

Basic Ideas  
of  
Secular Humanistic Judaism



Written and Compiled by Rabbi Eva Goldfinger

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# Secular Judaism

**Micah Goodman**



## **Secular Judaism:**

**Secular Judaism** Yaakov Malkin, 2004 The majority of Jews throughout the world are secular However few can define their secular beliefs Secular Judaism Faith Values and Spirituality attempts to articulate these beliefs and the practice of Secular Judaism It discusses Secular Humanist values Judaism as Culture and examines Judaism as both a religion and a nation It also raises the Who is a Jew issue and presents the Bible as source of collective memory and the foundation of Jewish culture and civilization going on to examine classic texts and the secular view on God as Literary Hero The idea of pluralism as being not merely desirable but as having existed in accord with ancient life and tradition is dealt with and the Talmudic mechanisms of debate and implied democratic values are described Finally the difference between pluralism and relativism and the danger of the latter is discussed together with a secular humanistic perspective on the need for spirituality with emphasis on community and principles of education Secular Judaism proposes an orientation and guidelines for a curriculum in Judaism as Culture studies and deals with both theoretical issues and practical experiences of secular Jewish communities

**Jewish Secularity** David M. Gordis, Zachary I. Heller, 2012-05-04 A growing number of Jews identify themselves as secular or somewhat secular Is this expansive definition of Jewishness a new phenomenon What are its roots What are its implications for the Jewish community its institutions and its future In reflecting on secular forms of Jewishness the contributors to this book explore the sources of Jewish secularism and its articulation in Jewish thought belief literature and culture Included in this book are several personal accounts of Jewish journeys as well as analyses of the extent of the division between secular Jews and others in the Jewish community In sum Jewish Secularity The Search for Roots and the Challenges of Relevant Meaning provides an overview of a profound development in the evolving history of Jewish life in America

Not in the Heavens David Biale, 2010-10-18 The story of the origins and development of a Jewish form of secularism Not in the Heavens traces the rise of Jewish secularism through the visionary writers and thinkers who led its development Spanning the rich history of Judaism from the Bible to today David Biale shows how the secular tradition these visionaries created is a uniquely Jewish one and how the emergence of Jewish secularism was not merely a response to modernity but arose from forces long at play within Judaism itself Biale explores how ancient Hebrew books like Job Song of Songs and Esther downplay or even exclude God altogether and how Spinoza inspired by medieval Jewish philosophy recast the biblical God in the role of nature and stripped the Torah of its revelatory status to instead read scripture as a historical and cultural text Biale examines the influential Jewish thinkers who followed in Spinoza's secularizing footsteps such as Salomon Maimon Heinrich Heine Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein He tells the stories of those who also took their cues from medieval Jewish mysticism in their revolts against tradition including Hayim Nahman Bialik Gershom Scholem and Franz Kafka And he looks at Zionists like David Ben Gurion and other secular political thinkers who recast Israel and the Bible in modern terms of race nationalism and the state Not in the Heavens demonstrates how these many Jewish paths to

secularism were dependent in complex and paradoxical ways on the very religious traditions they were rejecting and examines the legacy and meaning of Jewish secularism today      **Secularism in Question** Ethan B. Katz, 2015-07-16

Secularism in Question examines how twentieth century revivals of religion prompt a reconsideration of many issues concerning Jews and Judaism in the modern era Scholars of Jewish history religion philosophy and literature illustrate how the categories of religious and secular have frequently proven far more permeable than fixed      Jewish Identity in Modern Israel Naftali Rothenberg, Eliezer Schweid, 2002 A collection of articles based upon conferences of the Framework for Contemporary Jewish Thought and Identity at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute Jewish and Arab contributors including authors educators MKs and Rabbis address such subjects as Being an Arab Citizen in a Jewish Democratic State Teaching Judaism to Secular Jews Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State and Integration of State Law and Halakha      Judaism in a Secular Age Renee Kogel, Zev Katz, 1995      Radical Poetics and Secular Jewish Culture Stephen Paul Miller, Daniel Morris, 2010 This collection of essays is the first to address this often obscured dimension of modern and contemporary poetry the secular Jewish dimension Editors Daniel Morris and Stephen Paul Miller asked their contributors to address what constitutes radical poetry written by Jews defined as secular and whether or not there is a Jewish component or dimension to radical and modernist poetic practice in general These poets and critics address these questions by exploring the legacy of those poets who preceded and influenced them Stein Zukofsky Reznikoff Oppen and Ginsberg among others      **Judaism Beyond God** Sherwin T. Wine, 1995 Judaism Beyond God presents a new secular and humanistic alternative to any of the forms of conventional Judaism It provides new answers to old questions questions about the essence of Jewish identity about the real meaning of Jewish history the significance of the Jewish personality and not least it includes questions about the nature of Jewish ethics It also provide a radical new way of being Jewish new ways of celebrating Jewish holidays and ceremonies of the Jewish life cycle a new approach to dealing with intermarriage and conversion a new way of reinforcing Jewish identity      Religion and Secular Modernity in Russian Christianity, Judaism, and Atheism Ana Siljak, 2024-11-15

Religion and Secular Modernity in Russian Christianity Judaism and Atheism is a multifaceted account of the engagement between religion and the secular in Russia s Christian Jewish and atheist traditions Ana Siljak brings together an interdisciplinary group of leading scholars to present unique perspectives on the secularization dynamic in Russia and the Soviet Union telling stories about theologians sects churches poets and artists From the Jewish Christian priest Alexander Men to the cross dressing poet Zinaida Gippius to the Soviet promoter of Yiddish theater Solomon Mikhoels Religion and Secular Modernity in Russian Christianity Judaism and Atheism gives a voice to a variety of actors who have grappled with the possibilities of faith and unbelief in an industrialized modern and seemingly secular world Now more than ever as one narrative of Russia s religious history dominates official Russian accounts alternative perspectives of the relationship between Russian religion and secularism should be highlighted and emphasized      *Secularism and Religion in Jewish-Israeli*

*Politics* Yaacov Yadgar, 2010-07-28 Offering a fresh approach to the study of contemporary Jewish identity the author explores the implications of this identity from the perspective of traditionism covering issues of religion tradition modernity and secularisation within Jewish Israeli society and politics      **What Do Secular Jews Believe** Yaakov Malkin, 1998 A comprehensive introduction to the beliefs of secular Jews      *Contemporary Humanistic Judaism* Adam Chalom,

**God-Optional Judaism** Judith Seid, 2001 Here is a handbook for Jews looking for creative meaningful new ways to express their own ways of being Jewish The book discusses the historical evolution of the Jewish religion and takes up the question of what it means to be a cultural Jew God optional Judaism provides alternative nontheistic ways to celebrate every Jewish holiday and all the rites of passage in life including baby naming ceremonies bar bat mitzvahs weddings and funerals

**How to Be Secular** Jacques Berlinerblau, 2012 Argues that a return to a more secular America will promote religious diversity and freedom and help eliminate the widening divide between religious conservatives and staunch atheists

**Modern Judaism** Nicholas de Lange, Miri Freud-Kandel, 2005-01-21 A comprehensive multi disciplinary multi authored guide to contemporary Jewish life and thought focusing on social cultural and historical aspects of Judaism alongside theological issues This volume includes 38 newly commissioned essays including contributions from leading specialists in their fields This book covers the major areas of thought in contemporary Jewish Studies including considerations of religious differences sociological philosophical and gender issues geographical diversity inter faith relations and the impact of the Shoah the Holocaust and the modern state of Israel      **The Wondering Jew** Micah Goodman, 2020-11-10 A celebrated

Israeli author explores the roots of the divide between religion and secularism in Israel today and offers a path to bridging the divide Zionism began as a movement full of contradictions between a pull to the past and a desire to forge a new future Israel has become a place of fragmentation between those who sanctify religious tradition and those who wish to escape its grasp Now a new middle ground is emerging between religious and secular Jews who want to engage with their heritage without being restricted by it or losing it completely In this incisive book acclaimed author Micah Goodman explores Israeli Judaism and the conflict between religion and secularism one of the major causes of political polarization throughout the world Revisiting traditional religious sources and seminal works of secularism he reveals that each contains an openness to learn from the other s messages Goodman challenges both orthodoxies proposing a new approach to bridge the divide between religion and secularism and pave a path toward healing a society torn asunder by extremism      **Respecting the**

**Wicked Child** Mitchell Silver, 1998 A guide to reconciling Jewish tradition and modern secular identity      **An Introduction to Judaism** Nicholas de Lange, 2000-02-17 This book is intended for students of religion and others who seek an introduction to Judaism      **The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Judaism, 2nd Edition** Rabbi Benjamin Blech, 1999-08-01 One of our most popular religion and history titles updated and revised This guide contains a complete authoritative account of the Jewish people including profiles of Biblical and political leaders and focuses on understanding the Jewish influence on

American and world culture offering insights into the Yiddish and Hebrew languages theater art literature comedy film television and more

**American Judaism in Transition** Gerhard Falk, 1995 The American Jewish community is in transition This book describes in detail how American Jews changed from living in a religion oriented community to living a secular life Falk discusses how Jewish Americans were greatly influenced by the secularization of Western civilization in general and by the Christian community in Europe and America specifically The secularization of American Jewish institutions is analyzed by discussing changes in the Jewish religion Jewish education and Jewish organizations during this century Special consideration is given to the issue of Jewish survival in America with specific emphasis on the Jewish Christian intermarriage rate

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