THE 'OTHER' AND ITS DEMAND FOR RELATEDNESS: Taylor's Response to the Moral Crisis of Modernity

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Abstract: The 'Other' or 'constitutive other' is a contribution of the continental philosophy. Global humanity has been rampantly transitioning to a pluralism or multiculturalism, which places greater demand and complexity on the role of the 'Other'. Emmanuel Levinas deserves credit for formalizing the 'Other' in the western philosophy. However, in our time, Charles Taylor also presents an *alternative*, which can also provide some insights to our understanding of modernity, rationality, morality, and religiosity. Prospects of the 'Other' have been explicitly presented by Taylor on authenticity, respect, responsibility, recognition, dialogue, moral frames, immanent frame, and transcendence. This article re-emphasizes the importance of *being related to the Other* for an authentic definition of modern human being for which Taylor's *philosophical frame* is significant and relevant. There is a growing tendency to undermine the importance of religion in defining human being and, hence, it is urgent and important to engage in this debate.

Keywords: Authenticity, Autonomy, Heteronomy, Identity, Incommensurability, 'Other', Modernity, Morality, Pluralism, Politics, Religion

1. Introduction
Taylorian positions on human relationships and their relevance for defining modern politics, ethics, and religion can be effectively understood from a Levinasian background. Through his life and

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works, Emmanuel Levinas redefined 'ethics as the first philosophy' since for him 'the Other'[1] is not knowable and cannot be made into an object of the self, as is done by traditional ontology or metaphysics. He derived the primacy of ethics from the experience of the encounter with 'the Other'. The revelation of the *face* makes a demand, which is before one can express, or know one's freedom, to affirm or deny. Similarly, Charles Taylor has been trying to redefine modern self-identity from a background of *moral frames* or *moral sources* (inner and outer).

In the growing face of individualism and instrumentalism, he suggests a *fusion of horizons*[2] to make individuals more focused on the 'other-sources' – selves, traditions, intellectual history, religious history, and social imagery. In this essay, I claim that against the background of the Cartesian *disenchantment* and the Kantian *enlightenment* Taylor's *re-enchantment* succeeds in reconceptualising our modern self. I argue this out by presenting Taylor from the perspective of *the Other-relatedness*, for which Levinas is a pioneer. Nevertheless, the importance of religion re-emphasized by Taylor is also at the backdrop of this effort.

2. Dimensions of the Self and a Demand for Relatedness

Taylor championed the analysis of various layers and dimensions of human self in view of countering one-sided and narrow conceptions of human self. Modernity, with all its charm and accomplishment, presented a conception of human self, predominantly *rational* in nature. Such a notion has distorted the modern understanding of human self by ignoring or undermining other essential dimensions such as *emotional*, *moral,* and *spiritual*. Levinas has succeeded in presenting the aspect of

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[1]The words *Other* and *other* are used to represent God – the ultimate other – and ordinary human beings, respectively. I use the capital *Other* in this essay to represent both God and human beings.

[2]*Fusion of horizons* is a dialectical concept resulting from the rejection of *objectivism* and *absolute knowledge* coined by Hans-Georg Gadamer, which Charles Taylor endorses as a possible solution in the modern context of *plurality of goods*. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, New York: Continuum, 1997, 302.

Oneself as the Other and Taylor is clear in articulating the *plurality* within ourselves – physical, rational, emotional, moral, and spiritual.

2.1. Self as 'Human' Agent

Taylor considers 'self as an *agent*.' Any agency is *relational* either externally or internally. Drawing inspiration from Harry Frankfurt, he endorses a distinction between 'first and second order desires' in a human person (or self)[3] where he presents an inner dynamism of varying degrees of desires. According to Frankfurt,

> Human being is not alone in having desires and motives, or in making choices. They share these things with members of certain other species, some of which even appear to engage in deliberation and to make decisions based on prior thought. It seems to be peculiarly characteristic of humans, however, that they are able to form … second order desires (*HA* 15).[4]

For Taylor, the key insight here grasps the uniquely human ability to *evaluate* our own desires, with some as desirable and others not. Hence, no animal other than a human being has the "capacity for reflective self-evaluation which is manifested in the second order desires" (*HA* 16). Taylor sees it as an 'essential feature of the mode of agency' we call human.

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[3]Charles Taylor, "What Is Human Agency?" in *Human Agency and Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 15 (henceforth *HA*). This idea is taken from Harry Frankfurt's article "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of the Person," *Journal of Philosophy* 67 (1971), 5-20.

[4]Harry G. Frankfurt, *The Importance of What We Care About: Philosophical Essays*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 12. Taylor explains further: "My conception of the freedom of the will appears to be neutral with regard to the problem of determinism. It seems conceivable that it should be causally determined that a person is free to want what he wants to want. If this is conceivable, then it might be causally determined that a person enjoys a free will" (*HA* 336).

When somebody refrains from acting on a 'given motive' to pursue a 'higher motive' there comes a qualitative struggles in evaluation. Hence, we have classified desires in such categories as higher and lower, virtuous and vicious, more and less fulfilling. Taylor says:

> Intuitively, the difference might be put in this way. In the first case, which we may call *weak evaluation*, we are concerned with outcomes; in the second, *strong evaluation*, with the quality of our motivation. […] For what is important is that strong evaluation is concerned with the qualitative *worth* of different desires (*HA* 16; Italics added).

This notion of second order desires leads Taylor to another important aspect of human agency, i.e., responsibility. Levinas also had a similar notion of reponsibility. According to him, it is enough to say that the first philosophy is responsibility that unfolds into dialogical sociality. It is also Levinas' unique way of defining transcendence in relation to the world.

2.2. Self-in-the-World

According to Taylor, the single most significant contribution of phenomenology is the discovery that human self is an 'embodied agent'. He has been influenced by Martin Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty in this respect. "The core thesis might be put in a few terse assertions. The human subject is an agent, engaged in activity, and engaged in a world, which is his world. He is an embodied subject."[5] A person is in 'a world' and he finds his meaning essentially in *relation* with the world where he is (*EA* 2). We are 'inescapably in a world' such that it is impossible to give a 'purely intrinsic description' of the subject, neglecting the surrounding world. Drawing inspiration from Heidegger, Taylor states: "one cannot start with a subject and relate to a world, but can only describe the subject-in-the world" (*EA* 3).

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[5]Charles Taylor, "Embodied Agency" in *Merleau-Ponty: Critical Essays*, ed. Henry Pietersma, Washington, DC: Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology, University Press of America, 1989, 1 footnote (Henceforth *EA*).

Human being is not only in 'a world' but also in this world (field of meaning) 'as an agent'. Still following Merleau-Ponty, Taylor articulates meaning in terms of perception: "Our perception of the world is essentially that of an embodied agent, engaged with, or at grips with the world... The claim is rather that our perception as an experience is such that it could only be that of an embodied agent engaged with the world" (*EA* 4). We perceive the world and take it in, in our own ability to act in it. Moreover, as a bodily agent, it is not only that I act on the world but also the world can act on me. Taylor argues that we cannot effectively exercise our subjectivity without being well aware of a world, with a sense of ourselves as being embodied subjects closely *related* to it (*EA* 14).

2.3. Two Types of Selves: Porous and Buffered

Taylor distinguishes between two types of selves, depending on their predominant natures and features with regard to its nature of *relatedness*, calling the pre-modern self "porous" and the modern self "buffered."[6] He reflects on these two types of selves as against the background of the *exclusive humanism* of the modern western world. The pre-modern self is *porous* because it thought of itself as deeply situated in an enchanted world and open to being influenced by forces emanating from that world (*more relational in nature*). Taylor acknowledges his indebtedness to Tambiah[7] who used the term "porous" to show the contrast between Western and *Ayurvedic* medicine in their treatment of mental illness. In the latter, the empirical individual is seen porous and open to outside influences all the time. Taylor uses the same term to show the same openness and enchantment,

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[6]Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, Cambridge: Belnap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007, 27 (Henceforth *SA*).

[7]Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah (1929) is a leading social anthropologist and the Esther and Sidney Rabb Professor of Anthropology at Harvard University, who used the term "porous" in his book *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

which the pre-modern people had, in their relation to the cosmos. Taylor wrote:

> By definition for the porous self, the source of its most powerful and important emotions are outside the "mind;" … The porous self is vulnerable, to spirits, demons, and cosmic forces. Along with it grows certain fears which can grip it in certain circumstances. The buffered self has been taken out of the world of this kind of fear... [T]he buffered self can form the ambition of disengaging from whatever is beyond the boundary, and of giving its own autonomous order to its life (*SA* 38-39).

However, even in the predominantly modern buffered world, Taylor notices that "many people look back to see the world of the porous self with nostalgia." What they feel, then, is a sense that something important may have been lost. Part of his project is to "recover some measure of this lost feeling" (*SA* 39).

The buffered self is the self that was developed in early modernity in contrast to the 'open and porous and vulnerable' self of the previous epoch. The 'buffered self' of modernity considers its purposes and meanings as arising not from without but from within (*less relational*). According to Taylor, "It took more than disenchantment to produce the buffered self; it was also necessary to have confidence in our own powers of moral ordering" (*SA* 27). The development of the buffered self came about through the following changes: (i) The replacement of the cosmos of spirits and forces by a mechanistic universe; (ii) The fading of higher times: higher times of religion and its supernatural flow of events and lower time of natural events in ordinary time; and (iii) The recession of a sense of such complementarities of both immanent and transcendent aspects of life (*SA* 300).

2.4. Dialogical Self *versus* Monological Self

Taylor notices that the use of the term 'self' is a modern western development, as the earlier usage of 'human person' is abandoned or marginalized. The additions of articles, definite or indefinite, to define selfhood uniquely demonstrate certain

'powers of reflexivity' attributed to the modern human person. Taylor sees it as a radical shift of emphasis:

> The shift reflects a change in our understanding of what is essential. We have developed practices of radical reflexivity in the modern world. By 'radical reflexivity', I mean not only the focus on oneself, but on one's own subjective experience… [W]hen I examine my own experience, or scrutinize my own thinking, reflexivity takes a radical turn.[8]

There are different kinds of reflexivity developed in the course of history of philosophy. Descartes initiated a movement of reflexivity where the subject 'disengages' from its rootedness in the external world. This was furthered by the post-Cartesian thinkers, even while, the post-Romantic ideal of self-sounding and self-expression has given us another model of reflexivity, which eventually helps us to have 'creative imagination' (*DS* 305). In that way, the human self is *reflexively related* to some goods or standards of excellence. A change in this paradigm disturbs Taylor:

> A human being exists inescapably in a space of ethical questions; she or he cannot avoid assessing himself or herself in relation to some standards. To escape all standards would not be a liberation, but a terrifying lapse into total disorientation. It would be to suffer the ultimate crisis of identity (*DS* 305).

Understanding the self as something 'already established in our personal constitution' will blind us from what a self really is, and for Taylor this is an ominous possibility. He blames Descartes and Locke for the reification of the first person singular self that founded the modern epistemological tradition. According to Taylor, this subject is a 'monological one' since he or she sees the world as something in simple, even single, terms directed from its own perspective. The modern subject represents the world in an 'inner space' (within consciousness). The human mind has or even

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is the 'mechanism of processing representations.' 'I' am an inner space capable of defining myself independent of the body; my 'self' is the centre of this 'monological consciousness' (*DS* 307f).

According to Taylor, "What all these have in common is that they see the agent, not primarily as a locus of representations, but as engaged in practices, as a being who acts in and on a world" (*DS* 308). Bearing all these in mind, Taylor plainly sees that it is very important to distinguish between acts of a single agent (*monological acts*) and those of more than one (*dialogical acts*) (*DS* 310). Taylor states:

> An action is dialogical, in the sense I am using it, when it is affected by an integrated, non-individual agent. This means that for those involved in it, its identity as this kind of action essentially depends on the sharing of agency. These actions are constituted as such by a shared understanding among those who make up the common agent (*DS* 311).

The more one understands the importance of dialogical action, the more one will realize the inadequacy of the monological subject. Taylor's self is *socially and culturally constituted*. Hence, it is important for the self to confront or conform to the influences of community. Dialogical action is very important to be aware of what Jean Piaget has called our early "egocentricity."[9] The more one defines oneself in terms of the 'I' the less one is able take up the attitude of the *other*. Hence, Taylor places dialogue as an important factor in understanding self, which he draws from Bakhtin,[10] who says that human beings are constituted in conversation. Now it is relevant to discuss how is self inevitably

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[9]Jean Piaget (1896-1980) claimed that young children are egocentric. This does not mean that they are selfish, but that they do not have the mental ability to understand that other people may have different opinions and beliefs from themselves.

[10]Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) was a Russian philosopher, literary critic, and semiotician who worked on literary theory, ethics, and the philosophy of language. M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed., Michael Holquist, trans., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Texas: University of Texas Press Austin, 1981, 270ff.

related to moral source around him/her? This, in turn, demands a recognition of 'the Other'.

3. Necessity of Relatedness between Self and Moral Sources

Emphasizing goods without God became a trend in modern times. It is fashionable to visualize such goods though their sustainability and definability can be impossible. Here Taylor provides some meaningful insights through his concepts of comparative phenomenological approach. Again, there is a demand for being related to the available moral sources within a given moral space. Plurality of goods places modern self in a dilemma of competing goods all around him. Only his perspective and understanding of an "overarching" good can give him a foundation or criterion of evaluation. In the absence of such norms modern self is destined to fall into the fleeting and passing plural goods of partial nature.

Taylor's primary project is to extract and clarify the 'moral sources' of the human agent in the frameworks of the moral space where it is situated. There have been numerous attempts in this field, which is characterized by 'inarticulacy' due to the nature of the reality of 'moral intuitions'. The moral ontology behind any person's views can remain largely implicit. The articulation of moral ontology is a very difficult task because of the tentative, searching, uncertain nature of many of our moral beliefs.[11] One way of articulating morality is with the notion of 'respect'; this has been influential in the modern West (*SS* 13-14). The concept of 'respect' is gradually connected to 'right' and, thus, it falls into the notion of 'autonomy'. However, the nature of morality demands dynamism of constant dialogue (interrelatedness) with the available moral sources in a given moral space to make relevant our choices of good and our claims of morality.

There are pluralistic moral backgrounds of the human self, which Taylor prefers to call *moral sources.* Taylor's use of 'sources' in plural form has many implications. If it were a single

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[11]Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989, 9-10 (Henceforth *SS*).

'source', it would never have been 'problematic'. Part of its nature of 'inarticulacy' of ethics and morality also springs from the manifold sources of morality. A moral source can form into a particular 'frame' for the people in a later period of time, which continues to influence their moral decisions one way or another. For example, one can still speak of a *theistic frame* on the one side and a *rationalistic frame* on the other side. Apparently none of those frames is either complete in itself or can anybody articulate it with utmost clarity and certainty. Most of the moderns are occluded by the goods, which they are inspired by; they also are drawn by their own subjectivism. Hence, there is a need for an openness by which a modern self is genuinely ready for an *interrelatedness* with all the available sources of morality to frame one's own comprehensive moral positions.

Taylor has brought out the importance of 'recognition' or 'misrecognition' in framing one's identity and authenticity. For Taylor, "It is a vital human need."[12] The history of black people, colonized people, subaltern groups, and feminists will amply explain the role of recognition, or its absence, in framing the identity of an individual. Taylor mentions the dialectic of master and slave and its use by Hegel to emphasize the same point. Since "social hierarchies" and their "honour ethics" recede slowly from society, there emerges the importance of human 'dignity', which is used in the wider sense of a modern 'universalism and egalitarianism', where the inherent dignity of every human being is re-articulated. Equal recognition has been essential for democratic culture though provisions of reservations for women, minorities, dalits, and differently-abled persons can be justified from a given context of the reality. The notion of authenticity develops out of a displacement of the moral accent in this idea. It articulates the 'inner' depths. The first variants of this view were theistic, or at least pantheistic[13] (*PA* 226-228).

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[12]Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995, 225 (Henceforth *PA*).

[13]Originally, *inner depths* experiences were found mostly within religious circles and contexts. Spiritual pursuit can still be explained as a *journey within*. Saints and sages in the past were people of *inner*

It is possible to understand the concept *recognition* with *private* and *public* realms. We live in an age where we recognize the *politics of difference*, which recognizes everyone for his or her unique identity. By the *politics of equal dignity*, what is established is meant to be universally the same for all. However, the *politics of difference* asks for a *politics of dignity* (*PA* 233-234). Hence, there is a dilemma, which is not easy to resolve.

This situation of a demand for equal dignity emerged in the western civilization at a point where the approaches of Rousseau and Kant had met. Looking at them should enable us to engage to what extent they are guilty of the charge of imposing a false homogeneity. Rousseau is the initiator of the *discourse of recognition* since he began to think about the importance of "equal respect and deems it indispensable for freedom" (*PA* 237). He tends to oppose a condition of "freedom-in-equality" to one characterized by hierarchy and other-dependence (a slave to 'opinion').[14] People live very much in the public gaze (*PA* 237-238). Taylor says: "In contrast to the hierarchical honor, we are in competition; one person's glory must be another's shame, or at least obscurity" (*PA* 240).

In a liberal polity, the margin for recognizing differences happens to be narrow. Taylor observes:

> The notion that any of the standard schedules of rights might apply differently in one cultural context than they do in another, that their application might have to take account of different collective goals, is considered quite unacceptable. (*PA* 242).

He sees this problem in his own country and its political life. The Canadian political system necessitates two distinctive modes of recognition, one for the French Canadians and another one for

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depths. Eventually, there were *rational* and *romantic* movements led by Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and Herder, which could bring to light *different possibilities of depths* especially for the moderns.

[14]For further reference, see J. J. Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men *or* Second Discourse" in *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, ed. V. Gourevitch, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997, 111–222.

the English Canadians. Similar idea has compelled nations like India to provide *reservations* for the subaltern groups. In fact, Taylor's theory of *equal dignity* is a candid expression of his *Philosophy of the Other*.

As Taylor sees it, liberalism is rooted in Kant. Among other features, the Kantian or liberal view understands human dignity to consist largely in autonomy. This model of "self-determining and self-expressive choice" supports the liberalism of the West emphatically.

According to Taylor, there is a form of politics of equal respect, as enshrined in a liberalism of rights that precludes differences because (i) it insists on uniform application of the rules defining these rights, without exception and (ii) it is suspicious of collective goals. Taylor sees that "The rigidities of procedural liberalism may rapidly become impractical in tomorrow's world. The politics of equal respect, then, at least in this more hospitable variant, can be cleared of the charge of homogenizing difference" (*PA* 248).

Perhaps the discourse between politics and religion also faces a dilemma, since liberalism of political neutrality fails to understand the unique religious aspiration of a private citizen. Hence, it can lead to a conflict of the spheres; e.g., Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* shows how wrong is this view of the differences.[15]

Liberalism is not a possible meeting ground for all cultures; it is a political expression of one range of cultures, and quite incompatible with other ranges. Liberalism with a purely *secular* scheme has been negatively affecting traditional values in general. However, liberalism with a *progressive* attitude has the potential to take a society to higher levels of development. Many Muslims believe that Western liberalism is not so much an expression of the secular and post-religious outlook that happens to be popular among liberal *intellectuals*; rather, for

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[15]Sir Ahmed Salman Rushdie, Kt. (1947) is an Indian-British novelist and essayist. His second novel, *Midnight's Children* (1981), won the Booker Prize in 1981. Much of his fiction is set on the Indian subcontinent.

them, it is an organic outgrowth of Christianity – at least as seen from the alternative vantage of Islam (*PA* 249). Taylor explores the possibility of introducing *alternative* modernities, secularism, and even liberalisms. In the context of the *fighting creed*, liberalism of neutrality, Taylor prefers Gadamer's idea of a *fusion of horizons* more practical and applicable. The fusion of horizons operates through developing new vocabularies of comparison, for articulating these new contrasts (*PA* 252-253). According to him, however, there is yet another major problem with multiculturalism:

> The peremptory demand for favourable judgments of worth is paradoxically – perhaps tragically – *homogenizing*. For it implies that we already have the standards to make such judgments. The standards we have, however, are those of a North Atlantic Civilization. And so the judgments implicitly and unconsciously will cram the others into our categories (*PA* 255).

Here the demand for equal recognition is unacceptable. Still we cannot end the process here. Rather we should concentrate on the "depths of ethnocentricity" to really know the excellence of cultures. There must be some "midway between the inauthentic and homogenizing demand for recognition of equal worth, on the one hand, and the self-immurement within ethnocentric standards, on the other" (*PA* 256). It is possible to understand from Taylor that an integral theory of recognition can emerge from a *horizontal* and *vertical* practice of respecting the Other – God and other beings.

4. Horizontal and Vertical Openness and A Holistic Perspective of the "Other"

It is in his analysis of secularity that Taylor defines what he calls the "immanent frame." The emergence of this "immanent frame" against the predominantly "transcendent frame" explains the history of secularity and the notions of unbelief and belief. Taylor assembles his immanent frame by *picking up* pieces from his foregoing discussions of a number of issues related to religion, cosmos, self, secularity, identity, authenticity, and the like. Taylor remarks:

> All of this makes up what I want to call "the immanent frame." There remains to add just one background idea: that this frame constitutes a "natural" order to be contrasted to a "supernatural" one, an "immanent" world, over against a possible "transcendent" one (*SA* 542).

He has no doubt with regard to the distinction of the concepts 'immanent' and 'transcendent' as an achievement of the Latin Christendom. In a crucial development, the emergence of modern sciences gave theoretical form to the immanent order. Hence, the modern human agent began to understand himself without being connected to an 'outside' reality (Creator, Cosmos, and Community). This *immanentized* order is, therefore, like 'a plan without a planner' since individuals in this order does not reference God as the author of nature.

Taylor observes that our modern "immanent order" can be seen with a predominant nature of being *open*, *closed*, and *cross-pressed* in different parts of the world. American people in particular have a "sense of something higher to aim at, some better or moral way of life that was indissolubly connected to God" (*SA* 544). In the present time, this might be referred to the "civil religion," which has roots in the neo-Durkheimian[16] understanding of religion and civility. In any event, this designates an *openness* of human agents to a higher reality, even while being part of an "immanent order." Religious openness has goods that are inconceivable without a God.

As an open immanent order has a *consubstantial* relation to a *transcendent* good, a closed immanent order has a *consubstantial* relation to an *immanent* good. The orthodox belief and practice of religions pose a danger for the goods of the modern moral order, or such has been the contention of Gibbon, Voltaire, and Hume. They, according to Taylor, argue that "Strong Christianity will demand allegiance to certain theological beliefs or ecclesiastical structures, and this will split a society which should be intent

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[16]A neo-Durkheimian social form is one in which religion is partially *dis-embedded* from the traditional social structure of kinship and village life, but comes to serve as an expression of a larger social identity, namely, the newly emerging nation-state in the West.

simply on securing mutual benefit" (*SA* 546). This extreme manner of understanding religion as a source of fanaticism is a great source for the *closure of immanence.*

Taylor also speaks of another range of people who are "pressured" by both the 'open' and 'closed' immanent frames. On the one hand, they want to be "scientific," and, on the other, they want to be "spiritual" or "believing" in the openness of religions to a highest Good/God. Taylor sees Victor Hugo as an example for this kind of orientation. Unlike the predominant one-sided reading of the immanent order, Taylor insists forcefully on nuance, complexity, and fluidity. Taylor emphasizes the "Jamesian open space" (*SA* 592) as an endorsable place for experiencing *the spins* of our encounters of different realities.

Taylor's narration of immanence and transcendence yields an integral account of modern human identity that I call a *Holistic Identity*[17] at the point where the immanent order and its frames are considered together with an *openness* to transcendence. The moral space of holistic identity has a horizontal dimension and a vertical dimension. This becomes explicit later in *A Secular Age:*

> I want to examine the illusion of the rational "obviousness" of the closed perspective. My aim is to explore the constitution in modernity of what I will call "closed" or "horizontal" worlds. I mean by this shapes of our "world" which leave no place for the "vertical" or "transcendent," but which in one way or another close these off, render them inaccessible, or even unthinkable (*SA* 556).

In a sense, Taylor's later works offer an argument for the importance of horizontal frames and vertical frames, subtly and richly defined, in the formation of an integral or holistic modern identity. According to him, vertical openness to 'transcendence' is a substantial dimension of any conception of self-identity. This verticality can be theistic openness to God, but also, for example, an ultimate ethical principle. While many modern thinkers

[17]Description of a reality need not be exclusive of its possible dimensions. Natural sciences explain reality specifically from perceptual experiences. Christopher Peacocke, *Holistic Explanation*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.

apparently claim to have achieved their own self-identity and authenticity, Taylor's self-exploration continues to another level of articulation where he emphasizes the importance of transcendence together with immanence, community together with self-identity, and dialogue with monologue.

5. Conclusion

Both in Taylor and Levinas there are moments in which they are deeply concerned about a foundational necessity of a phenomenology and, thus, a metaphysics of politics and morality. Levinas being a *religious philosopher* became comfortable in being part of his *God of Jewish* religion as *The Other* in founding his search for meaning within himself and in the other. His legacy remains primarily *ethical* since he wanted modern human self to be *hospitable to the other*.[18] Taylor has been a pioneer in his constructive and positive approach to secularism. However, he never fails to pinpoint what is lacking in secularism as well. Down the road, modern secularism also suffers from a lack of metaphysical foundation to substantiate its claims. Modern politics wants to be independent from its religious roots and morality that came from it. Such Kantian enlightenment offers a reasonable argument in the wake of religious fanaticism and fundamentalism. Nevertheless, a predominantly religious human race will definitely look for divine interventions while they engage in secular politics. Hence, a self-definition that is purely *secular* and *monologic* will eventually fail in responding to the demands of human self in view of fulfilling their desire for the *supernatural* and *altruistic* aspirations and here one finds the significance and relevance of this work.

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[18]The fact that his parents were slaughtered in the Nazi concentration camp reiterates the role of his biographical instances in understanding the formation of his philosophical works.