

## Summary

The idea of the book emerges from Charles Taylor's Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh which he held in the spring of 1999, entitled "Living in a Secular Age?". The book has grown since 1999, and also increased its scope. In the book, Taylor explains what we usually call "secularization" in the modern West. And in doing so, he is trying to clarify what this process, often invoked, but still not very clear, amounts to. To do this properly, however, he says, we should have had to tell a denser and more continuous story. He asks the reader who picks up this book not to think of it as a continuous story and argument, but rather as a set of interlocking essays, which shed light on each other, and offer a context of relevance for each other. He hopes the general thrust of his thesis will emerge from this treatment, and will suggest to others further ways of developing, applying, modifying, and transposing the argument.

In his book, Charles Taylor develops an illuminating debate on secularism. He raises a question: What does it mean to say that we live in a secular age? He replies that almost everyone would agree that in some sense we do. He means the "we" who live in the West, or perhaps Northwest, or otherwise put, the North Atlantic world, or in other terms, he is dealing with the civilization whose roots lie in what used to be called "Latin Christendom". Of course, secularization and secularity are phenomena which exist today well beyond the boundaries of this world. It should be possible one day to undertake a study of the whole phenomenon on a global scale. We are more and more living in a world of "multiple modernities".