

Thank you. It's a great pleasure to be here. I just love the town, and I got a very good tour of it from Daniel who's a relative. It's always risky to give a lecture where one of the audience is a member of the family because after you finish talking, you may lose your position as the family sage. I find that silence helps maintain this position. Sometimes [inaudible] silence.

My talk will be on the Whither the Secular City, and it's going to be a talk on the ages of religion -- since I began with the subject rather than began in a religious home -- and it's practically autobiographical because I've lived through several phases of religion since the '60s. In fact, it makes my life look a lot more interesting than it actually was. So I will begin. I came to McMaster University in the late '60s to join the religion department. At that time departments of religion were new, regarded with suspicion by the rest of the university and even by the divinity schools. The universities in Canada were usually under the dominion of religious denominations. McMaster was connected to the Baptist Church, and they had recently come under the dominion of the Ministry of Higher Education and thus became secular institutions. The newly secularized departments thought that we were the Trojan horse whereby the faithful could return to the governance of the university curriculum, while the divinity school thought we were the Trojan horse which would render them irrelevant. It took us a long time to find our identity and win the trust of our colleagues.

Our presence confused the world outside the university. During our first two years, when townspeople learned that I was from the religion department, they would always ask whether I played the organ or preached a sermon. We, on the other hand, were trying to formulate the mission of the department, it was -- that was mandated to convey the ideas, interpret the practices, and penetrate the texts of ancient religions as they are understood by their practitioners without being bound by the requirements of divine revelation. The secularism of the university at that time was militant and consisted not only in the elite legal arrangements that we had with the government but in the very culture that was becoming hegemonic. The culture was defined by positivism that maintained that the only knowledge worth pursuing was that which would be framed by a scientific paradigm. That was the equivalent of those years to the dilemma we face today when we say that all questions should be formulated so that they can be addressed to a computer. Social scientists changed their enterprise from the study of institutions; number crunching has never had such high prestige.

The department of religion was housed in a gothic building which we shared with the newly formed psychology department. Psychology as I had known it as an undergraduate was concerned with human relations. It had become a subject that drew mathematicians and statisticians that employed the most sophisticated measuring devices and directed its attention to the behavior of rats and pigeons. I used to call the psychology floor of the building "Noah's Ark."

Now at that time it was actually the case that one could give a history of the university by the various cultures that invaded. So in the '50s and early '60s there was a positivist culture which I experienced full blast at Columbia University; after that it was followed by Marxist and the whole anti-Vietnam War and so on; later came postmodernist -- I'm not saying that they ruled the university but they, in a sense, set the agenda so that then, you know -- so feminism and so on; and now, we have an age of a conflict between conservatism. Conservatism was never a field of intellectuals in the '50s and so on, became so in the '70s. So there is a -- there is a good Ph.D. on the various cultures of the universities, and the way they looked at religion was one element as I show. It was mysterious to us that the same scientists who were promoting the positivist regime that dominated the university were also sponsors to the departments of religion. I'm still somewhat mystified by that but that was the case at McMaster.

We concluded they thought it appropriate that we should act as a museum for a dying world, and that's what we thought the first mission of religion would be, as a kind of museum of artifacts for a world that was passing, which indeed outside it seemed to be. My colleagues were studying war and peace, the dynamics of economic life, social conflict, while I was meant to compose eulogies for a dying era. My concern, as it turned out and as I hope to convince you, was misplaced. After so many decades studying the subject of the social science in our department, I can say that we have been unable to keep up with the turbulence of religion at home and in the international world. Lenin once said that it is important to be as radical as reality but ignored religion, one of the reasons his system failed. Many of the social sciences do the same. I have read books on Islam, on Judaism and even India where the reader would not guess that anyone in these countries ever set foot in a synagogue, mosque, or temple; this is changing.

For the next while I want to go over some of the high points of the engagement between religion in a secular world. These can be framed as something like a cultural kaleidoscope moved from religious secularism to what is called now "post-secularism" and beyond will be my main subject. It is a jerky narrative, as mine will be, and I am simply claiming that the study of religion is essential to the study of the world.

The first era that I will describe is that of the '60s until the late '70s. I would call this "Chapter 1," though there are hundreds of chapters before; the era of rapprochement between the secular and the religious. It was the era in which a book called "The Secular City" by a theologian was a wild bestseller. It was the era which historians of religion will probably label the era of Vatican II. It was an era in which the state of Israel was profoundly secular; in fact, I was there as a student for a year, and I come from a Rabbinic family, and I was shocked that there were Jewish atheists, and they seemed to be in – in terrific abundance even though still militantly Jewish. It was an era that Muslims called for Islamic socialism, and even in the East the Bhagavad Gita was read as a secular manifesto. Now, as I said, the most sensational document of the time was Harvey Cox's "The Secular City," a volume which became the most impressive bestseller of the time. In this volume, Cox argued that the imagery of Christianity had to change because the Christian church addressed a new and unprecedented environment, the city. The imagery of the church, he argued, was rooted in the rural parish, a world of unchanging verities, a world that oriented itself to the regularity of the seasons, a world that was rooted in a morality of unchanging verities concerning the family and sexuality, a world that could be described as a cosmos compared to today's world of an open and mysterious universe. The Kennedy presidency and the Kennedy family exemplified the ethos of pragmatism that Cox was calling for, a new church bound in kind of situational ethics that change with changing situations, though it turned out that the Kennedys were, in fact, devote Christians. I don't doubt their sincerities, the revelations came out that they had a certain -- a certain partiality to Aphrodite as well.

[Laughter]

And Camus was praised by Cox because he had an ethic of the here and now; in other words, he did not -- he criticized the religion of the afterlife and the religion of the spiritual world above us. So the Kennedys and Camus became Cox's heroes. Christianity, he was saying, needed to find a theological voice that could address the jostle and dynamism of a contemporary environment. He even rejected in the 1950s, people of my age -- which I don't see many of you here -- will remember was an era where theologians were on the cover of Time Magazine -- P Paul Tillich, Niebuhr, and so on. And they all argued that we live in an alienation, that we live in

cosmic loneliness, and so on. Cox was saying, what a bunch of junk, you know, we live in the city, it's upbeat, and so on; so he single-handedly put all these people temporarily into a rubbish bin. I think Obama has revived Reinhold Niebuhr, the way people say -- in any case, he was arguing something very new.

The Civil Rights Movement was also a phenomenon of this particular era. Here it was led by very devout clergy. On the other hand, it mobilized very secular people, so therefore like Vatican II and so on, it kind of brought together, it mingled in one pool secular ideals and religious ones; so this was part of what was a secular era. Finally, there was Vatican II, the event that I believe will define this era. The perception of Vatican II at this time, both by participants I knew and by observers including Nikita Khrushchev, was that the Catholic church had renounced the nineteenth-century documents that had rejected modernity. And indeed rejected its past collusion with the dark powers that had ruled Spain in the '30s. This was the era of what was then called "liberation theology" where various orders renounced the hierarchical vision of Thomas Aquinas and declared their allegiance to the profits of the equality. The Catholic thinker Teilhard de Chardin came to the fore. I knew one of the members of the secretariat of Vatican II who thought that the unfolding of Vatican II was giving us previews of Augustine, City of God. This priest, by the way, had been born Jewish in Germany, but he always says he was born of no religion and became a Catholic priest and then he understood and began to appreciate his Jewishness. So I tested him, I took him to a deli called "The Bagel" on College Street in Toronto which served a mishmash of Jewish foods which he hated. I told him he failed.

[Laughter] You're a Catholic.

That the kaleidoscope had taken a turn had become evident in the late '70s. In the macro-verse, the macro-universe of international order, what seemed to be a series of apocalyptic religious events took place, and these were reflected in the micro-world of our university. When I first came to the universities in the secular era, the chaplains told me that their offices were always empty, that in keeping with the scientific gist of the time, students whose spirits were troubled would go to the medical schools on our campus and consult psychiatrists. By the late '70s, the offices of the chaplains, who in the meantime had become prominent figures on campus, were always full. Suddenly the largest single student organization was not the social and political action groups who were so prevalent in the '60s but an evangelical group called "The Downstairs John" whose Sunday religious services were packed to capacity. A charming recollection of that time: a group of very religious Jews and very religious Muslims got together and proclaimed a pork-free zone in the cafeteria which lasted until they graduated. Even the behaviors of individuals had changed. Jewish parents who once complained that their children had run off and become hippies in Amsterdam or Maoist activists in the cities -- were now complaining that their children had become Lubavitcher, would not eat at home -- that is, ultra-Orthodox Jews would not eat at home because it wasn't kosher enough. I noticed that amongst my protestant students, more and more were joining -- leaving their mainline churches and joining Evangelical ones which seemed to be springing up; so a new era had come. Now, we can reflect for a moment what happened to Harvey Cox's era. I would say that in the '70s, the city lost its prestige. We talked about the secular city, and the secular city -- the city lost its prestige. Detroit was burned to the ground, Los Angeles was burned to the ground, the various-Miami -- there's a whole string of just uprisings in the cities that they became..Now, my favorite city in the world was New York, I studied there for two years, but for a period of time in the '70s and '80s, New York became terrifying even to walk from your hotel room, taxi was terrifying, and especially the parts where I lived. Even now I find it difficult to believe that you can walk down 8th Avenue and not worry. So the demise of the city is a long story, and its resurrection in recent years a wonderful story, but I won't go into it. The big issue is what happened to the term

"secularism" which everyone paraded in the '60s. Now, I will give a series of events, talk about one or two of them, regarding what happened to the word "secularism," knowing that I leave out a lot and illustrate the mixture of religious ideas and social and economic and other events.

Now, the most important macro event was the sudden eruption of fundamentalist religions all over the world. This became visible in the '70s. In 1977, in Israel the once marginalized thinker of an Israeli politician, it was to the right, Menachem Begin and his once-marginalized Likud party, so well known now, came into power. The party contained at its core a settlement movement that it declared had been mandated by the Bible and the direct command of God to settle the territories now inhabited by the Palestinians. During these same years, the Christian Coalition was formed in the United States and became active on life issues -- the issues of abortion, issues of feminism, and so on. This is still the case to some point; I'll talk about it in a moment. Around the same time another marginal figure came into power, Ronald Regan. So the world seemed apocalyptic at that time. In subsequent years, the most shocking event of this whole period was the seizure of power of a secular regime by Islamic fundamentalism in the Iran. Nothing like this was positive, nothing like this was foreseen, that a whole population rose up under the leadership of a cleric and seized power in what was formerly a secular country. Now, this kind of uprising had been forecast in Europe by Rosa Luxemburg years earlier and a few others, that there would be a mass rising of the people carrying the Communist manifesto. No one dreamed there would be a mass uprising around a cleric carrying the Koran, so this was almost the defining event of this religious resurgence.

In different parts of the world, the same thing happened. The BJP in India took power, which -- whether it's a Hindu orthodox power -- is controversial now, but certainly in India, the rising middle class, the technologic ones are Orthodox Hindus. So what was new here? Religious movements came into power which claimed the possibility of taking over the present order. So in the past we thought of fundamentalism people who lived in their own world and said, "You do your own way and go to hell, you know, and we'll live our way and go to heaven, but just leave us alone." This was what fundamentalism in most religions seemed to mean. But here were people who were politically sophisticated enough to take power. They claimed power in the same way that generations earlier the Communists had claimed they would take over capitalism. Now, before going into what's happened to these movements, which is the crucial part of story today -- I should remain as controversial whether you can call all these parties "fundamentalist." I won't go into that unless there are some questions, but the sociologists and political people call them fundamentalists. But I know the difficulties there.

Now, let's take a look at how this emergence throws light on what was happening in the world at that time. Now, there are many things that I can't go into but I'll mention a couple. The first is what the sociologist Manuel Castells calls the "rise of the network society," the coming of the information age. We have the world being transformed by computer technology, later the internet and so on, beginning in the late '70s. Castells thinks that this is a new era in the history of humanity in the same way that we call the Industrial Revolution a new era in the history of humanity. He's written three volumes to do it. The world is now divided into those who are plugged in and those who aren't. Now, he claims that the whirlwind of globalization that has lifted up some societies and brought down others, that now threatens European unity, for example, helped bring down capitalism -- not to mention in the '80s and not to mention Communism in the late '80s -- has now helped to create new religious movement. The impact of rapid changes when whole countries suddenly go into bankruptcy, where whole civilizations seem to disappear between newscasts, is fundamental. In 1989, a man came from the London School of Economics to our university just as communism had collapsed, and he told me at LSE

one of his friends had written a Ph.D. thesis that had been accepted called, "The Inner Stability of the Eastern European Communist System."

[Laughter]

You know, so in England it takes long time for that kind of thesis to go through for defense. By the time it came to the defense, the whole system had disappeared from the face of the earth. He may just as well have written a thesis on the inner stability of the Assyrian Empire.

[Laughter]

So that was one of the things. Now, what happens there according to Castells? He says that what happens is that religions become fortresses. They turn to the greatest fundamentals to shelter themselves from changes, from storms, from typhoons in the social world. In his own colorful language, "Social formations appear where the excluders exclude the excluded." In other words, religions appeared that kept everything, you know, that separated themselves from everything else. That's quite a different formation than what we saw in the '60s. Now, I think that there's a lot to this, but I have some criticisms of it later.

There is another aspect of the new technology, that is to say, of the new society, the new technological society that we live in that I can't interpret – Daniel is writing in part about it – namely that the world of internet, computers, and so on is one that very religious people find compatible with them. They can find a compatibility that they never found in the old industrial world of steel mills, mega cities, and so on. One can see this in the number -- if you go to New York, computer stores, they'll be run by ultra-Orthodox Jews. Native shamans have websites, so you'll have a kind of technological sophistication in the ultra-religious world, sometimes the most remote monasteries are on the internet, you know, checking with each other. This aspect of the new age, that is, its compatibility with ultra-Orthodox religion, is well worth study. I have been told, I can't defend these positions, that the excellence of Indians in Bangalore on computer programming has to do with their experience in Hindu mathematics. Recently I read that a man from the high-tech industries in Israel that are doing very well, said, "We have a whole pool of ultra-Orthodox Jews praying to the Talmud, the ancient text that's great for the computer." So don't ask me why. But for various reasons, the ultra-Orthodox of all religions are at home in the technology that has arisen since 1970s in ways that they weren't with the scientific world say of the 1940s or 1930s. And this is a subject that's now being intensely studied. We talk now about Twitter and all these social media, how they're helping foment revolutions all over the world, or uprisings in any case, but they have been fomenting congregations for a long, long time. Only a couple of years ago I saw an obituary of a very ultra-Orthodox Jewish man in the New York Times, and they said that one of his claims to fame is the he had a website before the word "internet" had been coined. So here is a subject of study. So the new change in technology changed the relationship between the ultra-religious to the technological world, one that they thought they could manage.

The second source of tumult in the religious world – and still is in large parts of it – was the great revolution of our times, the rise of feminism and the secular revolution. Now, this elicited a swift religious response. There are sociologists who believe that this is the main cause of the rise of the fundamentalisms that I have described. It is certainly the case that women's issues lie at the heart of religious self-consciousness; in fact, I would go so far as to say that when we talk about secularism in the '80s, '90s, and today, we're talking mainly about feminism and things coming forth from the revolution, the sexual revolution of that time, and that elicited a vast

response which -- and it still does, it still does, where you have conservative religion holding forth, feminist issues are usually at the heart of it.

Other issues in the rise of militancy are the decline of communism and the rise of pluralism, which is what I'll discuss now in connection with post-secularism. In downtown Toronto, which is one of the great multicultural centers of the world, you have Somali Muslims pushing their children's carriages, Chinese police officers, signs proclaiming meetings of atheist societies, and aromas of every kitchen in the world, and looks [inaudible] had like you have that in [inaudible], too, and mingling of cultures such as I couldn't have imagined. For me it was sad. When my family came from Poland to Canada, I was the outer reaches of multiculturalism in Canada. Now, I'm one of the white gang. [Laughter] I run the country.

So we come to what's called "post-secularism." Now, both a philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, and a sociologist, Peter Berger, among many others, agreed that these developments had put secularism in crisis. Habermas calls attention to a rising religious population that pushes against the limitations formulated by liberal thought. These limitations were established by a philosopher named [John] Rawls who said that the public realm has no idea of the good, it just manages things; and the private realm, you can want for the Messiah to come, you can want for the Muslim Messiah to come -- you can do whatever you want, but that's in the private realm, and that's where religion belongs. The public realm is kind of secular it just manages, but religious, as you can see from this previous account, are pushing into the public realm, and, in fact, this is what the Christian right did -- certainly issues of abortion and so on -- galvanized and put them into the public realm. So, he said, this particular compromise about the role of religion has now come to an end. So that's the first thing, the coming of religious groups and especially now in Europe, you have very large populations of Muslims, but not only that, you have a steady pressure on the secular world by religious groups.

The second thing, and I have experience of this, was the emergence in secular society of moral problems arising mainly from biotechnology for which there was no really ready secular answer. You know, before we had a bunch of issues, poverty and so on, to which, you know, there were secular answers, means, ends, and so on. But now you have problems of euthanasia, you have problems of abortion, problems of, you know, stem cells, whatever it happens to be, in which there are conflicting secular views, and one in which religious groups found themselves more competent or found themselves eager to participate. The reason that I say I have some experience with this is that out of sheer boredom of administration when I first came to the universities, I had joined -- we have a very dynamic medical school, progressive -- I joined, in the early '70s, the medical ethics committee. Now, I saw things that are familiar to all of you. The first issue is, when should we let people die? You know, when should we let people die? [Chuckle] It turned out, as we can see nowadays, that they had technology that could keep them alive forever, and, in fact, there are some, you know, and how do you turn off? So, strangely enough, this very confident scientific community came to the religious studies department thinking that we were pastors and, you know -- - to come and offer a solution to this particular problem. So the world is filled with problems in which the -- they can claim their views. So this -- these are the two things that brought about what we call post-secularism.

Now, today the focus of the discussion on post-secular -- well, I'll speak [inaudible] -- the focus of the discussion of post-secularism in a recent volume by the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, called "The Secular Age," is a volume of over 800 pages. It has been the subject of numerous conferences, several volumes of essays, and it now has a website called the "Imminent Horizon" funded by the Canadian -- the "Imminent Horizon" -- anyone who's interested in religion and the discussion of religion should have it on their list of things to look up

because it discusses almost every religious development and every religious book by some of the best philosophers, sociologists, and so on in the world. Now, I want to tell you what's in that book. Since it's 800 pages, I promise to finish by 11, so I'll make it very sketchy in about five minutes, really, and tell you what it's about, where the word "post-secular" applies to it. Now, it's a magisterial work; it should be kept in the houses of Encyclopedia of Modern Thought. It begins with an account in the late Middle Ages right up to the '60s of what has happened to secular and religious thought. You can look up anybody in it, you'll get really good ideas, no matter who it is -- Voltaire, Gibbon, and so on -- and it comes to the current period. Now, the book is inspired by the philosopher [Georg Wilhelm Friedrich] Hegel, about whom Taylor has already written another 800- page volume. Hegel -- those of you that may have studied him -- made a remark in a book called "The Philosophy of Right," that philosophy paints its gray on gray, that philosophy doesn't give us inspiring views of the world; and then he used the phrase "the Owl of Minerva takes flight at twilight." What he means to say, that weekend philosophers can look at the world when it's all accomplished and all over and tell you what it was about; in other words, we're good at the past not the future. Now, Taylor's book has this feel that he's talking about a complete world, the secular age which began with the protestant reformation right up to the '60s. So now what he wants to show is that we have the wrong view of what happened, as we generally view the modern age as one in which secularism pushed aside religion, and he calls this "the subtraction view of modern history." Now, what does he mean by "subtraction"? It means that in the late Middle Ages we had a philosophy, that of Thomas Aquinas, which held everything together. Aquinas you can -- you have metaphysics, you have politics, you have morality, you have all kinds of things of how to do various rituals, you have a whole structure, like a Medieval cathedral in which everything is whole and everything is put together and that's what we called the Medieval World View; a view in which everything is contained within a fairly flexible structure. There are still ardent followers of Thomas Aquinas as you know. In fact, my thesis advisor is one of the most prominent of them. Now, according to the subtraction view, every now and then -- you know, over the ages -- different constituencies broke free, the first being science. Science got rid of Thomas Aquinas because they said, we have others -- Thomas Aquinas gives us a distorted view of nature because he takes all his ideas from Aristotle, so let's do our own methodology and let's start, so we had the scientific revolution. Now the scientists were not antireligious for the most part; in fact, they said they were supporting religion. But the priesthood smelled a rat and quite rightly because scientific world view was partly defined by a philosopher Descartes, so he said, Let's begin by supposing that everything is false, everything is a nightmare as if we're in the Truman story, you know, let's suppose that everything is false, then we start to build everything up, and look, what do you know, I have God, I have science, I have truth, I have everything. So the church said, what's all this about nothing being true, we start -- you mean, that you decide what's true and what's not -- so they realized that there's a Trojan horse in the middle, and they turned out to be right.

So the second constituency to break off was the state. You have Henry the VIII, you have all these absolutist rulers who just put the church -- "We want the church here but you're second in command. We like to have church guidance but we like to have the final decision." So you have a number of states breaking off. Then after that, you have the capitalist market. Now, the capitalist market doesn't have religious control; it did beforehand. In the Middle Ages, the bishops would decide in what prices should be, they made decisions on prices. And a lot of the monasteries, the Cistercian monasteries were capitalist enterprises, but then came Adam Smith, and then came the rise of first mercantilism and then capitalism, and something else was free of religion -- capitalism. So basically speaking what started was a Catholic church and thelemism which ran everything, and then in Agatha Christie's words, "Then there were none," you know, and that's how we came to secularism. That's the subtraction story.

So Charles Taylor says, "No, no, no. That's not what happened. That's not what happened." Because the subtraction story can't talk about the moral fervor of the more -- of the present -- of the secular world; the absolute desire to build what he called a "human flourishing," what brought us democratic societies and so on, what brought us obligations to the poor. He says, no. The subtraction story can't account for that. We have to try to understand the modern world as a kind of Christian impulse that went in a direction that Christianity hadn't wanted. So the modern world is a Christian impulse, and I won't talk about that a long time but I can if any questions arise.

Now, he takes his account right to the '60s, and he looks at secularism as all the spiritual quests of the '60s, the search for authenticity that was very popular at that time, and he says, in the '60s, you had the sexual revolution, you had feminism, you have all that, which everybody was denouncing as narcissism and so on. He says, no, it's part of the Christian narrative, the desire to bring the flesh out of concealment, to bring the flesh and spirit together. So the whole thing is part of the Christian narrative. So in a sense, there's no secular story. What there is a kind of distorted version of the Christian narrative which takes us to where we are at the present. And where are we at the present? A whole multitude of what he calls [inaudible], of people looking for some kind of spiritual fulfillment. You have Catholics and Jews and Muslims, you have the diverse pluralistic society. Now, this has to be managed -- and there is secularism. You can have secular societies, you can have Marxists, you can have [inaudible], but they're only part of the borscht. So you set up a government that manages all these but you don't have to call it secular. So the word "secular" is misleading in trying to understand the modern world. So Taylor has given this huge structure to define post-secularism. Now, where does it stand? I'll bring us to where we are today as briefly as possible. Taylor's post-secularism has been resisted especially by Habermas, because Taylor was put on a commission in Quebec, in Canada in order to deal with problems, conflicts that had broken out between Muslims, Jews, and the Quebec public over women in public swimming pools. They came out -- now, in any other country this attempt to bring people together would be called the "Commission on Unity and Brotherhood," or it would be called the "Commission on Loving Kindness" or something, and here's why I love Canada, this commission was called the "Commission on Reasonable Accommodation."

[Laughter]

So they came out with this particular view of secularism, which, you know, of management of an economy or of a pluralistic society, and in which there were three principles: The principle was, equal respect for everyone; two, freedom of expression for everyone; and three, not to be too tied up in your sacred symbols. So, for example, Taylor would have utterly rejected the parades in Northern Ireland celebrating the Battle of the Boyne where the Protestants defeated the Catholics. Those celebrations -- anything that divides people -- you throw it out the door. In Canada we tried to have a celebration of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham where the English defeated the French. Well, that was nixed pretty fast. So the whole sacred history of the country changes in order that we can all live together. So those three principles -- the government has to have what we have partial -- what he calls partiality; partial -- distant partiality. You don't have to call it secular, it's not secular; in various countries, it's not. Now, he defends himself by looking at the social and political structure of India and other countries. So secularism isn't what's at stake. What's at stake are these three principles, and someone can be secular if they want, but they -- secularism shouldn't run a country. Well, as it happened, Quebec, they didn't take these views. They now have a law in Quebec that the government will not subsidize kindergartens that have religious programs. So in other words, if a Jewish school is celebrating Hanukkah, it can celebrate Hanukkah as a victory over the Hellenists, for example, but it can't

say God caused the light, you know, for -- the same with Christmas. Christmas you can celebrate as a holiday of peace and brotherhood, but you can't say anything about the divinity of Christ, so totally secular. So the government in Quebec didn't follow Taylor's views, they still call themselves secular.

But is there a reason to call yourself secular? Well, let me jump to the situation today. There are some oddities in Taylor's view. By secular states, such as we have in the United States, I mean a public space where all persons are equal in every political respect. Now, can you do this under some framework that doesn't call itself secular? That's the question that you can put -- Habermas thinks not, that there is, for the secular world you have to allow in all the religious people into the public world, but you have to have a space in which all are equal citizens, and that's what we mean by secular. So that dispute is ongoing, and I could talk a lot more about it.

But when Taylor talks about this world emerging, there's some things he leaves out. First of all, there are still spirited battles between religion and science. He doesn't think there should be. In the battles over Darwin in the United States, it used to be whether you believed in the Bible or whether you believed in science, but they're not framed this way anymore. The critique of Darwinism comes from people who are quite competent in science. So the debate is -- now, whether they are or not going to ask me, but this is what they claim -- they are scientists attacking Darwinism. So you still have that battle in the secular world and so on. But the other battles that he doesn't mention are the ones that I mentioned before in Iran and Egypt and, you know, so forth and so on, all over the world. There are spirited battles between the secular and the religious, and the outcome is not quite certain now except for one thing. All of the constituencies that came on the -- in the world in such a flash in the late 1970s are fighting a retreating battle. The Islamic rulership in Iran is in retreat. It may be in power, but it's not -- it doesn't have its charisma. The Islamic leadership in Iran looks more like the government of the Eastern European communist countries of the 1970s and '80s in that nobody believed what they are saying but they were in rule, in power, because of the police force.

Now, the second, the Christian Coalition is largely united with the Tea Party but not entirely, but it is professing secular issues such as the budget and the deficit. Now, it may be God's will that we rule the deficit or that we rule out the deficit or that we pay the deficit, but it's not one that will -- that isn't upheld also by secularists. In Israel the situation is more complicated. This particular movement is still in power but it has also lost its charisma -- this settlement movement -- and what will happen to it depends on what secular forces in Israel will decide not what they decide. So this is quite turbulent, And we might be, with the uprisings in Egypt last week, into a newer era. We don't know. We may be in a more -- an era that -- that focuses more on secular democracy. We don't know. As far as I know, these countries will remain Islamic but in a very different sense. I have students that are part of the opposition in Iran. They want a democratic society but they want it to be Islamic. How they'll resolve this, I don't know, you know. So we're into a kind of different formation which is bubbling to the surface now, and that's why I have to have a kind of let-you-hang end.

The other religious phenomenon in the world today is one that's being intensely studied -- the emergence of religious formations that have broken off from secular culture all together into globalism. Now, these are the religions that have the most converts. They are Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism is afire all over the world. They have had terrific impact in Latin America, they have had terrific impact in Eastern -- and in Eastern Europe they were just kicked out by force. I can tell you stories about Pentecostalist students of mine. In Africa they're very powerful. Here you have a movement that criticizes all the local culture, and, you know, for its morals, for everything else, that it speaks in tongues. So speaking in tongues, you can't speak in tongues --

some of you will know better, you know, speaking in tongues you can't do with a Scottish accent, you know. It's a kind of global movement. The other one that is succeeding and getting converts to our distress is al-Qaeda, but al-Qaeda is probably getting more converts in Amsterdam than it is in Riyadh. It's a kind of global movement -- second generation movement that is not connected to the local culture. There are ways also which the Israel Orthodox also aren't connected to the local culture, but it's very complex.

So in the end -- jumping over this last period that we are emerging into now -- we're groping towards something new. Taylor may be right in claiming that this world will not be managed by secular authority, but the ideals that he calls "rock bottom," the ideals of mutual respect, freedom of expression, and so on, won't last unless they're defended by secular authority, in my opinion. And at least it has given me the confidence that what I feared when I first came into religious studies, that religion would simply be a museum, certainly is not the case. We have all these movements moving ahead now; there's conservative religion is still moving ahead; for example, the big thing in the 1960s in the Catholic church was changing the service from Latin to English. Now, there's an explosion of Latin studies in the Catholic world. Our department of classics has been given a new lease on life. The Latin classes are full. On the other hand, secular activism continues -- that is to say the women's movement and various fronts continue. And, finally, we have these new international religious movements as well as the battle over what's coming up in the Middle East. So I have to leave you a little bit hungry, what reality is about. Thank you for your attention. I'm sorry I went on so long.

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