Archbishop William Temple and the British welfare state: Anglicanism, idealism, and the common good

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The Welfare State

As Pauline Gregg explained in her 1967 history of the British welfare state, the exact phrase "Welfare State" did not appear in the *Oxford English Dictionary* until 1955, when it was defined – in terms strikingly reminiscent, as I will presently explain, of British Idealist teaching on positive freedom – as "a polity so organized that every member of the community is assured of his due maintenance, with the most advantageous conditions possible for all". At the time she was writing Gregg was able to draw on information supplied by the editor of the very latest *OED* supplement, and accordingly pointed to William Temple's use of the term welfare state in *Citizen and Churchman* (1941) as "possibly" its first use in print.[1] For many years after, the phrase continued to be traced to Temple's book. Thus the second edition of the *OED* (1989) – which defined welfare state in less Idealist and rather more functional terms as, 'A country in which the welfare of members of the community is underwritten by means of State-run social services' – continued to list Temple's *Citizen and Churchman* (1941) as the first known example of its use.[2]

More recently, the third edition of the *OED* (2014) has altogether deleted reference to Temple and towards the end of this essay I will explore some possible explanations for this erasure. The most recent definition remains strictly functionalist, but this time specifies the types of social services the welfare state provides: "A system whereby the state undertakes to protect the health and well-being of its citizens, especially those in financial or social need, by

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[1] Pauline Gregg, *The Welfare State* (London: George G. Harrap, 1967), 3-4.
[2] "welfare state, n.". OED, second edition (1989). Oxford University Press. https://www.oed.com/oed2/00282598 (accessed February 20, 2023).

means of grants, pensions, and other benefits; a country practising such a system".[3] For present purposes it suffices to say that this is a long way from the original definition of 1955. At this point it needs be said that the new entry lists two earlier occurrences of the term: first in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (1894), and second in Joseph Jacobs' *Jewish Contributions to Civilization* (1920). It is worth considering if they are at all connected with the "Welfare-State" in Temple, and what influence they may have had on later use. Were they fortuitous coincidences of happenstance, or do they represent anything like a tradition or trajectory of English-language writing on the welfare state?

The first example is an American-English translation of the German term, *Wohlfahrsstaat*. It occurred in Joseph Adna Hill's translation of Gustav Cohn's *History of Political Economy* (1894), where *Wohlfahrsstaat* was used in antithetical contrast to Johann Gottlieb Fichte's *Geschlossener Handelstaat* (1800). In his translation of Cohn's work, Hill added a note of explanation at the relevant point: 'The idea [*of the welfare-state*] is that the State should not merely protect the persons and property of its citizens, but should endeavour to promote their welfare by some more positive action or interference in their behalf'.[4] The philosophical character of this initial use of the term welfare state is suggestive: it seems to have been something defined in contrast with Fichte's political philosophy. There is, however, little reason to suppose that Hill's neologism should be connected with later developments in Britain. It appears to be an isolated example in an American publication, quite accidental in character albeit related to terms then current in German writing on political economy.

The second pre-Temple example listed by the *OED* is particularly worthy of note, for a closer look at Jacobs' book shows that he used the term with reference to both Jewish as well

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[3] "welfare state, n.". OED Online. June 2019. Oxford University Press. https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/226969?redirectedFrom=welfare+state#eid (accessed February 20, 2023).
[4] Gustav Cohn, *Supplement: A History of Political Economy*, trans. Joseph Adna Hill. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 4 (1894), 83.

as Christian political theology. The instance listed in the current *OED* is from Jacobs' chapter on the breakdown of the European 'Church-Empire' in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, where Jacobs argued that the nation of Holland provided the 'first type of the Welfare State, which regarded the material welfare of its citizens as its chief aim'. Unfortunately, the *OED* does not cite the whole sentence from Jacobs, who in actual fact went on to argue that the 'phenomenal success' of Holland's welfare state 'made it a rival to the Church-State, which had hitherto formed the only type of… European State system'.[5] Later, in a chapter on 'Jews and Liberalism', Jacobs once more argued that the modern 'Welfare State' – this time 'interpreting welfare as spiritual as well as material' – was 'taking the place of the Church-State of the Middle Ages and of Reformation times'. He suggested that the time had come for the Synagogue to move alongside the Christian Churches as one more autonomous religious body existing within the shared 'modern federal constitution' of the welfare state, participating in work of common benefit to all. Together with the Churches, the Synagogue would begin to act 'within the state as having its part in promoting the general welfare'.[6] Jacobs supported his argument with a footnoted reference to the Anglican theologian John Neville Figgis' seminal work *Churches in the Modern State* (1913) – a book which only slightly later was to have a direct influence on Temple, too. Reference to Figgis thus provides a potential link between Jacobs and Temple. Jacobs seems to have drawn deeply from Figgis, for he also cites the latter's *From Gerson to Grotius* (1907) and *The Divine Right of Kings* (1914) at different points in his argument. But it has to be said that Figgis never seems to have used the term "Welfare State" in his published works.

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[5] Joseph Jacobs, *Jewish Contributions to Civilization* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1919), 284.

[6] *Ibid.*, 320-21.

William Temple and the Welfare State

Before the publication of the more recent editions of the *OED* the welfare state was very occasionally associated with Temple in particular. Thus, writing in 1984, David Nicholls made the claim that 'William Temple was probably the first person to use the term "welfare state" in print'.[7] Nicholls cited Pauline Greggs' earlier history of the *Welfare State* (1967), which had already suggested that Temple's book *Citizen and Churchman* (1941) contained 'possibly' the first public use of the term, before correcting Greggs by pointing out that Temple had actually used the term even earlier, in his *Christianity and the State* (1928). This was fourteen years in advance of the Beveridge Report (1942) – the enormously significant government report which informed the creation of the post-war welfare state in the UK. But notwithstanding Greggs and Nicholls, too many histories of the intellectual and philosophical frameworks of the British welfare state make no reference to Temple whatsoever.[8] The most recent *OED* entry is just one example of this trend to gloss over or simply ignore Temple's contribution. For us, however, Temple's early references to the welfare state raise an interesting question: to what extent was the language of "welfare state" in Britain informed by a pre-existing vocabulary from his theology?

Temple (1881-1944) was the Anglican Bishop of Manchester when he published his Henry Scott Holland Memorial Lectures, *Christianity and the State*, in 1928. He was Archbishop of York when he published *Citizen and Churchman* in 1941. Thus both instances

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[7] David Nicholls, 'William Temple and the Welfare State' in *Crucible: The Quarterly Journal of the Board for Social Responsibility*, October-December 1984, 161-168, here citing 162. Material from Nicholls' journal article was revised for inclusion in his book, *Deity and Domination: Images of God and the State in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Routledge, 1989), 44-50.

[8] Thus Jose Harris, 'Political Thought and the Welfare State 1870-1940: An Intellectual Framework for British Social Policy' in *Past & Present*, no. 135, May, 1992, 116-141; Pat Thane, *The Foundations of the Welfare State* (London: Longman, 1992); David Gladstone, ed., *Before Beveridge: Welfare Before the Welfare State* (London: IEA Health and Welfare Unit, 1999); Derek Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare* State, 4th ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Chris Renwick, *Bread for All: The Origins of the Welfare State* (London: Penguin, 2017).

of his use of "Welfare-State" pre-date his installation as Archbishop of Canterbury in April 1942 – an event which took place just eight months before the Beveridge Report was published – and also before the publication of his own *Christianity and the Social Order*, which also appeared in 1942. Each of these books by Temple, together with his earlier *Church and Nation* (1915), and *Essays in Christian Politics* (1927), represent points in a continuous, slowly evolving trend in his thought which persisted throughout his mature career as a theologian, namely, a concern with the proper place of the Church in the modern state, and of its engagement with politics. In some respects, it is important to view Temple as a kind of political theorist of the Church, working out what role the Established Church of England had to play in a liberal democratic state. That he used the vocabulary of welfare state in two of these works is itself significant; that such language did not re-appear in the later *Christianity and the Social Order* (1942) is something of a curiosity, for this latter book – the one for which he is chiefly remembered today – stands much closer in content to the vision and spirit of the Beveridge Report. The explanation for this is actually quite straightforward: in his earlier works Temple did not use "Welfare State" to denote extensive state provision of social security. As Matthew Grimley has explained, Temple's supposed neologism actually referred to 'a state which acted as an organ of community'.[9] We are here dealing with diachronic uses of a particular English phrase before the later, dominant meaning established itself. This does not mean that Temple's use of the phrase is irrelevant or unconnected to the later welfare state. His own personal friendships with R. H. Tawney and William Beveridge,[10] as well as with J. M. Keynes and Stafford Cripps,[11] mean that there is more than a fair chance that he had a hand in the

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[9] Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State between the Wars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 1.

[10] In 1909, Temple officiated at the marriage of Tawney to Beveridge's sister, Jeanette. In 1942 (the year of the Beveridge Report) he officiated at the marriage of Beveridge to Janet Mair.

[11] See Stephen Spencer, 'William Temple and the Welfare State: A Study of Christian Social Prophecy' in *Political Theology*, 3:1, 92-101.

christening of the welfare state, and that he probably helped reinforce and popularise such use of the term within government circles.[12]

Society in post-war Britain was for the most part self-consciously Christian. For many, "the welfare ideal was an extension of Christian aims".[13] One Bishop of the Church of England described the welfare state as "an expression at the national level of the humanitarian work of the Church".[14] Shortly after the welfare state was set up the 1948 Lambeth Conference passed a resolution which affirmed, "We believe that the state is under the moral law of God, and is intended by him to be an instrument for human welfare".[15] Support for state socialism was not unqualified, however, since this statement was immediately followed by another resolution which clarified that the state should not trespass on the freedoms of voluntary associations and warned of "any encroachments by the state which endanger human personality".[16] The important point to be made is that many of the welfare state's "early architects" (like Tawney and R. A. Butler) were themselves Christians, and they inspired a generation of both secular and Christian people to build the new settlement. Churches also handed over the "control of schools, hospitals, philanthropic institutions, buildings, personnel and expertise" to supply some of the necessary resources.[17] At its inception, the British welfare state was therefore heavily Christianised, and may even be viewed as representing, at least in part, a kind of Anglican achievement.

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[12] It ought to be remembered that Beveridge himself did not like the phrase "Welfare State" and never used it: 'he disliked what he called its "Santa Claus" and "brave new world" connotations, preferring the term "social service state"'. Peter Flora and Arnold Heidenheimer, eds, *The Development of Welfare States in Europe and America* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1981), 20.

[13] Catto and Woodhead, *Religion and Change in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge, 2012), 14.

[14] J. W. C. Ward, *God and Goodness* (1954). Quoted in Catto and Woodhead, 14.

[15] Anglican Communion Office, *The Lambeth Conference. Resolution Archive from 1948*, Resolution 19, available at https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/127737/1948.pdf (accessed 07/09/2022).

[16] Ibid., Resolution 20.

[17] Catto and Woodhead, 14

But all this was to come later. Temple's own first use of the phrase – in 1928 – was made in the context of a discussion of the First World War, drawing attention to the difference between German and British conceptions of the state:

> The war was a struggle between the idea of the State as essentially Power – Power over its own community and against other communities – and of the State as the organ of community, maintaining its solidarity by law designed to safeguard the interests of the community. The Power-State might have yielded to sheer pressure of circumstances in course of time; but it is contrary to the psychology of the Power-State to suffer conversion; it was likely to fight before it let a Welfare-State take its place.[18]

In his analysis, 'Welfare-States' (to use Temple's own capitalised and hyphenated form) took time to emerge. They had emerged in Britain and France, but not in Austria and Prussia. A welfare state had also begun to emerge in Italy. On the same page, Temple observed that it had been 'no accident that the Italy of Mazzini and Cavour dropped out of the Triple Alliance to become the ally of French and British democracy'.[19] Mention of Mazzini here in connection with the idea of a welfare state provides a suggestive indication of the background to Temple's political ideas. Though Mazzini was no orthodox Christian, his influence on Christian Socialism in England was considerable.[20] A number of writers, from Gaetano Salvemini

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[18] William Temple, *Christianity and the State* (London: Macmillan, 1928), 169-170.
[19] Ibid., 170.
[20] F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, and J. M Ludlow are often regarded as the progenitors of English Christian Socialism. Their short-lived movement, intended to ameliorate perceived risks of Chartism, began in the "Year of Revolutions", 1848. More influential were the later Guild of St Matthew (1877-1909), The Christian Social Union (1889-1919) – of which Green's old students Henry Scott Holland and Charles Gore were leaders – and the Church Socialist League (1906-1924). See T. Christensen, *Origin and History of Christian Socialism 1848-1854* (Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget, 1962); P. d'A. Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968); E. Norman, *The Victorian Christian Socialists* (Cambridge: Cambridge

onwards, have pointed out that Mazzini's *religious* influence was actually greater in England than in Italy, impressing itself on writers as diverse as T. H. Green, Arnold Toynbee, and Hugh Price Hughes, as well as on Temple himself.[21] In England, Mazzini's name was associated with a quasi-religious and idealist conception of national democracy, in which the community shared collective responsibility one for another. If Mazzini's reception as a religious voice seems counterintuitive, it needs be remembered that unlike many other European nations protestant Britain had not yet experienced a sharp division of national life into distinct religious and secular spheres. The sociologist Karl Mannhein drew attention to the peculiarly religious framework of British liberalism, observing that, "As the emergence of Capitalism and the corresponding social revolutions occurred at a very early stage in England, when religion was still alive and permeated society as a whole, both the conservative and the progressive forces developed their philosophies within the set framework of religion".[22] With this in mind Mazzini's reception by British protestants makes more sense. His achievement in Italy was viewed by Temple as an example of a "Welfare-State", a type of Christian polity.

Twenty-three years later, in the very different context of the Second World War, Temple again discussed the "Welfare-State" (again hyphenated) in *Citizen and Churchman*, the 1941 book supposed by Gregg and others to have been the first used the term in print. Once

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University Press, 1987). For developments in the twentieth century, see A. Wilkinson, *Christian Socialism: Scott Holland toe Tony Blair* (London: SCM, 1998).

[21] See Gaetano Salvemini, *Mazzini*, trans I. M. Rawson (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), 116-118; David Thompson, 'The Christian Socialist Revival in Britain: A Reappraisal' in J. Garnett and C. Matthew, eds, *Revival and Religion since 1700* (London: Hambledon Press, 1993), 273-295, esp. 281-283. For Mazzini's influence on the earlier generation of British Idealists see Denys Leighton, *The Greenian Moment* (Exeter: Imprint-academic, 2004), 300-302; Alberto de Sanctis, *The "Puritan" Democracy of Thomas Hill Green* (Exeter: Imprint-academic, 2005), 22; C. Tyler, *Civil Society, Capitalism and the State* (Exeter: Imprint-academic, 2012), 107-116. For Mazzini and England, see S. Mastellone, *Mazzini scrittore politico in inglese : democracy in Europe (1840-1855)* (Firenze: Olschki, 2004); D. M. Smith, *Mazzini* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 20-48. For Mazzini's connection with the father of Balliol's Arnold Toynbee, see K. Bolton, *The Life of Mazzini* (Frankfurt: Outlook Verlag, 2020), 54. For an anthology of Mazzini's writings, see G. Mazzini, *A Cosmopolitanism of Nations: Giuseppe Mazzini's Writings on Democracy, Nation Building, and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

[22] Karl Mannheim, *Diagnosis of Our Time: Wartime Essays of a Sociologist* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Tubner and co, 1943), 110

more the "Welfare-State" was contrasted with the "Power-State". Here the "Welfare-State" rested on "Christian presuppositions" and was described as a "fountain and upholder of Law".[23] It had a "moral and spiritual function" because its citizens were "spiritual beings".[24] Again, the State was "an organ of the community" and its end was "the welfare of the community".[25] The "primary duty" of the state was "to maintain that order which makes possible the free and unimpeded activity of its citizens"; and as "Aristotle observed long ago, having come into existence to maintain life, it continues to exist in the interest of the good life", concerning itself with the "moral welfare" of its citizens.[26]

Temple's "Welfare-State" thus combined the freedoms of Mazzini's social-democratic republicanism with a moral vision of the good life. For Temple there was no contradiction between these ideals. He was emphatic that "Only if men will use their liberty to pursue freely the common good in preference to their own is liberty even tolerable".[27] Indeed, "Liberty requires a high standard of public service and public honour; but these are the marks of a true fellowship – a free seeking of the common good".[28] Throughout Temple maintain a logically prior commitment to the value of freedom. In the last year of his life he wrote,

> God has given to man freedom to decide for Him or against Him. This freedom is fundamental, for without it there could be only automatic obedience, not the obedience of freely offered loyalty. God always respects this freedom to the uttermost; therefore, freedom is fundamental to Christian civilization.[29]

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[23] W. Temple, *Citizen and Churchman* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1941), 35.

[24] Ibid., 36.

[25] Ibid., 26.

[26] Ibid., 12.

[27] W. Temple, *Essays in Christian Politics and Kindred Subjects* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1927), 12.

[28] Ibid., 13.

[29] W. Temple, *Religious Experience and Other Essays and Addresses* (London: James Clarke & Co., 1958), 246.

"Freedom", wrote Temple in *Christianity and Social Order* (1942), "is the goal of politics". But what sort of freedom? For Temple, real freedom flourished within a state which encouraged, fostered or trained individuals to will good citizenship. Following Green, he consistently argued for a positive notion of freedom, *freedom to* will the common good, rather than negative *freedom from* state interference or coercion. "Consequently society must be so arranged as to give every citizen the maximum opportunity for making deliberate choices and the best possible training for the use of that opportunity".[30] The requisite training and equality of opportunity meant, for Temple, that the state should supply each citizen and their family with 1) decent housing necessary for "community in a happy fellowship", 2) "the opportunity of an education… inspired by faith in God", 3) "possession of such income as will enable" the maintenance of decency, dignity and fellowship, 4) trade union rights and the "satisfaction of knowing … labour is directed to the well-being of the community", 5) "sufficient daily leisure" to enable a "full personal life", and 6) "assured liberty in the forms of freedom of worship, of speech, of assembly, and of association for special purposes".[31] These were the foundations of a Christian social order. The "Welfare-State" was freely willed into existence by its citizens, in fellowship one with each other, to enable the best for all. Fellowship, was indeed a keyword in British thought at the time (witness Tolkien's *Fellowship of the Ring* published in 1954). And Temple's fellowship-based vision of welfare adumbrates the original *OED* definition of welfare state from 1955: "a polity so organized that every member of the community is assured of his due maintenance, with the most advantageous conditions possible for all". Given that the original entry quoted *Citizen and Churchman* in support of the definition, this should not be surprising. But it does open up the question whether Temple in 1941 and the *OED* in 1955 were working with an Idealist definition of the welfare state, in contrast with the later editions

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[30] W. Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 67.
[31] Ibid., 97

of the *OED* which have subsequently adopted a functionalist definition. If so, then within living memory the welfare state in Britain has passed through two distinct phases as it has shifted from one defining vision to another: it began as a Christian and Idealist vision dependent on the goodwill of citizens, but soon transformed into a functional and bureaucratic model.

Philosophical Idealism: An Intellectual Framework for British Citizenship, 1880-1944

Behind Temple stood the figure of Thomas Hill Green. In the first decades of the twentieth century, through the inter-war period, to the post-war establishment of the British welfare state, Anglican social thought on the national community and the state continued to be shaped by the philosophical Idealism of T. H. Green, and the incarnational theology of Green's Anglo-Catholic students, Henry Scott Holland and Charles Gore.[32] Green in particular has been described as having originally shaped ideas which became, in effect, " a public ideology in the country".[33] Some idea of the extent of Green's legacy may be gauged by the fact that his influence extended from philosophical Idealism and Anglican theology into a much broader pool of British social thought. Thus although William Beveridge, the architect of the British welfare state, was for most part a materialist and atheist, Green has nevertheless been described as having an "undeniable" influence on his ideas and work.[34] Clement Attlee, the Labour Prime Minister from 1945 to 1951 who oversaw the introduction of the Welfare State, acknowledged Green's influence on Edwardian social work, and later justified state intervention with

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[32] See M. Grimley, "The State, Nationalism, and Anglican Identities" in J. Morris, ed., *The Oxford History of Anglicanism. Volume IV. Global Western Anglicanism, c. 1910-present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 117-136, esp. 127.

[33] Frank Field, *Saints and Heroes: Inspiring Politics* (London: SPCK, 2010), 121.

[34] Field, *ibid.*, 156.

reference to the key Greenian term, the 'common good'.[35] Decades later Roy Hattersley, the Deputy Leader of the British Labour Party from 1983 to 1992, thought Green "the only genuine philosopher English social democracy has ever possessed".[36] Green's influence was cross-disciplinary and provided a common framework for philosophers, social theorists and theologians. Some date his influence as extending up to the First World War. Thus Melvin Richter judged that "Between 1880 and 1914 no other thinker exerted a greater influence upon British thought and public policy than did T. H. Green".[37] But Green's influence clearly continued in the interwar period. As A. D. Lindsay attested in 1920, Idealism remained "safely… established" in social psychology, economics, and sociology.[38]

Most scholars agree that the common good "is absolutely central to Green's theory".[39] It is one of his key ideas, and one which he was using in advance of the widespread reappearance of 'common good' language in subsequent Catholic social teaching.[40] Green derived the 'common good' from Aristotle's *koinon agathon* and deployed the concept as a corrective to Kantian ethics. For whereas Kantians typically focussed on the rational moral ends of an abstract individual, Green sought to focus instead on Aristotelian notions of fellowship and friendship. At the same time, Green's metaphysics provided a reciprocal

[35] C. R. Attlee, *The Social Worker* (London: G. Bell, 1920), 191; C. R. Attlee, *The Labour Party in Perspective* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1937), 141.

[36] R. Hattersley, *Edwardians* (London: Little Brown, 2004), 383.

[37] M. Richter, "T. H. Green and His Audience: Liberalism as a Surrogate Faith", in *The Review of* Politics, 18:4 (1956), 444-462, here 444.

[38] A. D. Lindsay, "Political Theory", 169.

[39] A. Simhony, "T. H. Green: The Common Good Society", *History of Political Thought*, 14:2 (1993), 225-247, here 225. For discussion, see A. Vincent and R. Plant, *Philosophy, Politics and Citizenship: The life and Thought of the British Idealists* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), esp. 24 and 65-68; P. Nicholson, The Political Philosophy of the British Idealists (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 54-82; M. Dimova-Cookson, *T. H. Green's Moral and Political Philosophy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 81-104; A. Simhony and D. Weinstein, eds. *The New Liberalism: Reconciling Liberty and Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); C. Tyler, *Civil Society, Capitalism and the State* (Exeter: Imprint-Academic, 2012), 43-76; C. Tyler, *Common Good Politics: British Idealism and Social Justice in the Contemporary World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 1-37 and 61-99

[40] R. Norman, "An Anglican common good?" *Theology* 126:2 (2023)

correction of Aristotelian ethics by allowing the common good to be universalized.[41] This allowed him to develop a philosophical account of fellowship and service, or what might be called a metaphysics of citizenship. The ideal to which all should aim could be expressed in quite simple terms: "the only good which is really common to all who may pursue it, is that which consists in the universal will to be good – in the settled disposition on each man's part to make the most and best of humanity in his own person and in the persons of others".[42] Green's ideal was not only humane, but expansive: he saw that there was "an ever-widening conception of the range of persons between whom the common good is common", and that the common good ought to be the "object of a universal society". It made a claim "of all upon all for freedom and support in the pursuit of a common end".[43] This provided an ideal which, for Green, *ought* to be shared by all rational agents in line with the following criteria:

i)   For the "educated conscience… the true good must be the good for all";

ii)   "no one should seek to gain by another's loss";

iii)   "gain and loss" are to be "estimated on the same principle for each".[44]

It is important to see that *education* was key to the promotion of the common good, for the 'educated conscience' knew that the true good was the good for all. As Alasdair MacIntyre has observed, "Green was the apostle of state intervention in matters of social welfare and of education; he was able to be so because he could see in the state an embodiment of that higher self the realization of which is our moral aim".[45] The attainment of a good civil society necessitated the development of a collectively shared understanding of the aims of that society. This allowed Green's student R. L. Nettleship to develop the educational aspects of Green's

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[41] D. O. Brink, *Perfectionism and the Common Good: Themes in the Philosophy of T. H. Green* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 44ff.

[42] T. H. Green, *Prolegomena*, § 244.

[43] T. H. Green, *Prolegomena*, § 340.

[44] T. H. Green, *Prolegomena*, § 240.

[45] A. MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, second ed. (London: Routledge, 1998), 247.

thought with reference to Plato. If, like Plato, ones takes morality to be a form of knowledge, goodness is primarily achieved through the acquisition of such knowledge through education. The best society is one in which "each individual, however limited his position, rises above his limitations to the consciousness of contributing to, and sharing in a common and unlimited good".[46] At it was in line with such thoughts that R. A. Butler's 1944 Education Act merged together Idealism, Christianity, and civic religion.

Green's common good certainly had a specifically Christian root, for he admitted that "We convey it in the concrete by speaking of a human family, of a fraternity of all men, of the common fatherhood of God; or we suppose a universal Christian citizenship, as wide as the Humanity for which Christ died". But this was also transferred and extended "under certain analogical adaptations" to "those claims of one citizen upon another which have actually been enforced in societies under a single sovereignty".[47] Yet, like Hegel, Green viewed Idealism "as the final result of a process in which religion becomes philosophy after transcending the middle stage of theology".[48] He took Christian discourse and translated it into other terms, shorn of the particularities of Christian belief; his own "new Christianity" was an adaptation to what he saw as the needs and requirements of the modern mind. Idealism thereby became a substitute for religion, and Green "offered an alternative to a theological framework as the basis of social change".[49] But with Temple it was different. As Frank Field once observed, "by putting a Christian belief back at the heart of the Idealist ideology", Temple attempted "to do a T. H. Green in reverse".[50]

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[46] Richard Lewis Nettleship, *Remains,* volume 1 (1901), p. 362.

[47] T. H. Green, *Prolegomena*, § 206.

[48] M. Richter, "T. H. Green and His Audience: Liberalism as a Surrogate Faith" in *The Review of* Politics, 18:4 (1956), 444-472, here 457.

[49] J. Moses, "Social Citizenship and Social Rights in an Age of Extremes: T. H. Marshall's Social Philosophy in the *Longue Durée*", *Modern Intellectual History*, 16:1 (2019), 155-184, here 169. See also M. Bevir, "Welfarism, Socialism and Religion: On T. H. Green and Others" *Review of Politics*, 55:4 (1993), 639-62.

[50] Field, *ibid*., 34.

Various Anglicans drew deeply on the social teaching of the Idealists, "stealing away the honey to the tory hive", as the one-time contributor to *Essays and Reviews*, Mark Pattison, memorably put it. One early example of this is evident in the Bampton Lectures of 1883, where Benjamin Jowett's disciple, W. H. Fremantle, considered the Church "as the Social State in which the Spirit of Christ reigns". The Church was the "important redeeming part" of the nation, "embracing the general life and society of men, and identifying itself with these as much as possible". Through imbuing "all human relations with the spirit of Christ's self-renouncing love", Fremantle found a role of the Church preaching something very much like the favourite Idealist trope of dying to live.[51] Fremantle thought that Christian teaching should be thought of as a means of "common good".[52] He was not alone. Charles Gore's *Dominant Ideas* (1918) borrowed its title from a technical term found in the Idealist political philosophy of Bernard Bosanquet.[53] "The welfare of the community", wrote Gore, "is today taken as the test of the good state". Yet Gore was explicit that he was no advocate of "State Socialism", and instead preferred a form of communitarianism. The immediate lived experience of co-operation took place in groups smaller than the state, such as "village communities, town communities, industrial groups, educational or religious corporations". Here, again the similarity with the thought of the Anglican pluralist J. N. Figgis is clearly recognisable. So much should be predictable as Figgis was a member of Gore's Community of the Resurrection. Yet Gore was obviously interested in how the good state was directed to the welfare of these communities. For Gore, each community was invested with authority to "manage its own concerns under the

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[51] W. H. Fremantle, *The World as the Subject of Redemption* (New York: Longmans, 1892), 1.
[52] Fremantle, *ibid*, 301.
[53] For "dominant ideas" see for example B. Bosanquet, "The Reality of the General Will" [1895] republished in Bosanquet, *Science and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1927) , 259. Bosanquet's dominant ideas related to the General Will, which was always oriented to the "common good". For discussion, see P. R. Nicholson, *The Political Philosophy of the British Idealists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 208-209; C. Tyler, *Idealist Political Philosophy: Pluralism and Conflict in the Absolute Idealist Tradition* (London: Continuum, 2006), 144-145.

supreme control and regulation of the state so far as the common welfare is concerned".[54] The

end of the state, then, was common welfare of plural communities. The "metaphysical doctrine

underlying welfarism and ethical socialism was a belief in a God who united all things and

worked through all things to realize the ideal".[55]

It was a short step from Gore's "good state" for the "welfare of the community" of 1918

to Temple's "Welfare-State" of 1928. This serves as a reminder that Temple was not some lone

genius but was representative of a longer tradition then establishing itself within Anglican

social thought which associated the state with welfare. Indeed, in a volume of sermons

published in 1906, Henry Scott Holland associated the 'common good' with 'public welfare'.[56]

And in his Christian Social Union handbook, *Our Neighbours*, Holland argued that the

Christian ideal of 'fellowship' should be applied to the 'welfare of the community'. This, he

said, would enable the essence of Christianity to be applied to 'the common good'.[57] In

discussion of "The Obligation of Civil Law" in a volume titled *Good Citizenship*, Holland

argued that a state based on democratic consensus was an embodiment of the "most intimate

and sacrificial obligations which can hold between citizens who consciously feel themselves

to be members of one body, living a common life, holding property for a common end, seeking

a common welfare".[58] Writers such as Scott Holland, Gore and Temple sought a careful balance

of freedom, fellowship, service and sacrifice for the common good. And it has to be said that

they had an impact on a broad range of their English contemporaries. G. K. Chesterton, for

example, always felt "gratitude" to them, and after his conversion to Catholicism would still

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[54] C. Gore, *Dominant Ideas and Corrective Principles* (London: Mowbray, 1918), 8-9.
[55] M. Bevir, "Welfarism, Socialism and Religion: On T. H. Green and Others" *The Review of Politics* 55:4 (1993), 639-661, here 661.
[56] H. S. Holland, *Vital Values* (London: Wells, Gardner, Darton and Co., 1906), p. 145.
[57] H. S. Holland, *Our Neighbours* (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1911), pp. 55–7.
[58] H. S. Holland, "The Obligation of Civil Law" in J. E. Hand, ed., *Good Citizenship* (London: George Allan, 1899), 278-305, here 304.

recall the words of the blindman in the Gospel of John 9:25 to convey his sense of indebtedness to the leaders of the Anglican Christian Social Union.[59]

As a younger man, Temple had early developed a reputation as an Idealist philosopher of religion. At Balliol College, Oxford, he had studied under Edward Caird, who proved to be a major influence. Temple's first major works, *Mens Creatrix* (1917), and its partner volume, *Christus Veritas* (1924), drew sufficient attention at the time to persuade the Idealist philosopher J. H. Muirhead to include an essay by Temple in the first volume of *Contemporary British Philosophy: Personal Statements* (1924), alongside contributions from other notable Idealists such as Bernard Bosanquet, Viscount Haldane, and J. Ellis McTaggart. Temple's presence in the volume (alongside others such as Bertrand Russell) is indicative of his reputation as a philosopher at the time. However, as Massimo Iiritano has suggested, Temple's philosophical writing from the time bears better comparison with that of another of his British Idealist contemporaries, R. G. Collingwood.[60] Both Temple and Collingwood attempted to draw the various forms or modes of human experience – artistic, scientific, ethical, and religious – into a single philosophical vision, and both can be seen attempting to analyse each sphere of experience from an Idealist perspective. It is interesting to observe that Temple's two books *Mens Creatrix* and *Christus Veritas* were published in the very same years as R. G. Collingwood's *Religion and Philosophy* (1917), and *Speculum Mentis* (1924). When all four books are read together they may be viewed as representing broadly similar philosophical approaches to a shared intellectual task. This was not lost on contemporary readers. T. S. Eliot reviewed Temple's *Mens Creatrix* alongside Collingwood's *Religion and Philosophy* in the

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[59] G. K. Chesterton, *Autobiography* (London: Hutchison, 1936), 166.

[60] For this, see Massimo Iiritano, *Utopia del Tramonto: Identità e Crisi della Coscienza Europea* (Bari: Edizioni Dedalo, 2004), 77n. See also Massimo Iiritano, *Picture Thinking: Estetica e Filosofia della Religione nei primi scritti di Robin Collingwood* (Rubbettino, 2006), 141. In contrast, Silvio Morigi has contested that Temple was closer to Bosanquet then to Collingwood. See Silvio Morigi, 'Bosanquet, Temple and Collingwood' in *Bradley Studies*, 7:2 (2001), 214-230.

International Journal of Ethics, noting that, "Mr Collingwood has conceived a task very similar to that of Mr. Temple", namely, "the necessary completion of philosophy in religion".[61]

One has to have read Green, Caird, and Bosanquet to fully grasp the critical worth of Temple's philosophical theology. Temple also took much from Scott Holland, whom he remembered (in the book where he first used the phrase, "Welfare State") as the fountainhead of "a massive and coherent philosophical theology".[62] Much like Holland, Temple contended that Idealist philosophy (with which he was largely sympathetic) found its true fulfilment in Christian theology. Where Green believed in the Eternal Consciousness, Holland and Temple believed in the God revealed in Jesus Christ. Christ was the true ideal of humanity already realised in history, the focal point of what Temple called a "Christo-centric metaphysics".[63] These themes were worked out at length by Temple in his great works of philosophical theology: *Mens Creatrix* (1917), *Christus Veritas* (1924), and *Nature, Man and God* (1934). The title of one of the chapters from Green's *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* was borrowed by Temple and used to name an entire movement within the Church of England, "Life and Liberty". Predictably, the Greenian "common good" also worked its way into Temple's mental framework and appeared with regularity and consistency in his published works. From as early as *The Nature of Personality* (1911), Temple was arguing that a properly educated, self-regulated, self-determining rational agent ought to will the "common purpose"

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[61] For both book reviews by T. S. Eliot, see *International Journal of Ethics*, 27:4 (1917), 542-543. Temple and Collingwood knew each other quite well. A lunch together was described by Collingwood in a letter to his father dated 23 March, 1910. For his part, Temple acknowledged the influence of the Cumnor Group (which then included Collingwood), in the preface to *Mens Creatrix* (Collingwood's essay on 'The Devil' from the Cumnor Group volume, *Concerning Prayer* (1916) was known to him). Moreover, the Preface to the Second Impression of *Christus Veritas* (1924) included Temple's own reflections on reading Collingwood's *Speculum Mentis*, citing some of their correspondence together. (See James Patrick, 'The Oxford Man' in R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography and Other Writings: With Essays on Collingwood's Life and Work*, ed. D. Boucher and T. Smith (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013), 213-246, esp. 222; William Temple, *Mens Creatrix* (London: Macmillan, 1917), viii; William Temple, *Christus Veritas* (London: Macmillan, ([1924]1949), xi-xiii).
[62] W. Temple, *Christianity and the State* (London: Macmillan, 1928), viii.
[63] W.Temple, *Christus Veritas* (London: Macmillan, 1949), ix.

or "common good" for the whole community.[64] The common good also appeared in *Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship* (1926).[65] Likewise, in a series of papers published in *Essays in Christian Politics* (1927), Temple linked the Christian social principles of liberty and fellowship to the free pursuit of the "common good".[66] It is found again in *Thoughts on Some Problems of the Day* (1931).[67] So, too, *Nature, Man and God* (1934).[68] *The Hope of a New World* (1942) contained more uses "common good".[69] Finally, one ought to observe the use of "common good" in Temple's much-valued classic, *Christianity and Social Order* (1942).[70]

Nevertheless, the biggest influence traceable in the pages of *Mens Creatrix* is that of Bernard Bosanquet, whose Gifford Lectures had recently been published as *The Principle of Individuality and Value* (1912) and *The Value and Destiny of the Individual* (1913). Temple was evidently impressed with Bosanquet's analysis of the 'general form of self-sacrifice' as 'the fundamental logical structure of Reality'. In line with the movement of Hegelian dialectic between the infinite and the finite, Bosanquet had argued that 'the burden of the finite is inherently a part or rather an instrument of the self-completion the infinite'.[71] Bosanquet argued that conceptions of the 'stability and perfection' of the divine nature' should not 'exclude activity and the general form of self-sacrifice'. Indeed, 'It is not an imperfection in the supreme being, but an essential of his completeness, that his nature, summing up that of all Reality, should go out into its other to seek the completion which in this case alone is absolutely

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[64] W. Temple, *The Nature of Personality* (London: Macmillan, 1911), 31. See also the later reiteration of this point in W. Temple, *Mens Creatrix* (London: Macmillan, 1917), 170.

[65] W. Temple, *Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1926), 36.

[66] Temple, *Essays in Christian Politics* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1927), 12-13.

[67] W. Temple, *Thoughts on Some Problems of the Day* (London: Macmillan, 1931), 34 and 189.

[68] W. Temple, *Nature, Man and God* (London: Macmillan [1934]1953). 186.

[69] W. Temple, *The Hope of A New World* (London: SCM, 1940),15, 41

[70] W Temple, *Christianity and Social Order* (London: SPCK, [1942]1976), 49.

[71] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value* (London: Macmillan, 1912), 233-234.

found'.[72] This was a recognisable adaption of Hegel for theological ends, and it is important to read Temple's version of the welfare state against this Hegelian background.

And this means that welfare socialism in Britain had little or nothing in common with Marx. In A. D. Lindsay's view, the 'scientific socialism' of Karl Marx was deficient not because it was communitarian or even communistic, but because its starting point was, paradoxically, too individualistic.[73] Marxism *presupposed* a picture of life as a competitive economic struggle between individuals and, on the basis of this presupposition, sought to agitate, aggravate, and magnify existing resentments for revolutionary ends. Ironically, Marx's fundamental worldview was taken to be both too pessimistic and too close to that of some social Darwinists. In Lindsay's interpretation, both Marxists and social Darwinists shared a common understanding of life as a "gloomy" struggle. For both, it seems, economics was a reductive and materialist zero-sum game. One was either a winner or loser in a Spencerian 'survival of the fittest'. As Lindsay observed, this was essentially a "denial of the real existence of politics". Marxism, he noted, was "a theory of society which denies the possibility of a will for the common good and therefore the possibility of political ideals". In contrast to this "malignant theory", "the modern idealist school… gave us a theory of the state based on the importance and reality of social purpose".[74] Unlike Marx, for whom, "if men unite and act together, it is because economic conditions have brought it about that such united action is in accordance with each man's individual interest", Idealism provided an inspiring moral vision of a "common cause", "common hopes", and "common ways of life".[75] It seems that one advantage of philosophical Idealism as a political theory was that it opened up social life to

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[72] Bosanquet, *Principle of Individuality*, 243.
[73] A. D. Lindsay, *Karl Marx's Capital: An Introductory Essay* (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), 44 & 121-122.
[74] Alexander Dunlop Lindsay, "Political Theory" in Francis Sydney Marvin, *Recent Developments in European Thought* (London: Oxford University Press, 1920), pp. 164-180, here citing 168.
[75] Lindsay, *Karl Marx's Capital*, 44-45.

questions of transcendent value, thereby allowing for non-reductive, non-materialist, non-deterministic value-based discussions of the purposes, ends, and goals of free life together. Idealism, in other words, opened up questions of the good life which materialists and "scientific" individualists had closed down. It allowed for a vision of human persons as something more than isolated, atomised individuals, seeing them instead as corporate members of a moral community, as interdependent parts of a greater, ethical whole. Idealism, then, "provided an alternative set of categories in which to think… [and] therefore bypassed some of the obstacles which had seemed so insurmountable when viewed from within the individualist paradigm".[76] Idealism offered a different paradigm, and with it new alternative ways of thinking about the moral society. The characteristically holistic vision of Idealists reconciled self-interest and benevolence and created a space for discussion of the common good. As far as Lindsay was concerned, "All political life demands a certain standard of moral behaviour, of capacity to work for a common good, and an understanding of the results of our own and other people's actions".[77] Ethical discussion was held to be important to understanding real life, including its everyday and apparently mundane aspects. As Lindsay explained, "moral purpose may seem to shine dimly enough in actual institutions, but it is the only light which shines in them at all, and only in that light can their meaning and reality be understood".[78] The vision was noble, but it did not last.

The secularization of the welfare state

As Frank Field has observed, "Beveridge saw his welfare proposals as a means of moulding an active, independent citizenry that practised the virtues of hard work, honesty and prudence. His

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[76] Stefan Collini, "Hobhouse, Bosanquet and the State: Philosophical Idealism and Political Argument in England, 1880-1918" in *Past and Present*, No. 71, August 1976, pp. 86-111, here citing p. 110.
[77] A. D. Lindsay, "Political Theory", p. 164.
[78] A. D. Lindsay, "Political Theory", p. 169.

fundamental principle was that the receipt of welfare was to be dependent on what a person had paid into the scheme".[79] The National Insurance contributions towards it meant that all citizens shared in the project; this perhaps reflected the ethically-inflected "equality of sacrifice" to which Beveridge was apparently committed.[80] Frank Field has elsewhere discussed National Insurance as a means of defining "membership of a community".[81] Insofar as it was intended as a means of realising a sense of good citizenship in those who paid it, National Insurance was what might be called a common good tax.[82] When supplemented by Temple's principles of social order, the *moral contribution* of money made for a sense an *active* citizenry in co-operation with the State: the good citizen willed what the State compelled. Yet it is difficult to maintain this desired moral co-operation of citizen with State. For once the State steps in to provide support, personal morality is made redundant. Such concerns have been raised by Frank Prochaska, who writes:

> It was not a coincidence that the expansion of government and the contraction of religion happened over the same period, for the modern British state was constructed against religious interests and customs of associational citizenship. The reform of the suffrage that prompted welfare legislation may be seen as an underlying cause of Christian decline. Indeed, the expansion of government into education and the social services was both cause and effect of Christian decline. It is notable that the high levels of welfare and low levels of religious adherence go together across much of Europe.[83]

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[79] Frank Field, "Rebuilding Beveridge", *Prospect Magazine*, 19 September 2012.
https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/rebuilding-beveridge-welfare-frank-field
[80] Timmins, *The Five Giants*, p. 40.
[81] Ian Geary and Adrian Pabst, eds., *Blue Labour* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), p. 59.
[82] Colin Tyler, *Common Good Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), p. 3; Peter Alcock, *Why We Need Welfare: Collective Action for the Common Good* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2016), pp. 11-12; Angus Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 344.
[83] Frank Prochaska, *Christianity and Social Service in Modern Britain: The Disinherited Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 150.

As Prochaska points out, this means that, "In their enthusiasm for state intervention, the British churches themselves contributed to their own difficulties". On this reading, the Christian Socialism of Scott Holland and William Temple was self-defeating; the church made itself increasingly irrelevant. Having handed over to the state much of its public, communal, and educational activity, the Church became "increasingly a private matter of individual conscience".[84] Temple himself seems to have been aware of the potential problem, for in *Citizen and Churchman* he had foreseen that, "If the Church withdraws from [welfare] because the State steps in, it hands over channels of spiritual influence, such as schools and probation work, to secular forces".[85] More than that, once in place, hegemonic secularist provision was able to flood over and around any continuing faith-based voluntary provision. With time, the NHS replaced the Church of England as the folk-religion of the people. As Linda Woodhead has observed, "welfare utopianism took on the contours of a this-worldly faith, absorbing much of the state church". And because of this, "it became increasingly difficult for [*the welfare state*] to share the same spaces with *other* faiths – that is to say, with what it came to oppose as 'religion'".[86] The State was now competing with the churches, which themselves adopted increasingly counter-cultural characteristics. Later, measures have been made to "extend state regulation over religion".[87]

Theological critics of the modern British welfare state have also pointed out ways in which the overall strategy may have been counterproductive. For example, Phillip Blond has contended that, "The great tragedy of the modern British welfare state has been the corrosion of the long-standing social values held by the working class, and thereby the effective erosion of the mutualism these values enshrined." In Blond's view, the welfare state actually worked

[84] Prochaska, *Christianity and Social Service*, p. 151.
[85] Williams, *Citizen and Churchman*, 59.
[86] Woodhead and Catto, *Religion and Change in Modern Britain*, p. 15.
[87] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

to diminish active citizenship and create conditions of welfare dependency: "Norms around community, work, familial obligation and civic and economic participation have been replaced by expectation of, and dependency on, state provision".[88] Blond's suggested alternative is the development of "a different kind of welfare state, one that [is] more mutual and reciprocal".[89] This overall model, he indicates, should be informed by reference to the "common good".[90] More recently, the late Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks, expressed somewhat similar concerns that the current settlement represents a moral outsourcing of welfare responsibilities on the state. Charity becomes a luxury when the state is there to provide for basic necessities. "The growth of the state meant the atrophy of many of those local institutions, from the family outwards, where people learned the give-and-take of human relationships and the subtle codes of civility without which it is difficult for people to live closely together for a while." Sacks was concerned that "The displacement of the community by the state meant the replacement of morality by politics".[91] When "Welfare was outsourced to government agencies… there was less need for local community volunteering". Elsewhere, Sacks observed that "welfare liberalism… weakened all civil association – families, communities and churches – which had hitherto mediated between the individual and the state".[92] When, "the state *entered* the welfare arena [it] *exited* the domain of the enforcement of morality".[93] As for Blond, Sacks's suggested alternative depends, rather emphatically, on a rediscovery of the common good.

Some of the most influential critical interpretations of Idealist political philosophy have dwelt not only on its perceived tendency towards absolutism, but also on its tendency (as exemplified by Green's own work) to become a substitute or replacement religion. In a shifting

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[88] Phillip Blond, *Red Tory*, p. 76.
[89] Blond, *Red Tory*, p. 116.
[90] Blond, *Red Tory*, p. 75, p. 160, and p. 288
[91] Jonathan Sacks, *Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2021), pp. 316-317.
[92] Jonathan Sacks, *Politics of* Hope, 138.
[93] Sacks, *Politics of Hope*, p. 115.

of allegiances from God to the secular state, the duties which an individual once owed to God and neighbour are now owed to the state itself. Once the "higher" or "true" life of the individual is associated with service of the community or state, individual freedom is inevitably sacrificed on the altar of the nation. Thus, for instance, in L. T. Hobhouse's opinion, the "Hegelian theory of the god-state" was responsible for the German bombing of London in 1914.[94] For Isaiah Berlin, T. H. Green's teaching could be used by a tyrant "to justify his worst acts of oppression".[95] For the potential cost of the Idealist version of the common good was the sacrifice of self-interest for the greater good of the state. If someone became as they ought to be *in the eyes of* the powers that be, if someone's co-operation in the needs of the community turned into an unquestioning loyalty to the nation, then the result was tyranny. But there are reasons to be cautious of this criticism. Stefan Collini has contended that Bosanquet's political philosophy cannot fairly be represented as leading to a tyrannous "god-state"; it was Bosanquet who advocated a *voluntarist* doctrine of charity in distinction to compulsory state welfare. But in fact Bosanquet had argued for a limited and negative criterion for state action: "The state is in its right, when it forcibly hinders a hindrance to the best life or common good".[96] It is arguable that Bosanquet, like Temple, sought to balance positive freedom, fellowship, and service for the common good. David Nicholls nevertheless suspected that analogies drawn from theology reinforced an ideological "relationship between the welfare God and the paternal state" in the minds of key Idealist philosophers, sociologists, and politicians as well as religious leaders of early twentieth century Britain.[97]

Given that the British Welfare State was originally woven into a majority Anglican culture of civic religion, what explains the subsequent occlusion of its early religious aspects?

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[94] L. T. Hobhouse, *The Metaphysical Theory of the State* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1918), p. 6.
[95] Isaiah Berlin, *Liberty*, ed. Henry Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 180.
[96] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State* (London: Macmilan, 1958), 178.
[97] David Nicholls, *Deity and Domination* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 44.

Some, like Frank Prochaska, have argued that the Welfare State provided a professional alternative to voluntary religious charity, leaving the latter in a state of redundancy. Others, like Linda Woodhead, have argued that the NHS gradually began to actively supplant aspects of religion in Britain. Certainly, when the Church of England handed its schools and hospitals over to the State, it limited the roles it played in people's lives. But none of this explains why the Anglican roots of the system have now largely been forgotten. In actual fact, much depends on the secularising agenda discernible in histories of the welfare state. For some historians, religion is simply a blind sport. For others, there seems to have been a more conscious attempt to evade writing about religion and welfare. In this, secular academic historians simply reproduce and exemplify the ascendancy of particular power elite and "the takeover of power by more self-consciously secular classes: a new political elite, an expanded class of cultural producers (including academics and media professionals), scientists and those whose jobs have been created by the vast expansion of welfare".[98] The ascendancy of this elite has worked to exclude religion from the public space now inhabited by the new secular faith. Very often, "religion is positioned, represented and actively constructed as a minority interest by secular lobbies in politics, the media, state services, science, education and professional bodies – the effect being to maintain religion's minority status by regulation, opposition, exclusion and silencing".[99]

As the British welfare state was something new in 1944, it is unsurprising that histories of the welfare state did not begin to be written until the later 1960s. This means they were written after the sudden and unexpected invention in the 1960s of the new idea that Britain was a "secular society". Such histories accordingly viewed the welfare state through a later, secularizing lens. It is important to realise that the idea of Britain as a "secular society" was an

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[98] Catto and Woodhead, *Religion and Change in Modern Britain*, 25.
[99] *Ibid.*, 25.

abrupt and unforeseen invention of the decade, albeit one which many at the time found compelling. Through the 1950s and into the 1960s Church attendance had in actual fact remained high, and during the 1960s believers in God outnumbered non-believers by an estimated eight to one.[100] Nevertheless, as Simon Green has observed, "Almost overnight it became educated common sense to describe contemporary England as a secular society".[101] Secularization narratives did not enter the mainstream British media until circa 1961-1964, and were boosted in part by such books as John Robinson's million-selling *Honest to God* (1963).[102] Works of academic sociology dedicated to secularization, such as Bryan Wilson's *Religion in a Secular Society* (1966) and David Martin's *The Religious and the Secular* (1969) followed afterwards. One recent study has argued that this initially represented a revolution in the attitudes of a relatively small and elite network of "academics, journalists, and clergymen", which "itself had important secularizing consequences" for the nation at large. "On this view, the religious crisis of the 1960s was like a stock-market crash; once enough people believed there was a [religious] crisis, they therefore and thereby became correct".[103] It apparently gained traction with Harold Wilson's embrace of a new technocratic framework for Britain, in which the "white heat" of science would lead to a "New Britain".[104] As histories of the welfare state date from late in this period onwards, they typically reflect the new secularism and accordingly show little interest in the religious context from which the welfare state emerged.

Take, for example, Raymond Williams' Marxist viewpoint on "Welfare" in his influential work, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976). According to

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[100] Robin Gill, Kirk Hadaway, and Penny Marler, "Is Religious Belief Declining in Britain?" in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 37 (1998), 507-16, esp. 508-509.

[101] Simon Green, *The Passing of Protestant England: Secularism and Social Change, c. 1920-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 294.

[102] Sam Brewitt-Taylor, "The Invention of a 'Secular Society'? Christianity and the Sudden Appearance of Secularization Discourses in the British National Media, 1961-4" in *Twentieth Century British History*, 24:3 (2013), 327-350.

[103] Brewitt-Taylot, *ibid.,* 349-350.

[104] David Edgerton, *Warfare State: Britain, 1920-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 230-240.

Williams, "The Welfare State, in distinction from the *Warfare State*, was first named in 1939".[105] No sources are given to support this statement, and it would be interesting to know from whence Williams derived the binary contrast between welfare and warfare states (which has elsewhere been dated to 1962).[106] This binary pairing certainly does not accurately reflect Temple's *earlier* contrast between the welfare and power states (which dates from *Christianity and the State* in 1928). Frustratingly, Williams makes no reference to Temple whatsoever. As Williams' book was written in the mid-seventies when he was working at Cambridge University, it is entirely reasonable to suppose he should have had access to the latest supplements to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and that he should have known from the *OED* of William Temple's use of the "welfare state" in *Citizen and Churchman* (1941). After all, the historian Pauline Gregg had already cited the recent supplement in support of Temple's early and influential use of the phrase at the beginning of her study, *The Welfare State* (1967). That Williams did not, as Gregg before him had, follow the *OED* is telling. To be frank, the most compelling explanation for why Williams departed from the available lexicographical evidence rests on the supposition that he did so to evade the historical connections between religion and the welfare state. This would be entirely in line with his wider project of constructing a socialist vocabulary which moves past religion while writing extensively on culture without acknowledging its religious dimensions. Critics of both the political left and political right have noted Williams' typical silence on religion: some, like the Marxist philosopher Roland Boer, apparently welcome it; others, like the conservative thinkers Maurice Cowling and Roger Scruton, quite decidedly did not.[107] The point is that Williams provides one example of a

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[105] Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (London: Fontana, 1976), 281.

[106] Keith L. Nelson credits use of the term "warfare state" to the New York-based journalist, Fred J. Cook, as late as 1962. See K. L. Nelson, "The 'Warfare State': History of a Concept" in *Pacific Historical Review*, 40:2 (May, 1971), pp. 127-143 and esp. p. 128. See also F. J. Cook, *The Warfare State* (London: Macmillan, 1962) and F. J. Cook, "The Warfare State" in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* vol. 351:1 (1964), pp. 102-109.

[107] For a sympathetic discussion of Williams' silence on religion, see Roland Boer, "The Bible and the *Beekeeper's Manual*: Raymond Williams and Religion" in *Arena*, 22 (2004), pp. 159-178. Roger Scruton

Marxist writer whose work in the 1960s and 1970s airbrushed religion out of the historical development of the British welfare state. It is hard to ignore Williams' own activist role in shaping some of the very lexicography he was writing about.

Conclusion

There are, then, strong reasons to suppose that histories of the welfare state in Britain have marginalized the contribution of moderate Christian civic religion. The lack of attention to Temple's early use of "Welfare-State" is, at best, a significant oversight, at worst a deliberate distortion for ideological ends. But one of the things shown here is that Christian Idealism in the 1920s was an obvious alternative to Marxist socialism and developed a thorough critique of what it took to be the latter's tyrannous and violent world view. For whereas Russia offered a version of the "Power-State", British Christian Idealism allowed for the development of a rather gentler, kinder, "Welfare-State", an organ of community founded on the core principles of freedom, fellowship, service and sacrifice for the common good. Drawing on T. H. Green's notions of positive freedom and the common good, this early vision of the welfare state was very different to the bureaucratic and functionalist moderate socialist model which came later. Indeed, the key conclusion I draw from this discussion is that there has in fact been not one, but two distinct usages of "welfare state" in Britain, the first instilled with Christian-Idealist virtues of good citizenship and fellowship, the second framed in terms of socialist state intervention. The irony is that although a Christian and Idealist vision first brought the welfare

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criticised Williams' evasion of religion in *Culture and Society*: see Scruton, *Fools, Frauds and Firebrands: Thinkers of the New Left* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), esp. p. 211. Maurice Cowling observed that "In William's writings religion scarcely existed… At no point did he consider religion in its own terms, certainly not in *The Long Revolution*, where it would have given backbone to boneless arguments, in *The Country and the City*, where the Church of England should have been of central significance, or in *Culture and Society*, where many of the thinkers discussed were obsessed by Christianity and hardly any can be understood once its centrality is disregarded". See M. Cowling, *Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England. Volume III: Accommodations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 597.

state into being, once it was successfully in place welfare utopianism largely supplanted Christianity as the folk-religion of Britain. It was at once an Anglican achievement, and the undoing of the Church of England as a national religion. The triumph of the functionalist welfare state is now so complete that its Christian origins are in danger of simply being forgotten.