



Religion in Public Life.
Studies in Political Theology
and Political Philosophy

| 1

Sergio Gadea Caballero

Loving your Neighbor in a Secular Age

Agape in the Philosophy
of Charles Taylor

VERLAG KARL ALBER



**Religion in Public Life.
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and Political Philosophy**

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Volume 1

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Acknowledgments

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nary body of work provided me with a rigorous entry point into several central debates in contemporary philosophy and offered a way of thinking attentive to history, lived experience, and the conditions under which people make fundamental decisions and seek meaning in their lives. I am also personally grateful for his kindness in receiving me and for the generosity with which he gave time to my questions, an encounter that helped clarify and sharpen the concerns that lie at the heart of this book.

I am a Jesuit, and this work is the result of a mission entrusted to me by the Society of Jesus: the study of philosophy in the field of secularization and the attempt to understand the conditions under which belief is lived today. That mission led me, among other things, to the thought of Charles Taylor. I am deeply thankful to the superiors who entrusted me with this task, for their confidence and for the generosity with which they granted me extended time for study. In a particular way, I wish to thank Manuel García Bonasa, SJ, my spiritual director during most of these years, for helping me through what may be one of the most demanding challenges of doctoral work: discerning an apostolic meaning in the sustained and often demanding labor of study.

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I became a companion of Jesus with a clear awareness not only of the commitment to faith proper to my religious order, but also

of the pursuit of justice. I have grown within the Society shaped by the three verbs articulated by Ignacio Ellacuría, SJ: *hacerse cargo*—to take reality seriously; *cargar*—to bear its weight; and *encargarse*—to act upon it and seek its transformation. I have been fortunate to walk alongside friends, Jesuit and lay alike, who have made these verbs both horizon and practice, through concrete choices and visible fruits in the struggle for justice. I have also seen, up close, the cost sometimes of such fidelity: weariness, disappointment, suffering, and the slow erosion of hope. Beneath this book lies the question of a fourth verb—*recargarse*: where one learns again how to draw breath, how to be renewed when the weight becomes too heavy, and the horizon seems closed. Where can one return to a source of motivation that does not deceive, that does not exhaust, that allows one to remain faithful even when reality does not respond, when change is imperceptible, and when fruits do not appear?

This book is dedicated to those who have taught me, through their lives, that love—*agape*—is not only the deepest motivation, but the most truthful answer.

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Introduction	13
1.1. The meaning of agape	19
1.2. The puzzle of agape	24
1.2.1. Incarnational love or dialectical love?	24
1.2.2. Specific love or universal love?	26
1.2.3. What a theory of moral motivation grounded in agape must account for?	30
1.3. Taylor on altruism and the role of agape	32
1.4. Taylor and the “catholic attitude”	39
1.5. Outline of the study	44
2. The place of agape in Taylor’s moral realism	49
2.1. Mapping Taylor’s moral realism	52
2.2. Articulation, live goods and constitutive goods	59
2.2.1. Strong evaluation and moral motivation	66
2.2.2. Incommensurable Goods and the Orientation of a Life	68
2.3. Is the articulation of agape qualitatively distinctive?	71
2.4. Enrique Dussel’s critique from the perspective of the alterity and liberation	80
3. The Secularization of Agape (I): Moral Slippages in Taylor’s Sources of the Self	93
3.1. First slippage: interiority	96
3.2. Second slippage: ordinary life	100
3.3. Third slippage: the utility of the good and the rationalization of agape	103

3.4. Fourth slippage: historical exceptionalism	106
3.5. Fifth slippage: expressivism	112
3.6. The fate of agape in the age of pluralism	115
4. Agape as Best Account: Moral Realism, Resonance, and the Weak	117
4.1. Taylor's theistic hunch at the end of Sources of the Self .	118
4.2. Taylor's Best Account (BA Principle)	120
4.3. The moral maps of Modernity	124
4.4. The Best Account for the sake of the weak?	127
4.5. Some critics against Taylor's theistic argumentation . . .	131
4.6. Is agape (just) a romantic inspiration?	134
4.7. Agape and Resonance	140
4.7.1. Resonance and the Good Samaritan	144
4.7.2. Addressing two difficulties	146
4.8. The Good Samaritan in Charles Taylor's account of agape	154
5. The Secularization of Agape (II): Moral Sources and Fullness in A Secular Age	159
5.1. The Axial Religions	164
5.2. The novelty of Christian agape	166
5.3. Reform and the eclipse of agape	171
5.4. The Renaissance civility	178
5.5. Providential Deism	180
5.6. The expansion of exclusive humanism	182
5.7. The Nova Effect	186
5.8. Altruism in the 19th Century 'Open Space'	190
5.9. The Age of Mobilization	194
5.10. The super-nova effect and the Age of Authenticity	197
5.11. Evaluating Taylor's historical account	202

6. The Mutation of Agape and the Charisma-Institution Dilemma	211
6.1. Ivan Illich's challenge to charities	213
6.1.1. Evaluating Illich's position	217
6.1.2. Corruption or Mutation?	219
6.1.3. Institutionalization as nomolatriy	222
6.2. Hegelian explorations	224
6.2.1. Moralität and Sittlichkeit in Taylor's perspective	225
6.2.2. Civil society and the role of charitable institutions	228
6.3. The imaginary of solidarity and moral transformation	231
6.4. An argument in favor of the non-translatability of agape	237
6.5. The place of agape in social philosophy	243
7. Agape and the Politics of Recognition	245
7.1. Recognition and agape	246
7.2. Agape in Taylor's Politics of Recognition	254
7.2.1. The dialogical nature of identity	256
7.2.2. Inarticulation as a danger for recognition	259
7.3.3. The way out of the struggle: holistic liberalism and the articulation of collective goals	260
7.3.4. The fusion of horizons	263
7.3. The Good and the Right	269
7.4. Agape and the end of violence	273
7.5. The question of transcendence and politics	278
8. Agapeic Transcendence	287
8.1. The concept of transcendence according to Taylor	288
8.1.1. The eschatological perspective of agape.	294
8.1.2. The ambiguity of Taylor's concept of transcendence and the catholic attitude	297

8.2. A trialogue on Christian neighborly love	303
8.2.1. Martha Nussbaum and the Mutilation of Transcendence	304
8.2.2. Friedrich Nietzsche and the lack of articulation of the good	309
8.2.3. Agape as a fuller account	314
8.3. Agapeic transcendence in the later work of Charles Taylor	317
8.3.1. On the significance of hermeneutic interpretations	318
8.3.2. On the admiration towards moral exemplars	322
8.3.3. On the use of subtler languages	329
9. Conclusions	335
9.1. Agape as a motivational source for loving the neighbor: Strengths and weaknesses	335
9.2. Evaluating the presence of agape in Taylor's philosophy: Consistencies and ambivalences	338
9.3. Taylor and the catholic attitude: an integral and undamaged account of humanity	341
9.4. Taylor's contribution to the debate on the motivation towards altruism and the reinforcement of the call to love one's neighbor	343
Bibliography	349