

Secular Definition World History



Secular Definition World History: Understanding the Rise of Secularism in Global Events

Have you ever wondered how the rise and fall of empires, the spread of religions, and the development of modern nation-states have all intersected with the concept of secularism? Understanding the role of secularism in world history is crucial to grasping the complexities of global events. This comprehensive guide will delve into the definition of secularism, its historical evolution, and its profound influence on shaping the world we live in today. We'll explore its impact on major historical movements and examine its multifaceted relationship with religious and political power. Prepare to gain a nuanced perspective on the "secular definition world history" and its enduring legacy.

What Does Secular Mean in the Context of World History?

The term "secular" stems from the Latin word "saecularis," meaning "worldly" or "of this age." In the context of world history, secular definition broadly refers to the separation of religious institutions and their influence from the state and public life. This doesn't necessarily equate to atheism or the rejection of religion altogether. Instead, it emphasizes the principle of neutrality, where the government does not endorse or favor any particular religion, allowing for religious freedom and the separation of church and state.

The Historical Evolution of Secularism: A Journey Through

Time

The journey towards secularization wasn't a linear process; it unfolded differently across various societies and time periods.

Ancient Roots: Seeds of Secular Thought

Even in antiquity, we can find glimpses of secular thought. Ancient Greece, for instance, saw the development of philosophical systems that explored ethics and morality without relying solely on religious dogma. The Roman Empire, despite its official religion, also witnessed periods where secular law and governance held considerable sway. However, these examples were exceptions rather than the rule during these predominantly theocratic eras.

The Enlightenment and the Rise of Secular Ideals

The 18th-century Enlightenment played a pivotal role in shaping modern secularism. Thinkers like John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau championed individual rights and limited government, challenging the authority of the church and advocating for a separation of powers. The Enlightenment emphasis on reason and empirical evidence contributed significantly to the decline of religious authority in public life.

The French Revolution and Secularization's Political Impact

The French Revolution serves as a dramatic example of secularism's impact on political structures. The revolution's radical thinkers sought to dismantle the influence of the Catholic Church, leading to the nationalization of church property and the establishment of a secular republic. While the French experience was extreme, it highlighted the potential for secularism to reshape political landscapes.

The 19th and 20th Centuries: Secularization's Global Spread

The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed the gradual spread of secularization throughout the world. The rise of nationalism, scientific advancements, and the growth of democratic ideals further contributed to the separation of religion and state in many countries. However, the pace and extent of secularization varied significantly across different regions and cultures, with some societies experiencing a more rapid transition than others.

Secularism and its Impact on Major Historical Events

The impact of secularism can be seen in a multitude of pivotal historical events:

The Reformation: Challenging Religious Authority

The Protestant Reformation, beginning in the 16th century, challenged the authority of the Catholic Church and paved the way for religious pluralism, albeit initially within a still largely religious framework. This challenge to religious hierarchy indirectly contributed to later secular movements.

The Rise of Nation-States: Shifting Power Dynamics

The emergence of nation-states in the modern era saw a shift in power dynamics, with secular governments increasingly assuming control over areas previously dominated by religious institutions. This led to the development of secular legal systems and the establishment of public education independent of religious control.

The Cold War: Ideological Conflict and Secularism

The Cold War, with its clash between communism and capitalism, also saw secular ideologies play a significant role. Both sides, while often utilizing religious rhetoric strategically, largely promoted secular governance systems in their respective spheres of influence.

Secularism: Challenges and Criticisms

While secularism advocates for religious freedom and the separation of church and state, it also faces criticisms. Some argue that secularism leads to a loss of moral values, while others contend that it can marginalize religious communities. The debate surrounding the role of religion in public life remains a complex and ongoing discussion.

Conclusion

Understanding the “secular definition world history” requires acknowledging its complex and multifaceted nature. It's not a monolithic movement but a gradual process with diverse manifestations across different cultures and historical contexts. From its ancient roots to its profound influence on modern nation-states, secularism has fundamentally reshaped the global landscape. While its impact remains a topic of ongoing debate, its role in shaping the modern world is undeniably significant.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Is secularism the same as atheism? No, secularism is not synonymous with atheism. Secularism emphasizes the separation of religion and state, allowing for religious freedom, while atheism is the disbelief in the existence of God.
2. How does secularism affect religious freedom? Ideally, secularism protects religious freedom by ensuring that the government doesn't favor any particular religion, preventing religious discrimination and promoting a level playing field for all faiths.
3. Has secularization always led to positive outcomes? Not necessarily. The implementation of

secular policies has sometimes resulted in unintended consequences, including the marginalization of religious groups or the erosion of social cohesion in some societies.

4. What are some examples of countries with highly secular governments? Many countries in Europe, such as France, Sweden, and the Netherlands, are often cited as having highly secular governments, although the degree of secularism varies.

5. Is secularism a universal concept? The concept of secularism, while globally influential, is interpreted and implemented differently across various cultures and contexts. Its application is shaped by specific historical, social, and political factors.

secular definition world history: *A Secular Age* Charles Taylor, 2018-09-17 The place of religion in society has changed profoundly in the last few centuries, particularly in the West. In what will be a defining book for our time, Taylor takes up the question of what these changes mean, and what, precisely, happens when a society becomes one in which faith is only one human possibility among others.

secular definition world history: *Secularism: A Very Short Introduction* Andrew Copson, 2019-07-11 Until the modern period the integration of church (or other religion) and state (or political life) had been taken for granted. The political order was always tied to an official religion in Christian Europe, pre-Christian Europe, and in the Arabic world. But from the eighteenth century onwards, some European states began to set up their political order on a different basis. Not religion, but the rule of law through non-religious values embedded in constitutions became the foundation of some states - a movement we now call secularism. In others, a de facto secularism emerged as political values and civil and criminal law altered their professed foundation from a shared religion to a non-religious basis. Today secularism is an increasingly hot topic in public, political, and religious debate across the globe. It is embodied in the conflict between secular republics - from the US to India - and the challenges they face from resurgent religious identity politics; in the challenges faced by religious states like those of the Arab world from insurgent secularists; and in states like China where calls for freedom of belief are challenging a state imposed non-religious worldview. In this Very Short Introduction Andrew Copson tells the story of secularism, taking in momentous episodes in world history, such as the great transition of Europe from religious orthodoxy to pluralism, the global struggle for human rights and democracy, and the origins of modernity. He also considers the role of secularism when engaging with some of the most contentious political and legal issues of our time: 'blasphemy', 'apostasy', religious persecution, religious discrimination, religious schools, and freedom of belief and freedom of thought in a divided world. Previously published in hardback as *Secularism: Politics, Religion, and Freedom* ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

secular definition world history: *Secularism* Andrew Copson, 2017 What is secularism? -- Secularism in Western societies -- Secularism diversifies -- The case for Secularism -- The case against Secularism -- Conceptions of Secularism -- Hard questions and new conflicts -- Afterword: the future of Secularism

secular definition world history: *Humanism: A Very Short Introduction* Stephen Law, 2011-01-27 Religion is currently gaining a much higher profile. The number of faith schools is increasingly, and religious points of view are being aired more frequently in the media. As religion's profile rises, those who reject religion, including humanists, often find themselves misunderstood, and occasionally misrepresented. Stephen Law explores how humanism uses science and reason to make sense of the world, looking at how it encourages individual moral responsibility and shows that

life can have meaning without religion. Challenging some of the common misconceptions, he seeks to dispute the claims that atheism and humanism are 'faith positions' and that without God there can be no morality and our lives are left without purpose. Looking at the history of humanism and its development as a philosophical alternative, he examines the arguments for and against the existence of God, and explores the role humanism plays in moral and secular societies, as well as in moral and religious education. Using humanism to determine the meaning of life, he shows that there is a positive alternative to traditional religious belief. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

secular definition world history: *Formations of the Secular* Talal Asad, 2003-02-03 "A dark but brilliantly original work . . . one of the most important books on religion and the modern in recent years." —H-Net Reviews Opening with the provocative query "what might an anthropology of the secular look like?" this book explores the concepts, practices, and political formations of secularism, with emphasis on the major historical shifts that have shaped secular sensibilities and attitudes in the modern West and the Middle East. Talal Asad proceeds to dismantle commonly held assumptions about the secular and the terrain it allegedly covers. He argues that while anthropologists have oriented themselves to the study of the "strangeness of the non-European world" and to what are seen as non-rational dimensions of social life (things like myth, taboo, and religion), the modern and the secular have not been adequately examined. The conclusion is that the secular cannot be viewed as a successor to religion, or be seen as on the side of the rational. It is a category with a multi-layered history, related to major premises of modernity, democracy, and the concept of human rights. This book will appeal to anthropologists, historians, religious studies scholars, as well as scholars working on modernity. "A difficult if stunningly eloquent book, a response both elusive and forthright to the many shelves of 'books on terrorism' which this country's trade publishers are rushing into print." —Bryn Mawr Review of Comparative Literature "This wonderfully illuminating book should be read alongside the author's *Genealogies of Religion*." —Religion "One of the most interesting scholars of religious writing today." —Christian Scholar's Review "Asad's brilliant study remains a defining piece of intellectual and scholarly contribution for all of those interested in exploring the religious and the secular in the modern era." —The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences

secular definition world history: *Religious Difference in a Secular Age* Saba Mahmood, 2015-11-03 How secular governance in the Middle East is making life worse—not better—for religious minorities The plight of religious minorities in the Middle East is often attributed to the failure of secularism to take root in the region. *Religious Difference in a Secular Age* challenges this assessment by examining four cornerstones of secularism—political and civil equality, minority rights, religious freedom, and the legal separation of private and public domains. Drawing on her extensive fieldwork in Egypt with Coptic Orthodox Christians and Bahais—religious minorities in a predominantly Muslim country—Saba Mahmood shows how modern secular governance has exacerbated religious tensions and inequalities rather than reduced them. Tracing the historical career of secular legal concepts in the colonial and postcolonial Middle East, she explores how contradictions at the very heart of political secularism have aggravated and amplified existing forms of Islamic hierarchy, bringing minority relations in Egypt to a new historical impasse. Through a close examination of Egyptian court cases and constitutional debates about minority rights, conflicts around family law, and controversies over freedom of expression, Mahmood invites us to reflect on the entwined histories of secularism in the Middle East and Europe. A provocative work of scholarship, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age* challenges us to rethink the promise and limits of the secular ideal of religious equality.

secular definition world history: *After Secular Law* Winnifred Sullivan, Mateo Taussig-Rubbo, 2011-08-29 Bringing together scholars with a variety of perspectives and orientations, this work

examines the interconnections between law and religion and the unexpected histories and anthropologies of legal secularism in a globalizing modernity.

secular definition world history: *The Sacrality of the Secular* Bradley B. Onishi, 2018-04-24 Through a bold and historically rooted vision for the future of philosophy of religion, *The Sacrality of the Secular* maps new and compelling possibilities for a nonsecularist secularity. In recent decades, philosophers in the continental tradition have taken a notable interest in the return of religion, a departure from the supposed hegemony of the secular age that began with the Enlightenment. At the same time, anthropologists and sociologists have begun to reject the once-dominant secularization thesis, which both prescribed and described the demise of religion in modern societies. In *The Sacrality of the Secular*, Bradley B. Onishi reconsiders the role of religion at a time when secularity is more tenuous than it might seem. He demonstrates that philosophy's entanglement with religion led, perhaps counterintuitively, to vibrant reconceptions of the secular well before the unraveling of the secularization thesis or the turn to religion. Through rich readings of Heidegger, Bataille, Weber, and others, Onishi rethinks what philosophy can contribute to our understanding of religion and the wider social and cultural world.

secular definition world history: *The Principles of Secularism Illustrated ...* George Jacob Holyoake, 1871

secular definition world history: *Lessons in Secular Criticism* Stathis Gourgouris, 2013-09 Disrupting recent fashionable debates on secularism, this book raises the stakes on how we understand the space of the secular, independent of its battle with the religious, as a space of radical democratic politics that refuse to be theologized.

secular definition world history: *The Post-secular in Question* Philip Gorski, 2012-03-12 This collection of original essays by leading academics represents an interdisciplinary intervention in the continuing and ever-transforming discussion of the role of religion and secularism in today's world. Foregrounding the most urgent and compelling questions raised by the place of religion in the social sciences, past and present, *The Post-Secular in Question* restores religion to a more central place in social scientific thinking about the world, helping to move scholarship 'beyond unbelief.'--book jacket.

secular definition world history: *Meaning and Value in a Secular Age* Paul Kurtz, 2012-06-26 The secular age has confronted human beings with a fundamental challenge. While the naturalistic worldview rooted in science has persuasively shown that traditional religious conceptions of the universe are unsustainable, it has so far offered no compelling secular narratives to replace the religious narratives so entrenched in civilization. In the absence of religion, how do thoughtful contemporary individuals find meaning in a secular world? In this book, philosopher Paul Kurtz argues for a new approach that he calls eupraxsophy. Kurtz first coined the term in 1988 to characterize a secular orientation to life that stands in contrast to religion. Derived from three ancient Greek roots, eupraxsophy literally means good practice and wisdom. Drawing upon philosophy, science, and ethics, eupraxsophy provides a thoroughly secular moral vision, which respects the place of human values in the context of the natural world and presents an empirically responsible yet hopeful picture of the human situation and the cosmos in which we abide. Editor Nathan Bupp has conveniently gathered together Kurtz's key writings about the theory and practice of eupraxsophy for the first time in this volume. Written with eloquence and scope, these incisive essays show how Kurtz's brand of humanism moves above and beyond the current new atheism. Eupraxsophy successfully bridges the cultural divide between science and value and provides a genuine and constructive alternative to religion. Bupp's informative introduction places the concept of eupraxsophy in historical perspective and shows why it is critically important, and relevant, today.

secular definition world history: *Secularism and Freedom of Conscience* Jocelyn Maclure, Charles Taylor, 2011-10-24 Secularism: the definition of this word is as practical and urgent as income inequalities or the paths to sustainable development. In this wide-ranging analysis, Jocelyn Maclure and Charles Taylor provide a clearly reasoned, articulate account of the two main principles of secularism—equal respect, and freedom of conscience—and its two operative modes—separation

of Church (or mosque or temple) and State, and State neutrality vis-à-vis religions. But more crucially, they make the powerful argument that in our ever more religiously diverse, politically interconnected world, secularism, properly understood, may offer the only path to religious and philosophical freedom. Secularism and Freedom of Conscience grew out of a very real problem—Quebec’s need for guidelines to balance the equal respect due to all citizens with the right to religious freedom. But the authors go further, rethinking secularism in light of other critical issues of our time. The relationship between religious beliefs and deeply-held secular convictions, the scope of the free exercise of religion, and the place of religion in the public sphere are aspects of the larger challenge Maclure and Taylor address: how to manage moral and religious diversity in a free society. Secularism, they show, is essential to any liberal democracy in which citizens adhere to a plurality of conceptions of what gives meaning and direction to human life. The working model the authors construct in this nuanced account is capacious enough to accommodate difference and freedom of conscience, while holding out hope for a world in which diversity no longer divides us.

secular definition world history: The Secular Enlightenment Margaret Jacob, 2021-04-20 Provides a panoramic account of the radical ways that life began to change for ordinary people in the age of Locke, Voltaire, and Rousseau. In this book, familiar Enlightenment figures share places with voices that have remained largely unheard until now, from freethinkers and freemasons to French materialists, anticlerical Catholics, pantheists, pornographers, readers, and travelers. Jacob reveals how this newly secular outlook was not a wholesale rejection of Christianity but rather a new mental space in which to encounter the world on its own terms. She takes readers from London and Amsterdam to Berlin, Vienna, Turin, and Naples, drawing on rare archival materials to show how ideas central to the emergence of secular democracy touched all facets of daily life. Jacob demonstrates how secular values and pursuits took hold of eighteenth-century Europe, spilled into the American colonies, and left their lasting imprint on the Western world for generations to come. --Adapted from publisher description.

secular definition world history: Ecodefense Dave Foreman, Bill Haywood, 1987

secular definition world history: Secularism and Cosmopolitanism Étienne Balibar, 2018-06-19 What is the relationship between cosmopolitanism and secularism—the worldwide and the worldly? While cosmopolitan politics may seem inherently secular, existing forms of secularism risk undermining the universality of cosmopolitanism because they privilege the European tradition over all others and transform particular historical norms into enunciations of truth, valid for all cultures and all epochs. In this book, the noted philosopher Étienne Balibar explores the tensions lurking at this troubled nexus in order to advance a truly democratic and emancipatory cosmopolitanism, which requires a secularization of secularism itself. Balibar argues for the idea of the universal against its particular dominant institutions. He questions the assumptions that underlie popular ideas of secularism and religion and outlines the importance of a new critique for the contemporary world. Balibar holds that conflicts between religious and secular discourses need to be reframed from a point of view that takes into account the cultural hybridization, migration and mobility, and transformation of borders that have reshaped the postcolonial age. Among the topics discussed are the uses and misuses of the category of religion and the religious, the paradoxical genealogy of monotheism, French laïcité’s identitarian turn, and the implications of the responses to the Charlie Hebdo attacks for an extended definition of free speech. Going beyond circumscribed notions of religion and the public sphere, Secularism and Cosmopolitanism is a profound rethinking of identity and difference that seeks to make room for a renewed political imagination.

secular definition world history: The Monkey Wrench Gang Edward Abbey, 2011-08-19 A motley crew of saboteurs wreaks havoc on the corporations destroying America’s Western wilderness in this “wildly funny, infinitely wise” classic (The Houston Chronicle). When George Washington Hayduke III returns home from war in the jungles of Southeast Asia, he finds the unspoiled West he once knew has been transformed. The pristine lands and waterways are being strip mined, dammed up, and paved over by greedy government hacks and their corrupt corporate coconspirators. And the manic, beer-guzzling, rabidly antisocial ex-Green Beret isn’t just getting

mad. Hayduke plans to get even. Together with a radical feminist from the Bronx; a wealthy, billboard-torching libertarian MD; and a disgraced Mormon polygamist, Hayduke's ready to stick it to the Man in the most creative ways imaginable. By the time they're done, there won't be a bridge left standing, a dam unblown, or a bulldozer unmolested from Arizona to Utah. Edward Abbey's most popular novel, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* is an outrageous romp with ultra-serious undertones that is as relevant today as it was in the early days of the environmental movement. The author who Larry McMurtry (Lonesome Dove) once dubbed "The Thoreau of the American West" has written a true comedic classic with brains, heart, and soul that more than justifies the call from the Los Angeles Times Book Review that we should all "praise the earth for Edward Abbey!" "Mixes comedy and chaos with enough chase sequences to leave you hungering for more."—The San Francisco Chronicle

secular definition world history: *Freedom of Religion and the Secular State* Russell Blackford, 2012-01-17 Exploring the relationship between religion and the state Focusing on the intersection of religion, law, and politics in contemporary liberal democracies, Blackford considers the concept of the secular state, revising and updating enlightenment views for the present day. *Freedom of Religion and the Secular State* offers a comprehensive analysis, with a global focus, of the subject of religious freedom from a legal as well as historical and philosophical viewpoint. It makes an original contribution to current debates about freedom of religion, and addresses a whole range of hot-button issues that involve the relationship between religion and the state, including the teaching of evolution in schools, what to do about the burqa, and so on.

secular definition world history: *Religion, Secularism, and Constitutional Democracy* Jean L. Cohen, Cécile Laborde, 2015-12-22 Polarization between political religionists and militant secularists on both sides of the Atlantic is on the rise. Critically engaging with traditional secularism and religious accommodationism, this collection introduces a constitutional secularism that robustly meets contemporary challenges. It identifies which connections between religion and the state are compatible with the liberal, republican, and democratic principles of constitutional democracy and assesses the success of their implementation in the birthplace of political secularism: the United States and Western Europe. Approaching this issue from philosophical, legal, historical, political, and sociological perspectives, the contributors wage a thorough defense of their project's theoretical and institutional legitimacy. Their work brings fresh insight to debates over the balance of human rights and religious freedom, the proper definition of a nonestablishment norm, and the relationship between sovereignty and legal pluralism. They discuss the genealogy of and tensions involving international legal rights to religious freedom, religious symbols in public spaces, religious arguments in public debates, the jurisdiction of religious authorities in personal law, and the dilemmas of religious accommodation in national constitutions and public policy when it violates international human rights agreements or liberal-democratic principles. If we profoundly rethink the concepts of religion and secularism, these thinkers argue, a principled adjudication of competing claims becomes possible.

secular definition world history: *The Joy of Secularism* George Levine, 2011-02-22 This book provides a balanced and thoughtful approach for understanding an enlightened, sympathetic, and relevant secularism for our lives today. Bringing together distinguished historians, philosophers, scientists, and writers, this book shows that secularism is not a mere denial of religion.

secular definition world history: *Secular Translations* Talal Asad, 2018-12-04 In *Secular Translations*, the anthropologist Talal Asad reflects on his lifelong engagement with secularism and its contradictions. He draws out the ambiguities in our concepts of the religious and the secular through a rich consideration of translatability and untranslatability, exploring the circuitous movements of ideas between histories and cultures. In search of meeting points between the language of Islam and the language of secular reason, Asad gives particular importance to the translations of religious ideas into nonreligious ones. He discusses the claim that liberal conceptions of equality represent earlier Christian ideas translated into secularism; explores the ways that the language and practice of religious ritual play an important but radically transformed role as they are

translated into modern life; and considers the history of the idea of the self and its centrality to the project of the secular state. Secularism is not only an abstract principle that modern liberal democratic states espouse, he argues, but also a range of sensibilities. The shifting vocabularies associated with each of these sensibilities are fundamentally intertwined with different ways of life. In exploring these entanglements, Asad shows how translation opens the door for—or requires—the utter transformation of the translated. Drawing on a diverse set of thinkers ranging from al-Ghazālī to Walter Benjamin, *Secular Translations* points toward new possibilities for intercultural communication, seeking a language for our time beyond the language of the state.

secular definition world history: *American Judaism* Jonathan D. Sarna, 2019-06-25 Jonathan D. Sarna's award-winning *American Judaism* is now available in an updated and revised edition that summarizes recent scholarship and takes into account important historical, cultural, and political developments in American Judaism over the past fifteen years. Praise for the first edition: Sarna . . . has written the first systematic, comprehensive, and coherent history of Judaism in America; one so well executed, it is likely to set the standard for the next fifty years.--Jacob Neusner, *Jerusalem Post* A masterful overview.--Jeffrey S. Gurock, *American Historical Review* This book is destined to be the new classic of American Jewish history.--Norman H. Finkelstein, *Jewish Book World* Winner of the 2004 National Jewish Book Award/Jewish Book of the Year

secular definition world history: *A Social History of Modern Spain* Adrian Shubert, 2003-09-02 Insightful and accessible, *A Social History of Modern Spain* is the first comprehensive social history of modern Spain in any language. Adrian Shubert analyzes the social development of Spain since 1800. He explores the social conflicts at the root of the Spanish Civil War and how that war and the subsequent changes from democracy to Franco and back again have shaped the social relations of the country. Paying equal attention to the rural and urban worlds and respecting the great regional diversity within Spain, Shubert draws a sophisticated picture of a country struggling with the problems posed by political, economic, and social change. He begins with an overview of the rural economy and the relationship of the people to the land, then moves on to an analysis of the work and social lives of the urban population. He then discusses the changing roles of the clergy, the military, and the various local government, community, and law enforcement officials. *A Social History of Modern Spain* concludes with an analysis of the dramatic political, economic, and social changes during the Franco regime and during the subsequent return to democracy.

secular definition world history: *Secular Cycles* Peter Turchin, Sergey A. Nefedov, 2009-08-09 *Secular Cycles* elaborates and expands upon the demographic-structural theory first advanced by Jack Goldstone, which provides an explanation of long-term oscillations. This book tests that theory's specific and quantitative predictions by tracing the dynamics of population numbers, prices and real wages, elite numbers and incomes, state finances, and sociopolitical instability. Turchin and Nefedov study societies in England, France, and Russia during the medieval and early modern periods, and look back at the Roman Republic and Empire. Incorporating theoretical and quantitative history, the authors examine a specific model of historical change and, more generally, investigate the utility of the dynamical systems approach in historical applications.--BOOK JACKET.

secular definition world history: *A Secular Humanist Declaration* Paul Kurtz, 1980 No Marketing Blurb

secular definition world history: *Is Critique Secular?* Talal Asad, Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, Saba Mahmood, 2013-05-09 This volume interrogates settled ways of thinking about the seemingly interminable conflict between religious and secular values in our world today. What are the assumptions and resources internal to secular conceptions of critique that help or hinder our understanding of one of the most pressing conflicts of our times? Taking as their point of departure the question of whether critique belongs exclusively to forms of liberal democracy that define themselves in opposition to religion, these authors consider the case of the “Danish cartoon controversy” of 2005. They offer accounts of reading, understanding, and critique for offering a way to rethink conventional oppositions between free speech and religious belief, judgment and violence, reason and prejudice, rationality and embodied life. The book, first published in 2009, has been

updated for the present edition with a new Preface by the authors.

secular definition world history: Rethinking Secularism Craig Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, Jonathan VanAntwerpen, 2011-08-25 This collection of essays examines how "the secular" is constituted and understood, and how new understandings of secularism and religion shape analytic perspectives in the social sciences, politics, and international affairs.

secular definition world history: Questioning Secularism Hussein Ali Agrama, 2012-11-02 What, exactly, is secularism? What has the West's long familiarity with it inevitably obscured? In this work, Hussein Ali Agrama tackles these questions. Focusing on the fatwa councils and family law courts of Egypt just prior to the revolution, he delves deeply into the meaning of secularism itself and the ambiguities that lie at its heart.

secular definition world history: Keywords for Today The Keywords Project, Colin MacCabe, Holly Yanacek, 2018-09-03 *Keywords for Today* takes us deep into the history of the language in order to better understand our contemporary world. From nature to cultural appropriation and from market to terror, the most important words in political and cultural debate have complicated and complex histories. This book sketches these histories in ways that illuminate the political bent and values of our current society. Written by The Keywords Project, an independent group of scholars who have spent more than a decade on this work, *Keywords for Today* updates and extends Raymond Williams's classic work, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. It updates some 40 of Williams's original entries and adds 86 new entries, ranging from access to youth. The book is both a history of English, documenting important semantic change in the language, and a handbook of current political and ideological debate. Whether it is demonstrating the only recently-acquired religious meaning of fundamentalism or the complicated linguistic history of queer, *Keywords for Today* will intrigue and enlighten.

secular definition world history: The Origins of American Religious Nationalism Sam Haselby, 2016-11-01 Sam Haselby offers a new and persuasive account of the role of religion in the formation of American nationality, showing how a contest within Protestantism reshaped American political culture and led to the creation of an enduring religious nationalism. Following U.S. independence, the new republic faced vital challenges, including a vast and unique continental colonization project undertaken without, in the centuries-old European senses of the terms, either a church or a state. Amid this crisis, two distinct Protestant movements arose: a popular and rambunctious frontier revivalism; and a nationalist, corporate missionary movement dominated by Northeastern elites. The former heralded the birth of popular American Protestantism, while the latter marked the advent of systematic Protestant missionary activity in the West. The explosive economic and territorial growth in the early American republic, and the complexity of its political life, gave both movements opportunities for innovation and influence. This book explores the competition between them in relation to major contemporary developments-political democratization, large-scale immigration and unruly migration, fears of political disintegration, the rise of American capitalism and American slavery, and the need to nationalize the frontier. Haselby traces these developments from before the American Revolution to the rise of Andrew Jackson. His approach illuminates important changes in American history, including the decline of religious distinctions and the rise of racial ones, how and why Indian removal happened when it did, and with Andrew Jackson, the appearance of the first full-blown expression of American religious nationalism.

secular definition world history: Secularisms Janet R. Jakobsen, Ann Pellegrini, 2008-03-11 A collection that challenges the binary conception of conservative religion versus progressive secularism by highlighting the existence of multiple secularisms.

secular definition world history: The Church of Saint Thomas Paine Leigh Eric Schmidt, 2021-11-02 The forgotten story of the nineteenth-century freethinkers and twentieth-century humanists who tried to build their own secular religion In *The Church of Saint Thomas Paine*, Leigh Eric Schmidt tells the surprising story of how freethinking liberals in nineteenth-century America promoted a secular religion of humanity centered on the deistic revolutionary Thomas Paine (1737-1809) and how their descendants eventually became embroiled in the culture wars of the late

twentieth century. After Paine's remains were stolen from his grave in New Rochelle, New York, and shipped to England in 1819, the reverence of his American disciples took a material turn in a long search for his relics. Paine's birthday was always a red-letter day for these believers in democratic cosmopolitanism and philanthropic benevolence, but they expanded their program to include a broader array of rites and ceremonies, particularly funerals free of Christian supervision. They also worked to establish their own churches and congregations in which to practice their religion of secularism. All of these activities raised serious questions about the very definition of religion and whether it included nontheistic fellowships and humanistic associations—a dispute that erupted again in the second half of the twentieth century. As right-wing Christians came to see secular humanism as the most dangerous religion imaginable, small communities of religious humanists, the heirs of Paine's followers, were swept up in new battles about religion's public contours and secularism's moral perils. An engrossing account of an important but little-known chapter in American history, *The Church of Saint Thomas Paine* reveals why the lines between religion and secularism are often much blurrier than we imagine.

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