



Lockean Pseudosecularism

**David Rand
Atheist Freethinkers (AFT)
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

Talk for Atheists for Liberty (AFL)

2nd July 2024

Secularism Defined

1. **Equality of persons**, including between women & men.
 2. **Freedom of conscience**, including both freedom **of** religion & freedom **from** religion, etc.
 3. Strong **religious neutrality** of the State.
 4. **Separation** of State and religions.
-

“Divine” law does not apply.

“Divine” = written & imposed by a tiny clique of religious authorities & zealots, mainly dead men.

Clarifications (1)

- + ~~“Freedom of conscience and religion”~~
NO. If “freedom **of** religion” is mentioned, then “freedom **from** religion” must also appear.
- + Furthermore, split “religion” into
 1. **religious belief (part of freedom of conscience)**
 2. **religious practice (may impact other’s freedom)**
- + Thus: Simply “**Freedom of conscience**” is best.

Clarifications (2)

- + **Religious practice or expression** is no more important than **scientific, artistic, political, philosophical, etc. practice**.
It does not deserve constitutional or legal protection any more than the others do.
- + **Actions which may impact other persons or other rights** must not be absolute.
- + **Religious neutrality:**
 - **Weak:** neutrality among all religions.
 - **Strong:** neutrality among all religions and between religion and irreligion.



John Locke

“A Letter Concerning Toleration”

1689

- + **Major reference for “secularism”** in the English-speaking world.
- + **Tolerance of religious diversity, BUT:**
 - Intolerance for **Catholics**.
 - Absolute intolerance for **atheists!**
- + **Weak religious neutrality**
- + **Communitarian**, not universalist.
- + Modern Lockean pseudosecularists adds atheists as another “religious” community.

Importance of the Separation Principle

If separation between religions and State is absent, the other 3 principles are compromised:

- + **Male/female equality** threatened by religious misogyny.
- + **Equality of persons** threatened by imposition of religious identities.
- + **Children easily indoctrinated**, stamped with religious identity of parents.
- + **Freedom of conscience** threatened by religious proselytism.
- + **Religious neutrality degenerates** into its weak variant.

Is the USA Legally Secular?

USA has secular legal provisions:

+ US Constitution, [First Amendment](#) (1791):

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; [...]”

– **Federal government only**, until 1947.

– **“not an endorsement of secularism but of nonsectarianism...”**,
[Shadia Drury](#).

+ US Constitution, [Article Six](#):

“...no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.”

Thomas Jefferson

- + **1802-01-01, Letter to the Danbury Baptists**

"I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus **building a wall of separation between Church & State.**"

This is not law. It is Jefferson's interpretation of the 1st Amendment.

- + **1947-02-10, Everson v. Board of Education, US Supreme Court decision that, by virtue of the 14th Amendment, the Establishment Clause of the 1st Amendment applies to states.**

Is France Legally Secular?

- + **Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789)**

Article 10: "No one should be disturbed for their opinions, even religious ones, provided that their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law."

- + **Law of Separation between Churches and the State (1905):**

Article 1: "The Republic ensures freedom of conscience. It guarantees the free exercise of worship, restricted only as stipulated below in the interest of public order."

Article 2: "The Republic does not recognize, remunerate, or subsidize any religion...."

Lockean (Pseudo-)Secularism versus “Laïcité”

American Model Pre-secularism or Lockean (Pseudo)Secularism	French Model « Laïcité » or Republican Secularism
Weak religious neutrality	Strong religious neutrality
No explicit separation	Separation explicitly declared
No “established” religion, i.e. non-sectarianism, no State religion	No religion supported by the State
Freedom of religious expression guaranteed (and unlimited in First Amendment)	Freedom of religious expression guaranteed, but may be limited by law
Communitarian	Universalist
Religious affiliation treated as immutable	Religious affiliation on a par with political or philosophical convictions, thus changeable

Major Beneficiaries of Secularism: Daughters of Strictly Religious Parents

- + Consequence of separation: **Ban religious symbols in some contexts.**
- + Separation **reduces religious indoctrination & misogyny.**
- + Example: **Ban on religious symbols worn by school pupils** since 1994 (ministerial directive) and 2004 (law) as recommended in 2003 (Stasi).
- + Result: massive, lasting improvement in academic performance of girls from Muslim families.
- + **Islamic veil is a tool of sexual segregation & religious supremacism.**
It is child abuse when imposed on girls, isolating them.

Quebec Bill 21

« Loi sur la laïcité de l'État »

- + Declares **State secularism** for Quebec. Adopted 2019.
- + Bans teachers & some civil servants from wearing **religious symbols**.
- + Bans civil servants, users & teachers from wearing **face-coverings**.
- + Much **weaker than similar legislation** in Europe and North Africa.
- + Has (so far) survived **legal challenges** from anti-secularists.
- + **Fanatical, hysterical opposition** from inside & especially outside Quebec.
- + **Several weaknesses**. E.g.
 - Does not apply to all civil servants,
 - Does not repeal major fiscal privileges.

Anglo Intolerance of Republican Secularism

A small selection from many examples:

- + **Lawyer Azim Hussain** (later appointed judge!) [compares Bill 21 to Nuremberg Laws](#), adopted by Nazi government in 1935.
- + **Montreal's Ricochet Media** claims [Bill 21 will lead to genocide](#).
- + Former **premier of Alberta** declares that, with Bill 21, "[racism has become law](#)."
- + **NY Times** [blames the beheading of Samuel Paty on secularism](#) in France, for not "accommodating" religious practices & for implementing freedom from religion.
- + **Chris Hedges** writes that [Charlie Hebdo deserved what it got](#).

In [Why the French Ban the Veil](#), **Paul Berman** analyses this prejudice:

"the belief that America is the home of the free, and France is not, and any desire to arrange things differently from how we Americans do can only be an aggression against common sense."

Tribalism, Multitribalism & Universalism

- + **Tribalism:** Early stage of human social development
 - Humans divided into distinct tribes.
 - Tribal religion (e.g. ancient Hebrews), monolatry.
- + **Multitribalism:**
 - euphemistically called **Multiculturalism**, a.k.a. communitarianism)
 - Postmodern variant of tribalism:
 - Loyalty to one's "tribe" is given priority.
- + **Universalism:** Valuing our common humanity above particular identities. Opposite: Identitarianism

Philosophical Universalism

- **Reality:** all-encompassing, unique, accessible to all, shared by all.
- **Objectivity:** "Truths" are not personal.
- **Isegoria:** Freedom of speech for all.
(Approx. opposite of "lived experience" of one's tribe)
- **Equality** of human rights.
- A key element of the **Enlightenment**.
- Necessary for scientific research: **Repeatability**.

The Post-Left a.k.a. The "Woke"

- + **Post-left** or **anti-Enlightenment pseudo-left**.
- + Claims to be the left but **has betrayed and abandoned its roots** in the universalism of the Enlightenment.
- + Origin of "left" and "right": sides of National Constituent Assembly during French revolution.
 - **"Left" = for revolution, republicanism, secularism.**
 - **"Right" = loyal to the Ancien régime, i.e. monarchy and Church**

Components of the Post-Left

A toxic mixture of various **anti-Enlightenment ideologies**, mainly American (but with important German & French elements).

- + **Intersectionality:** Identitarian "antiracism," foments racism.
- + **Multiculturalism:** A euphemism for multi-tribalism.
- + **Postmodernism:** An anti-universalist, relativist philosophy.
- + **Neomarxism:** Lobotomized Marxism, with no class (literally).
- + **Islamoleftism:** Neomarxism "Plus." Muslims replace proletariat.
- + **Butlerian pseudoscience:** Conflate sex and gender. Declare both to be social constructs, non-binary, even on a continuum.

The Post-Left Rejects Universalism

- + **Post-left rejects philosophical universalism**, a core Enlightenment value.
- + Allegation: **Universalism just a mask for the racism and colonialism.**
- + **Post-leftist Identity Politics:** utterly incompatible with universalism.
- + Post-leftism is itself **supremacist**.
- + Post-leftism is allied with **an extremely supremacist, identitarian & authoritarian ideology—political Islam**—which uses universalism as a mask for that supremacism.

Racism, Neoracism & Antiracism

Classical European Racism	Neoracism (self-styled "antiracism" of the post-left)	Antiracism
Eurocentrism: Europe = the greatest civilization	Eurocentrism: Europe = source of all evil and oppression	Universalism
Prejudice against certain groups	Prejudice against certain majorities, especially "Whites"	Colour-blindness
Tribalism based on pseudoscience	Multi-tribalism based on postmodernism	"Racial" identity: just one of many personal attributes
Exaggeration of genetic differences. Hierarchy of "races."	Obsession with "racial" identity. Racialization of religious affiliation.	Only one human "race." Respect for freedom of conscience.
Discrimination against "inferieur" groups	Any inequity is considered resulting from injustice. Positive discrimination.	Anti-discrimination. Meritocracy.

The Consequences of Post-Leftism

- + **Race-religion conflation undermines freedom of conscience.** It resembles the **Islamic ban on apostasy**.
- + Obsessive identity politics, race-religion conflation & Islamoleftism → **anti-secularism**.
- + Post-Left = **self-criticism on steroids**, self-criticism from hell (not criticism of oneself, but of one's European cultural heritage.)
- + **France & Quebec remain bastions of universalism and secularism**, but they are severely threatened, targets of hate propaganda, largely from the post-left.

Conclusions

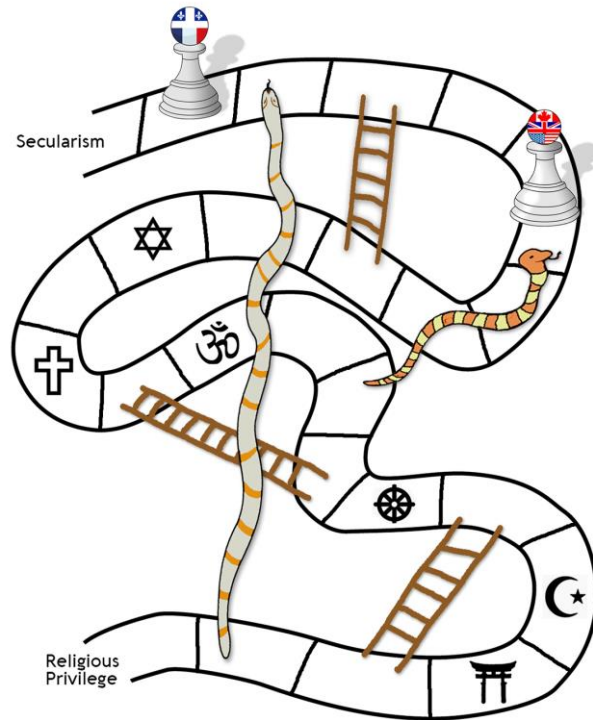
- + "Secularism" ≈ **Lockean pseudo-secularism** in Anglo countries.
- + **Secularism without separation** is not secularism.
- + **State religious neutrality** is insufficient, even if strong.
- + Freedom **from** religion should be respected as much as freedom **of** religion.
- + **Religious belief is no more important than political conviction.** They both can change. They often overlap. (Example: group prayers in public)
- + **"Wokism" is an anti-secular parareligion.** Secularists must oppose it.
- + **French "laïcité" must be defended** against the religious and parareligious fanatics who are trying to kill it.

David Rand

Foreword by Nina Sankari

Stillbirth

The Failure of Secularism
in the English-Speaking World



How Anglo Ethnocentrism, French Postmodernism
& Fashionable Nonsense have Neutralized Secularism

Stillbirth

The Failure of Secularism in the English-Speaking World

+ Available on Amazon:

- [eBook](#)
- [Paperback](#)

+ Further info:

www.davidrand.ca/stillbirth/

"...Anglo-American political activism has so thoroughly embraced what is arguably one of the worst products of French culture—postmodern philosophy—while simultaneously rejecting one of its finest realizations—secularism..."