* chronos. See Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, London, SCM, 1962, 3rd ed., 63. Cullman's methodology - though not all of his conclusions - has been criticised by James Barr, *Biblical Words for Time*, London, SCM, 1962.
52. Cf. R.A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, Cambridge University Press, 1990, Ch. 1: 'Introduction: 'secularity''. Markus uses religion and culture or sacred and secular informally and synonymously (8, 13). Later (15-17), he defines secular 'as that sector of life which is not considered ... of direct religious significance'. He traces the draining of the secular in Western Europe in the 5th and 6th centuries through 'shifts in social structure and the administrative functions, the growing prominence of military and clerical at the expense of the civil powers, and the eclipse of civil education ... to the profit of a more clerically oriented and a more scriptural culture'. However it was not only the external world's external institutions and practices that changed, 'but also the framework of thought, imagination and discourse within which it could be interpreted'.

But if secularisation is the reverse of this process, Markus traces 'de-secularisation', the loss of autonomy of the secular in both broad arenas above, but also, as Taylor too notes, 'a change in the nature of Christianity itself; a contraction in the scope that Christianity, or more precisely, its educated clerical representatives and officials allowed to be the 'secular'.... This change in the nature of Christianity manifested itself ... in the tendency to absorb what had previously been 'secular', indifferent from a religious point of view, into the realm of the 'sacred'; to force the sphere of the 'secular' to contract, turning it either into 'Christian', or dismissing it as 'pagan' or 'idolatrous'... the spread of an ascetic mentality through Christian society had much to do with this re-drawing of the boundaries.'

That ascetic takeover signals the end of 'ancient Christianity' (Markus, xii) and the beginning of Medieval Christianity. This corresponds qualitatively, if not chronologically, to Taylor's later Great Reform post first millennium (ASA, 64).

53. From her science fantasy classic *A Wrinkle in Time*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1963.
54. Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis*, Princeton University Press, 1953, cf. 73.
55. Cf. Fenn, *Time Exposure*, 51. Also, James Wm. McClendon Jr, *Ethics: Systematic Theology 1, Abingdon*, 1986, who stresses the significance of the 'this is that' or 'this is what was spoken through the prophet' (Acts 2:16) formula explaining the Pentecost events that birthed the church.
56. David Ford, *Barth and God's Story*, Frankfurt/Bern, Peter Lang, 1981, 25.
57. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*. Galaxy, 1968 [1919].
58. See Robert J. Banks, *The Tyranny of Time*, Oregon, Wipf and Stock, 1997.
59. See Gordon Preece, 'God the Intimate Interventionist: Nick Cave in Dialogue with Dietrich Bonhoeffer', in ed. Gordon Preece and Ian Packer, *Bonhoeffer Downunder: Australian and South African Centenary Essays for the 100th Anniversary of Bonhoeffer's Birthday*, Adelaide, ATF, 2012, 155-65.
60. Hans Urs von Balthasar's image from his *The Theology of Karl Barth*: Ignatius Press, 1951, on his fellow Swiss theologian Karl Barth's strongly Christocentric theology which lies behind Bonhoeffer's image.
61. William Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination: Christian Practices of Space and Time*, New York, T&T Clark, 2002, 4.
62. Mark Sampson, 'Faith in Modernity: Reflections from Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*', *CRUX*, 46 (1), Spring 2010, 38.
63. Alasdair MacIntyre, 'A Partial Response to My Critics', in ed. John Horton and Susan Mendus, *After MacIntyre: Critical Perspectives on the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre*, University of Notre Dame Press, 1994, 303.
64. See G.R. Preece, 'Living Advent-urously', Engage.Mail, December 2011, www.ethos.org.au.

From A Two-Time and Two-Speed 'Economy of Salvation' to a Single One

65. Taylor is right overall but the distinction between the permitted, Martha-like active life of the laity, and the perfect, Mary-like (cf. Lk 10: 38-42) contemplative life of clergy and monks was developed by the fourth century A.D. Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, Emperor Constantine's court historian and midwife at the birth of Christendom. With the rise of infant baptism and levels of nominal Christianity, the pacifist, celibate and martyr spirit and its more rigorous practices became transferred to clergy - see O. and J. O'Donovan, *From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought 100-1625*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1999, 2-3.
66. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, Ch. 4. Significantly, given the controversial nature of compulsory celibacy today as allegedly causal of the Catholic Church's abuse crisis, it is important to mention that 'by the time of Pope Leo the Great (440-61) the law of celibacy was generally recognized in the West'. See 'Celibacy of the Clergy', *Catholic Encyclopedia*, www.newadvent.org › Catholic Encyclopedia › Celibacy of the Clergy. The later Lateran Councils simply reinforced what was already in place.
67. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 134-135, locating the Christian takeover of Roman civic feasts like the Lupercalia in the latter part of the reign of Pope Leo I (440-461) as part of a broader clericalisation and monasticisation of the laity. 'The different fate of the Lupercalia in the Byzantine world reveals a parting of the ways between Greek and Latin Christendom: in the tenth century the Lupercalia were celebrated in Constantinople, as a mobile spring festival in which civic,

political, and religious elements were combined without the least tension Greek Christianity was, somehow, less hospitable to sharp discontinuities which cut across the texture of Christian existence.' This shows Taylor is on the right track in focusing specifically on Latin Christian Reform as an ironic source of later secularisation. The stricter the sacralisation, the stronger the reaction, e.g. in Quebec since the 1960s and Ireland since the 2000s.

68. Sam Harris, *The Moral Landscape: How Science Can Determine Human Values*, London, Bantam, 2010.

69. I. Persson, and J. Savulescu, *Fit for the Future? Modern Technology, Liberal Democracy, and the Need for Moral Enhancement*, Oxford University Press, 2011.

70. See my 'New Monasticism', *Arena Magazine*, 08-09, 2009, 37-40. Cf. James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation*, Grand Rapids MI, Baker Academic, 2009, 209-213, 222, for the necessity of monastic-like disciplines of daily training of desire to prepare for embodied engaging of the consumer world of omnivorous desire. Cf. Smith's *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*, Grand Rapids MI, Baker Academic, 2013.

71. Race Matthews, 'Light in Darkness: Mondragon and the Global Economic Meltdown', *Arena Magazine*, 102, 10/11/09, 16-22.

72. See Gordon Preece, 'Transition Parishes: Mission to the Precariat in an Age of Chronic Economic & Ecological Crises', in Darrel Jackson, *New Wineskins vol. 2*, forthcoming, Sydney, Morling Press, 2016.

73. On 'ungraspable' see Ecclesiastes 1:4-13 and Richard Humphrey, 'Hebel and Hermeneutics', Moore College 4th Year Project, 1996.

74. Cf. George Monbiot's provocative article at <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/truth-is-the-forgotten-family-value-20120515-1youb.html#ixzz1vCSIZNBk>. This is based, one-sidedly, on *A World of Their Own Making*, where Prof. 'John Gillis points out that until the Reformation, the state of holiness was not matrimony but lifelong chastity... [in] the holy orders'.

75. Cf. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's prison poem 'Who am I?', with its strong emphasis on the epistemological primacy and certainty of God's knowing us rather than us knowing God or ourselves, in *Letters and Papers from Prison*, New ed., New York, MacMillan, 1972, 347-348.

76. Cf. Bryden Black, 'Whose Language? Which Grammar? 'Inclusivity' and 'diversity', versus the crafted Christian concepts of catholicity and created differentiation' in eds Brian Edgar and Gordon Preece, *Whose Homosexuality? Which Authority?*, Adelaide, ATF, 2006.

77. D. Stephen Long, 'How to Read Charles Taylor: The Theological Significance of *A Secular Age*', *Pro Ecclesia*, XXVIII (1), 103, citing ASA, 737.

Part IV: Narratives of Secularisation

78. James K.A. Smith, *How (Not) to be Secular*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2014, 80.

79. J.K.A. Smith, *How (Not) to be Secular*, 81.

80. J.K.A. Smith, *How (Not) to be Secular*, 82.

81. J.K.A. Smith, *How (Not) to be Secular*, 83.

82. Hence the pervasiveness of passion language in, for example, the conference advertising of Hillsong.

83. J.K.A. Smith, *How (Not) to be Secular*, p.89.

The Ethics of Authenticity

84. Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1991.
85. Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1982.
86. Michael P. Jensen, 'In Spirit and in Truth': Can Charles Taylor Help the Woman at the Well Find Her Authentic Self?', *Studies in Christian Ethics*, 21 (3), 2008, 325-341.
87. See Krister Stendahl, 'The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West and Other Essays', in *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1976, 78-96.
88. Jensen, 'In Spirit', 329.
89. Jensen, 'In Spirit', 329, citing Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity*, 31-33, 38-40.
90. Jensen, 'In Spirit', 330.
91. Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity*, 62.
92. Jensen, 'In Spirit', 331.
93. J.K.A. Smith, 'Have Your Transcendence and Eat it Too', posted 29 March 2011, <http://asecularage.blogspot.com.au/>.
94. Cited without further sourcing by William Dyrness in 'Subjectivity: The Person and Modern Art', *Crosscurrents*, March 2013, 98.
95. Dyrness, 'Subjectivity', 93.
96. Peter Fuller, 'Neo-Romanticism', in his *Images of God: The Consolations of Lost Illusions*, London, Hogarth Press, 1990, 88. Cf. Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just*, Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 1999, 47-48. Without a metaphysical foundation, beauty's fragility seems insufficient for its almost infinite modern claims.
97. George Steiner, *Real Presences*, London, Faber and Faber, 1989, 216.
98. Dyrness, 'Subjectivity', 99.
99. Dyrness 'Subjectivity', 99, citing J. Maritain's influential *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, Cleveland/Meridian/World Publishing, 1954, 82-84.
100. Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 20.
101. J.R.R. Tolkien defines writing fairy-stories as 'sub-creation', creating a secondary world endowed with its own rules, with the 'inner consistency of reality'. See *The Tolkien Reader*, George Allen and Unwin, 1964, 88.
102. Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 83.
103. Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 50.
104. Dyrness, 'Subjectivity', 100, citing Taylor, *SOS* 38-39, and comparing Colin Gunton, *The One, The Three, and The Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 168-170 as another resource for Taylor to develop a more thoroughly Trinitarian way of tying together transcendence and the immanent frame. The interlocutory, inter-relational pattern of personal creativity begins with the Trinity as a dialogue that includes humanity in the conversation. The artist similarly assimilates, without merging, their art and their being.
105. See further G.R. Preece, 'You are What You are Called: Trinity, Self & Vocation', in eds S. Hale and S. Bazzana, *Towards a Theology of Youth Ministry*, Aquila Press, Sydney, 1998.

106. Jensen, 'In Spirit', 333.
107. Jensen, 'In Spirit', 82.
108. Jensen, 'In Spirit', 339-41.

Conversions and Examples of Triune Community in Secular Time

109. Baker, *Tailoring*, 121. The whole section through to p.124 is helpful on this.
110. Baker, *Tailoring*, 123, citing Skinner, 'Who are 'we'? Ambiguities of the Modern Self', *Enquiry*, 34, 1991, 133, cf. Connolly, 'Catholicism and Philosophy', 172.
111. Baker, *Tailoring*, 124. The *sensus divinitatis* is a term used by Calvin and Reformed theologians to describe the universal human sense of divinity, due to common grace and the providential activity of God's Creator Spirit. This is what Taylor, from a Catholic perspective, is seeking to fill the immanent frame with.
112. Note Bonhoeffer's regular reference in *Letters and Papers from Prison* to the power of example, individual and communal, which he lived out himself and sought to live out at the Finkenwalde underground seminary, and in the embryonic ecumenical movement as an alternative to Nazism.
113. Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, Nashville, Abingdon, 1996, 129-130.
114. Published in *Anecdotes of Destiny*, 1958. Isak Dinesen was the penname of Karen Blixen (1885-1962).
115. Long, 'How to Read', 106.
116. Long, 'How to Read', 106. This reflects Taylor's more Catholic sensibility concerning canonised saints as special ones, mediators of grace, even in their ordinariness. Protestants, by contrast, emphasise the biblical sainthood of all believers. Taylor sees this in itself as a step towards secularisation, a one-speed system with no room for slowcoaches.
117. Cf. Peter L. Berger, *The Heretical Imperative: contemporary possibilities of religious affirmation*, Garden City NY, Anchor Press, 1979. Berger takes *hairesis* as meaning choice, and religious and non-religious choice as being the fundamental modern condition.
118. See Gordon Preece, 'Maurice, Ludlow and the Paradox of Christian Socialism', MA thesis, Sydney University, 1977.
119. Lynn White Jr, 'The historical roots of our ecologic crisis', reprint from *Science*, 155, 10/3/1967, in *Ecology and Religion in History*, New York, Harper and Row, 1974.
120. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 2000.