To theorize the sacred—as the perfect—is by no means to explain it away. Patently imperfect, and addressing the imperfect, social science cannot do this. What social science can do, though, is to explore what prompts people to seek to experience the perfect, seek to experience what can be thought of as the sacred; to explore why some acquire beliefs in or about the sacred, however that might be conceived (perhaps at an early age, and to be retained for life). Whether it be called "sacralization" (a term which has acquired a certain currency during recent decades), "idealization" (Emile Durkheim 1971, orig. 1912), or, perhaps, "spiritualization" (Karl Mannheim 1936, orig. 1929), the processes which prompt people to seek the sacred, as some kind of ultimate, behoves inquiry. With an eye on the "implicit," is it the case that factors of an implicit nature, contribute to a "pointing" to the sacred, and on occasion to encountering it in experience?

Dwelling on economically wealthy nations, such as Britain, the argument is that a widespread cultural-cum-personal momentum is in evidence.This is a momentum towards the outskirts of the secular "condition" (as it is often called), sometimes even transgressing the limits of secularity. From the social scientific perspective, the momentum is basically generated within the secular itself. It owes a great deal to the nature ofthe secular as the realm of the imperfect, to the functioning of secular ideals, to the role of the implicit, to the operation of the yearn: "idealizing 'away,"' "yearning 'away,'" as it can be put. If the argument is valid, it provides an answer to a rather important matter. Addressed by academics such as Durkheim a hundred years ago, and by others before that, the question is: "What happens to culture, society, and above all to personal life—personal consciousness—"when Christianity becomes relatively marginalized?"

An answer from today, from Charles Taylor: "I hold that religious longing, the longing for and response to a more-than-immanent transformation perspective... remains a strong independent source of motivation in modernity" (2007, 530). Leaving to one side thouhts about the term "religious"— for the "longing" could equally be for spirituality— the question remains: is Taylor's contention true? I think so. I would argue that the secularity of the age has to be qualified by the fact that it is also a time of at least an intermittent yearning, towards, sometimes into, the sacred, in which the implicit plays a crucial role: as built into "the yearn," as implied by it. It must be said, though, that the yearning/momentum argument is secular: thereby being imperfect.

Paul Heelas, "Theorizing the Sacred: The Role of the Implicit in Yearning "Away"", *Implicit religion* 15 (4, 2012): 477-521.