

# Definition of the most basic European Values

and their significance for our modern society

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The Nature of the Problem

Every society looks back upon its own history and has consequently derived its own set of values from it. A common set of values unites the individuals, and therefore a society comes into being. If the individual members are no longer aware of the fundamental values of their society and the historical provenance of these values, the society loses its “glue.” Most people in Europe take history lessons in school, but only few could name the most basic “European values.” When a society loses a sense of their values, it will not be able to protect and preserve this foundation of the social structure.

Due to a lack of knowledge, previously highly-esteemed institutions and achievements are no longer perceived as such. When someone cannot draw a comparison between “now and then,” he / she experiences the momentary “status quo” as a matter of course, as the obvious “normal condition.” As a result of lacking historical knowledge, many members of our European societies are no longer aware that the momentary “normal condition” concerning the social structure and civil liberties has developed over centuries, in many cases has been hard fought for and relies on the foundation of certain well-defined values.

If the knowledge about our values and their significance is lost, we will simultaneously lose the foundation of our free, modern and democratic European society.

## 1.2 Objective and Benefit

It is the **objective** of this paper to find the most fundamental European values, from which all the other European values can be derived. Their origin and history as well as their significance for our modern society are to be described.

Furthermore, this paper will depict how the individual values rely upon each other and how they are connected.

The **benefit** of this paper lies not only in imparting knowledge regarding our fundamental values but also in the creation of an understanding: why these values are the foundation of our free, modern and democratic European societies and what significance they have for our society today as well as the everyday life of the individual.

### 1.3 What is a “Value” anyway?

One could simply state: “A value arises from a ranking.”

By undertaking such a ranking, a society for example decides which value is more important than another. But this kind of ranking is not a conscious, active decision that we make by desiring or rejecting something; it is rather an unconscious, passive affection due to a predefined, subconscious imprinting developed within ourselves mainly via our education, religion and culture. The accumulations of values are therefore not just superficial assessments or wishes that could be abandoned easily due to a logical objection; they are rather our deep-rooted emotionally loaded imaginations about something “valuable” and “desirable.”

All individual commitments to values define which values are “respected” within a society and which are “proscribed.” The commitments to values within our thoughts influence our actions, and our actions form our culture. In thought and action, European Culture is formed by European values.

Values are the fundamental elements of the culture; they define the meaning and significance for the people within a social system (society.) The rules and norms of a society are derived from its values. From this point of view, it becomes clear that values have a deep significance for the respective social system due to the fact that they significantly influence, control and regulate this social system. Plainly said: values are the foundation of a society!

It is quite possible that specific values of a certain culture may seem worthless, abominable, deserving of persecution or scorn or illogical to people from other cultures. As the values that are deemed important by someone and even what is considered "of value" at all, is initially predefined by the culture in which the concerned person has grown up.

#### **What does the term “Basic European Values” mean?**

The general term of “European Values” often also includes achievements of European arts like painting, architecture, literature, music and the like. The term “Basic European Values” however contains only the very essential and elementary values from which the fundament of our free, modern and democratic society has evolved.

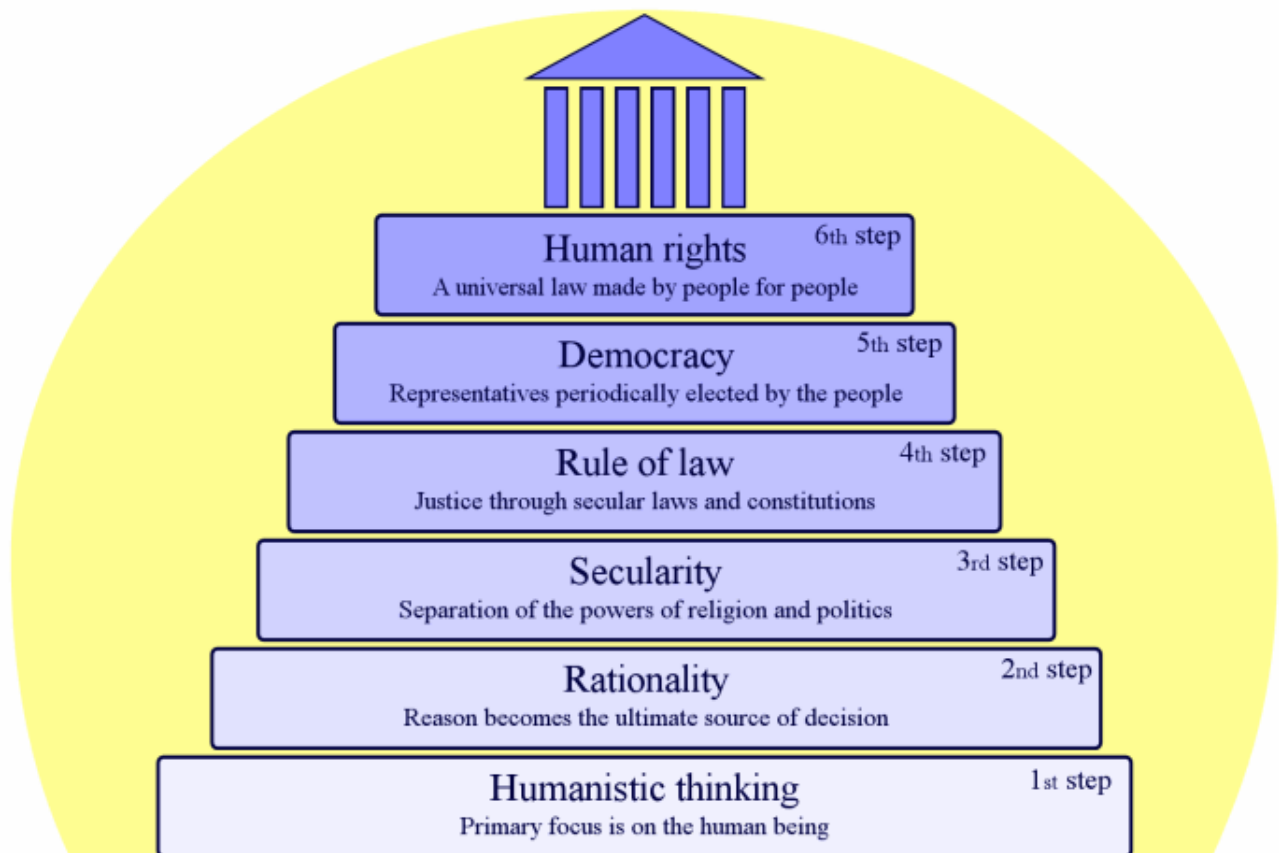
## 2 European Values

### 2.1 Short Explanation of the European values

The European high culture developed in six stages:

The 6 most Fundamental European Values

Humanistic World-View (“Weltanschauung”)



**These six European values together add up to a fully developed “Humanistic World-view”**

The humanistic world-view has its origin within the times of ancient Greece in antiquity and was resurrected during the Renaissance – the rebirth of antiquity – and the rebirth of humanistic thinking that followed.

The fully developed humanistic world-view evolves on the basis of the six stages mentioned above. At the same time, these six stages are the Fundamental European Values building the foundation for our advanced European civilization that we live in today, and all other European values can be derived from them.

The humanistic world-view starts with the thought of giving *value to a human being* (humanistic thinking) and ends with the thought of giving *value to all people* (human rights.) It is a world-view made by the people for the people.

**Was this humanistic world-view of any benefit?**

Simply put: it fulfilled the wish for *Liberty, Equality and Fraternity* that Europeans had over thousand of years. History also shows that first a basis needed to be built, upon which this revived wish (during the French Revolution) could be fulfilled, step by step. As a result of humanistic, rational, and secular thinking, laws of freedom were established and could be implemented for the first time due to constitutional legality.

Democracy transformed the two-tier society of rulers and subjects into one class of people with the same duties. Human rights turned all our fellow human beings into brothers united within one land who share the same rights.

**How liberty, equality and fraternity could be realized in Europe:**

The most human of all slogans  
 “liberty, equality, fraternity”

6 <sup>th</sup> step	Human Rights	liberty, equality, fraternity
5 <sup>th</sup> step	Democracy	liberty, equality
4 <sup>th</sup> step	Rule of law	liberty
3 <sup>rd</sup> step	Secularity	} basis, upon which “liberté, égalité, fraternité” could arise.
2 <sup>nd</sup> step	Rationality	
1 <sup>st</sup> step	Humanistic thinking	

## 2.2 Explanation of the Individual Values

### 2.2.1 Step 1 – Humanistic Thinking

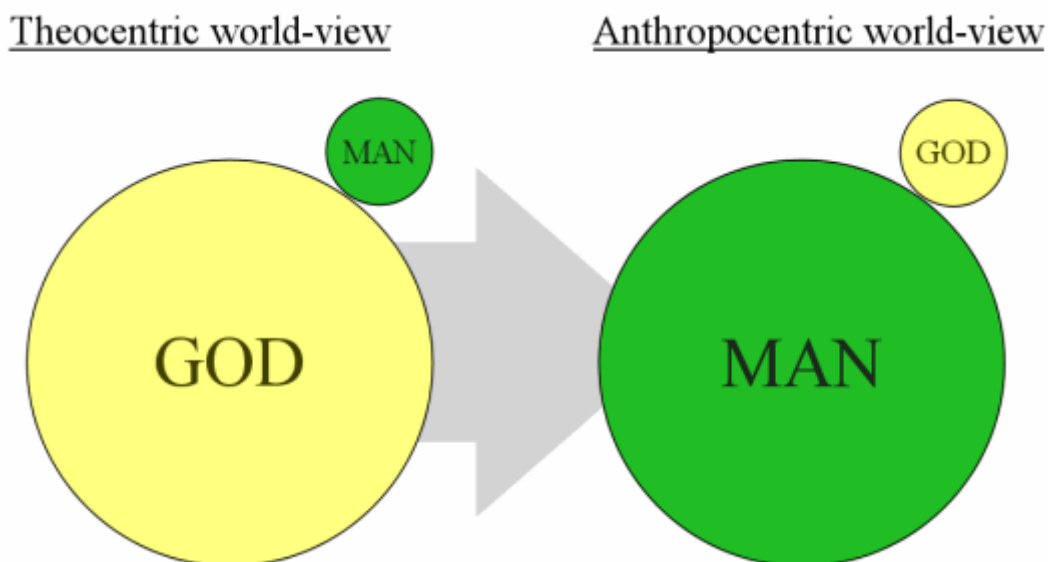


The Latin word “*humanus*” means “humane, people-friendly, educated, cultured.”  
The Latin word “*humanitas*” means “humanity.”

Today's humanistic thinking is re-introduced by the age of “humanism.” Humanism indicates a way of thinking and acting that is based on the educational ideal of Greek and Roman antiquity. This ideal is characterized by an awareness of the dignity of the human being.

During the age of Renaissance, this spirit was rediscovered and revived. The initial development of today's European values is represented by a turning away from the theocentric world-view (God being everything's center) of the Middle Ages.

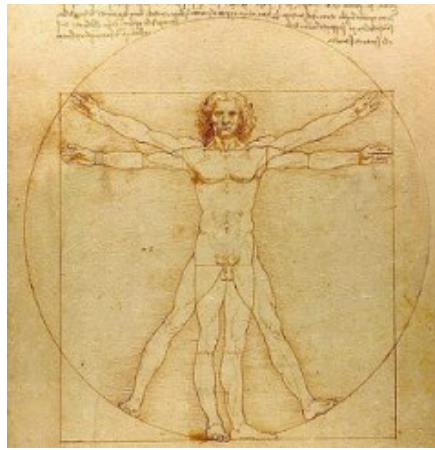
What follows is an orientation towards the anthropocentric world-view of the modern era. “Anthropos” comes from the Greek and means “man.” This world-view therefore puts man in the center of everything. The well-being of individual people increasingly becomes the focus of thought and action.



From the “theocentric” world-view of the Middle Ages  
to the “anthropocentric” world-view of today.

*Here are some examples to illustrate the impact of this new way of thinking:*

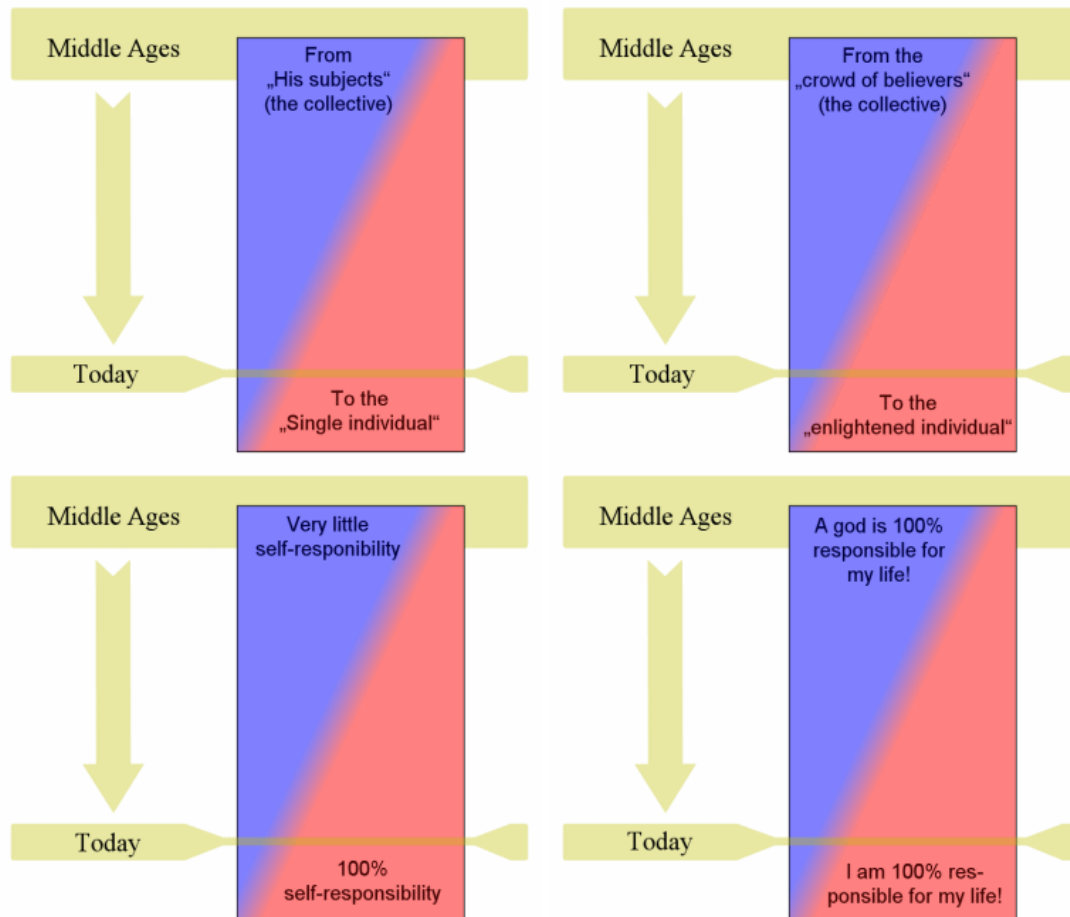
- The view of the world changes:  
*Before:* Theocentric view of the world; that means God is the focus of thought and action.  
*Afterward:* Anthropocentric view of the world; that means the human being is the focus of thought and action. This means that the focus is directed more towards the individual, but the idea of a God still remains.
- The standard by which everything is measured, changes:  
*Before:* God is the measure of all things!  
*Afterward:* The human being increasingly becomes the measure of all things! His/her actions and aspirations are no longer inferior in comparison to God's glory.



- Individual development becomes possible:  
*Before:* The human being can only develop within his religious determination.  
*Afterward:* The human being can develop independently of God or his/her gods. This development emerges from education; education develops from experience and awareness gained by studying nature. This is the starting point for individual development, self responsibility, and universal education.
- Education becomes a human value:  
*Before:* education must be prevented – otherwise godliness diminishes!  
*Afterward:* Humanistic education of antiquity becomes the ideal. The human being can elaborate through education and has the ability to cultivate and develop him/herself.
- If you wanted to know something about the world:  
*Before:* Studying the bible brought awareness and knowledge.  
*Afterward:* This knowledge should be developed by studying nature (natural sciences begin to form.)
- From a collective to a free individual:  
*Before:* every individual is insignificant – personal living conditions are God-given.  
*Afterward:* happiness and wellbeing of the individual human being and society are the highest values, which now should become the benchmark for all actions. Human individuality should be able to develop freely. Every individual is to gain self-determination regarding his/her own living conditions.
- Personal responsibility begins:  
*Before:* In a collective (being a King's subject or part of the "flock of believers"), the human being had no personal or individual responsibility. Without individual responsibility and self-dependent actions – which also include the decision-making process – no one is able assume responsibility for one's own actions. If misfortune befalls a collective, also the cause and guilt is therefore related to an outer enemy or power. The collective thinks that others must be plotting against it (conspiracy theory.)  
*Afterward:* The individual is self-dependent and responsible for his or her own actions!
- Where happiness is found:  
*Before:* The transformation of every-day suffering into happiness and joy only begins in the afterlife. This means that this happiness and joy can only be expected in a heavenly paradise after one's death.  
*Afterward:* The transformation of every-day suffering into happiness and joy already begins in this world since the knowledge gained through education changes every-day suffering.



## Development from the Middle Ages until today



### Which changes regarding state and religion did humanistic thinking bring about?

*Changes due to Humanistic thinking about the state:*

One leaves the collective of subjects and becomes an independent individual in relation to the state.

*Changes due to humanistic thinking about religion:*

One leaves the collective of believers and becomes an independent individual in relation to religion. One can evolve also outside of the borders in thought and action, that religion imposes, e.g. through the study of nature.

### How is the concept of “humanistic thinking” misused?

*It is misused by public institutions:*

“Communism, which defined religion as the ‘opium of the people’, is based on Humanism.”

No, collective ideologies like communism are not humanistic systems, because communism relies on the collective and not on well-instructed and developed free individuals.

*It is misused by religious institutions:*

“The value of a human is based on the fact that s/he was created by God in his/her own likeness.”

No, every person gains the “value of a human” solely because of his/her existence as a human being. This means that every human is valuable, regardless of which god s/he believes in or whether s/he believes in a god at all.

## 2.2.2 Step 2 – Rationality



The Latin word “*ratio*” means “reason, intellect.”

A rationalist bases his/her philosophical explanation of the world primarily on reasonable conclusions.

Rationality denotes an attitude, which considers rational thinking, i.e. thinking determined by *reason*, as the sole source of insight.

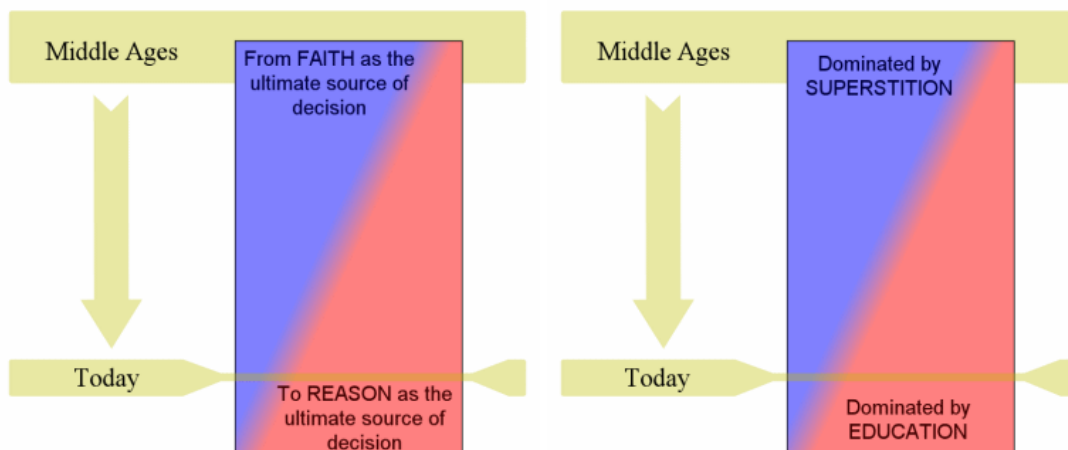
Rationality means that a statement can be judged by its value and not on the basis of the authority of the person or institution who made the statement, or on how many others agree with this statement, or on the fact that the statement is attributed to any kind of god. Rationality includes the ability to unmask arguments as being false even when they are said to be God-given.

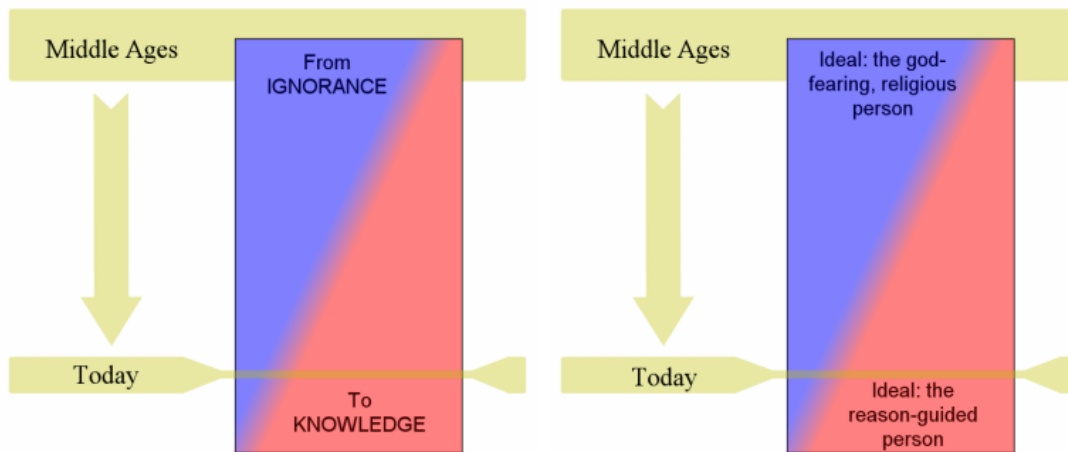
Linked with the Greek tradition of logical debate, the rationalistic principle is applied in many contexts and also forms the core of scientific work. In the Age of Enlightenment, Descartes and other philosophers and scientists based their thinking on reason and rationality. They applied reason to all areas of everyday life, exposing superstition and starting a scientific revolution.

*Here are some examples to illustrate the impact of this new way of thinking:*

- Reason stands above faith:  
*Before:* God's omniscience stands “infinitely” far above human reason.  
*Afterward:* Human reason more and more refutes the conveyed “omniscience” of God.
- A new way of decision making becomes possible:  
*Before:* Faith must be chosen as the ultimate source of decision. A decision made on the basis of reason is not welcomed.  
*Afterward:* Reason becomes the ultimate source of decision.
- Century-old restrictions get suspended:  
*Before:* Human reasoning and acts are restricted by religious dogmas and totalitarian rules.  
*Afterward:* The use of reason overrules religious and absolutistic bans on free thought and acts.
- What is identified as “good”?  
*Before:* The Bible defines what is “good.”  
*Afterward:* “Good” is defined as “reasonable.”
- Basis of Evaluation  
*Before:* Evaluation occurs on the basis of the Bible and religious principles.  
*Afterward:* Evaluation occurs on the basis of a rational consideration of the situation.

### Development from the Middle Ages until today





## What changes concerning state and religion has reasonable thinking (rationality) brought about?

*Changes due to reasonable thinking about the state:*

It should be allowed to critically question the ruling system of the grace of God, in all of its aspects, via rationality.

*Changes due to reasonable thinking about religion:*

It should be allowed to critically question the Christian doctrine, all dogmas and even the existence of God, via rationality. It should also be possible to further question the historical context and the different weight each dogma had throughout church history. (What were the reasons that one dogma was especially important at a certain time and others more or less irrelevant, and why was it the other way around at other times?)

## How is the concept of rationality misused?

*It is misused by public institutions:*

“Authority must be trusted blindly!”

No, since the meaning of this conclusion is more important than the person or institution who made this statement.

*It is misused by religious institutions:*

“Human rationality is a gift of God”

No, since a human being possesses rationality regardless of which god s/he believes in or if s/he doesn't believe in one at all.

“Rationality is important as long as this does not cause a conflict with religion. In case of doubt, religion must be always rated higher than rationality.”

No, since in case of doubt, rationality must be basis of decision.

Exemplification: though the fact is well known that condoms can prevent one from being infected with AIDS, religious Catholics are not allowed to use this protective measure even in high-risk regions in Africa. In this case, rationality could save the life of human beings, but the religious dogma causes the exact opposite. A rationalist could never accept such a dogmatic rule.

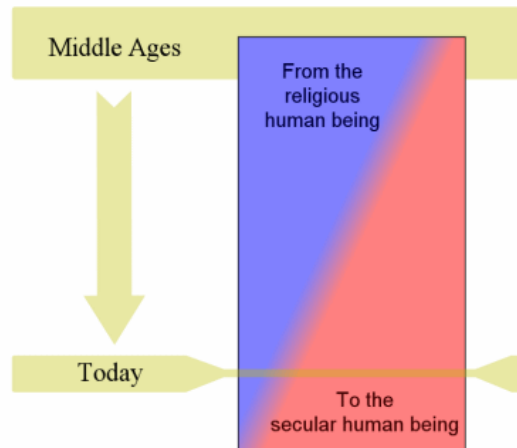
### 2.2.3 Step 3 – Secularity



#### **Secularity = separation of religion and state affairs**

Secularity means to separate public and religious bodies by law – the separation of politics and religion, of state and state church.

#### **Development from the Middle Ages until today**



- ***Compared to a religious human being, a secular human being can be characterized*** by the fact that s/he practices religion only in a private sphere and also knows how to discern “Godly politics” from “worldly politics.”
- ***Compared to a religious human being, a secular human being can be characterized*** by the fact that s/he respects human laws and defines religion only as a mean for personal and private development.
- ***Compared to a religious human being, a secular human being can be characterized*** by the fact that s/he does not have to follow religious laws made by “God” or “men via the grace of God.” S/he also must not fear any punishment from a religious authority. A secular human being is bound by the laws of his/her state that are made by humans. It is part of his/her personal freedom to conform to religious regulations or not.

Religion no longer has to interfere with the reasoning and actions of individuals involved; it should not declare any bans on thinking and behavior. It is the personal choice of an individual whether s/he adheres to religious rules. Nobody can be forced to participate in religious activities or be punished if s/he doesn't do so. Religion is a private matter and has to be subordinated under all circumstances to the constitution and rule of law. The task to interpret the world and its phenomena lies solely with reason. Just the clear mind can always develop new ways to adapt to the constantly changing conditions around us and find the right solutions.

Secularization could only emerge by using rationality, since rational thinking was the only way to expose religious dogmas. That was the reason why, later on, the wish arose to regulate social life by using *reasonable* instead of *dogmatic* rules. The separation of religious and worldly power was increasingly desired, thus making way for secularity to be implemented in Europe.

*This strict separation of religious and worldly power is exceedingly important for our society today due to many reasons:*

If religion possesses political and social power, it is a very human trait that those who possess such power will want to keep it. This ambition is of course problematic, since the structure of belief that legitimizes this power must be adhered to by all means. If religion possesses political and social power, science becomes a threat to this power: if science with its accumulated knowledge can reveal that a religious dogma is illogical, the religious rulers lose all legitimization for their regulations and laws. Only the strict separation of worldly and religious power can assure that science can work freely and become able to support the development of our society. This separation is exactly the reason for the economical and social success story of Europe!

Furthermore, this separation is the cause that the rules we developed for our society are made *by human beings*. Thus human beings can again change these laws and adapt them to new changes or developments. This also means that rules exist for humans, and humans do not exist for rules. When religious authorities determine laws and regulations for living together in a society, these laws are always refer to God. Since God is considered to be infallible, these laws and regulations are also usually not modifiable. These laws then become a large burden and limitation for a society, especially when they become obsolescent. Imagine the laws that have their roots in medieval times being carried out today, e.g the religious legislation of Sharia law in Iran: stoning for adultery and chopping off a hand for theft.

*Coronation of the emperor by the Pope*



*Secularity is the divorce of the marriage between secular and religious power.*

*Here are some examples to illustrate the impact of this new way of thinking:*

**Influence of religious rules:**

*Before:* Religious rules and regulations affect both the public and the private sphere of people's lives.

*Afterward:* Religious rules and regulations affect only the private sphere of people's lives.

### Influence of religious thinking:

*Before:* Political and religious thinking are the same, i.e. they pull in the same direction.

*Afterward:* Political and religious thinking are separated.

### Legitimization of worldly and religious power:

*Before:* National church and national regime legitimate one another.

*Afterward:* The rulers of a state have to be legitimized also by the people. The church is also legitimized by the community of believers.

### Religious interests and demands:

*Before:* Christianity has both clerical and worldly interests and demands.

*Afterward:* Christianity only follows clerical interests and demands.

## **What changes concerning state and religion has secular thinking (secularity) brought about?**

### *Changes due to secular thinking about the state:*

The ruling system and its leaders are legitimized not only by God but also have to seek for legitimation from the people. Before, a “chosen one” came into power as a ruler and was legitimized by a religious institution. Now the rulers or army commanders have to receive their legitimation also by the basis, e.g. by concessions of the people etc.

### *Changes due to secular thinking about religion:*

Religion must not have any influence over politics and becomes solely a personal private affair. From now on religious institutions are not more than religious institutions, and they are not political institutions either. Religious leaders no longer play a political leading role. For a political leader, there is no need to be crowned by the church. Political decisions do not have to correspond with religious concepts or dogmas thus making it possible to respond to changing life conditions in a better way.

## **How is the concept of secularity misused?**

### *It is misused by public institutions:*

“Laicism is practiced secularity.”

No, since laicism just means that a state has stipulated the separation of state and religion in its constitution. But this does not necessarily result in a real change in the individual religious thinking of the population. Laicism is simply secularity enacted by the government. What’s missing is the necessary previous rational attitude adjustment of every individual.

### *It is misused by religious institutions:*

“Secular means that one can learn also about other religions during Christian religious education.”

No, since secularity would mean that society does not have any influence over individual religious activity. This means that any religious education is to be replaced by a non-denominational education that deals with ethics.

## Step 4 – Rule of law



The modern rule of law has its origin within the philosophy of the times of enlightenment. The initial breakthrough was made during the French revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**Rule of law** primarily contains four principles:

- Basic rights (basic laws; constitutional laws)
- Separation of powers
- Calculability of governmental actions
- Security mechanisms

### **Basic rights:**

Rule of law is synonymous with “freedom of state.” Every individual possesses basic, freedom, and human rights. An independent authority watches over these exact rights and also over possible denials or violation. This also means that the individual can appeal to this legal authority to enforce his/her own rights. Rule of law does not discriminate or differentiate, and every citizen is equally entitled to make use of it.

(“Equality before the law”)

### **Separation of powers:**

A constitutional state is a state that has its administration and jurisdiction linked with the legislation. The term *separation of powers* means the separation of authorities (legislation, administration, jurisdiction.) Along with that goes the separation of the state authorities in legislative (legislating body), executive (body executing state power), and judiciary (judging authorities.)

### **Calculability of governmental actions:**

A constitutional state has a defined legal system that is formulated in detail. This allows every single citizen to behave and live in conformity with the law and also to file his/her claims and titles. This means that governmental actions are predictable and calculable.

- Legality (governmental actions must not contravene any law)
- Proportionality (every action is to be appropriate, necessary, and adequate.)
- Transitional and adaptive rules for changes due to traditional conditions

### **Security mechanisms:**

*“Checks and balances”*

All three governmental bodies control and check one another at all times, thus preventing misuse and misfeasance of the respective power. If one of these bodies should try to extend its power or to interfere with the powers of the other bodies, these other governmental bodies are in possession of adequate security mechanisms to defend their own interests.

Special attention must always be given to the legislative or the class of “politicians” since they appoint new public officers, judges, federal prosecutors and also decide over institution over legal proceedings etc.

*Here are some examples to illustrate the impact of this new way of thinking:*

Jurisdiction:

*Before:* In an absolutistic state, the jurisdiction is random and arbitrary.

*Afterward:* In a constitutional state, every citizen is protected by an established, objective legal system.

The status as a subject is replaced by the status as a citizen:

*Before:* A subject basically does not have any rights at all that s/he could rely on, but s/he has every obligation.

*Afterward:* A citizen has defined and written rights and obligations.

Basis of legislation:

*Before:* Laws were made and based upon the individual intention of the ruler.

*Afterward:* Laws are made based on the underlying legal system that is anchored within the constitution.

Before the law:

*Before:* Treatment from a legal standpoint depends on the respective social class of the plaintiff and also the social class of the defendant.

*Afterward:* All citizens are equal in the eyes of the law!

**What changes concerning state and religion has thinking in accordance with the rule of law brought about?**

*Changes in thinking about the state:*

Rule of law based on rational and secular laws naturally concludes that every human has to be treated equally before the law.

*Changes in thinking about religion:*

Laws made by humans overrule laws written by the hand of a Prophet: worldly laws take precedence over religious laws.

**How is the concept of rule by law misused?**

*It is misused by public institutions:*

“A police state is based on rule of law”

No, since also the executive body – being one of the three governmental powers – is connected to the two other powers based on checks and balance.

*It is misused by religious institutions:*

“Non secular rule of law is also rule of law!”

No, since when it comes to constitutional principles, it is certainly not enough to declare or execute arbitrary or religious laws having no comprehensible legal basis. Comprehensible laws and regulations based on rationality are an essential basis for the rule of law, and mere religious-based laws do not correspond to that.



## 2.2.4 Step 5 – Democracy

### What does “democracy” mean?



Democracy consists of the Greek words “*demos*” for “people” and “*kratein*” for “ruling.” This characterizes a popular government or respectively a sovereignty of the people.

“Democracy” is the term for a political system where sovereignty is based and relies on the will of the people and where the government is accountable to the people.

### What basic standards does a democracy have to meet?

A democracy is only a democracy if:

- the actual sovereignty lies in the hands of the people
- the rulers (the representatives elected by the people) are elected by the people during free elections.

#### 1) Which basic standards does a democratic government have to meet?

- *Free elections*  
In a democracy, the government is elected by the people via periodic, free, secret, unaltered, and general elections. Furthermore the government can be voted out of office by the people or the representatives; also the government is checked and monitored by the people or its representatives.
- *Democratic constitution*  
The government is also built on the rule of law (all its actions must correspond with the constitutions and the laws) and majority rule (all its actions must follow the will of the majority.)
- *Existence of an opposition*  
Another central characteristic of democracy is a high level of freedom of opinion and also the existence of an opposition.
  - At least two parties, standing for two different positions getting along with each other while considering democratic rules.

#### 2) Which basic standards do democratic elections have to meet?

- *Equality*: Every eligible voter must be allowed to participate in elections and polls and has exactly one vote.
- *Freedom*: No coercion may be applied. To avoid this, elections are often held secretly or anonymously.
- *Eligibility for office*: Every eligible voter should also be allowed to run for office.
- *Alternatives*: A real decision can only be made if there is more than one alternative.
- *Results*: The winner is the one who receives the most democratic votes (*majority rule*) or the one who is declared to be the winner according to the democratic rules of the constitution.

## What is not to be considered a democracy?

It is not a democracy,

- if dictatorship predominates; e.g. tyranny of a dictator, a political party or group.
  - Military dictatorship: domination of the military
  - Dictatorship of the proletariat (communism: dictatorial domination by one single party!)
  - Theocracy: (Greek “theos” = God) a state ruled by God, dominance of a person or a cast of priests chosen by God, literally “Godly dominance” with one worldly and also simultaneously spiritual ruler
- if a ruler decides who stays ruler.
- if there are no free and periodic elections.
- if the political opposition has no access to the media and therefore cannot gain attention.
- if the press cannot report freely.
- if people are arbitrarily excluded from their right to actively or passively participate in elections.
- if there is only one political party.
- if the state is not a constitutional state, e.g. without freedom of speech etc.

A democracy can only function properly if the previous political power system, which was in charge, is changed completely.

It is rather difficult to establish a democratic form of government. Very easily it can be again lost and changed back into one of the mentioned forms of a “pseudo democracy.”

*Here are some examples to illustrate the impact of this new way of thinking:*

### Legitimation:

*Before:* Dictatorship of a worldly ruler, legitimated by God (by the Grace of God)

*Afterward:* Democratic representatives are elected and legitimated by the people.

### How does one get entrusted with running the government of a state?

*Before:* A ruler upon succession or election within oligarchic structures.

*Afterward:* The people’s representatives upon elections.

### Structures of the society:

*Before:* Ruler, aristocracy and subjects.

*Afterward:* Citizens and civil representatives.

### Who is allowed to rule?

*Before:* The ruler must descend from a noble bloodline.

*Afterward:* Anyone – meeting certain criteria – can become a civil representative.

### Time of government:

*Before:* A ruler reigns until his/her own death.

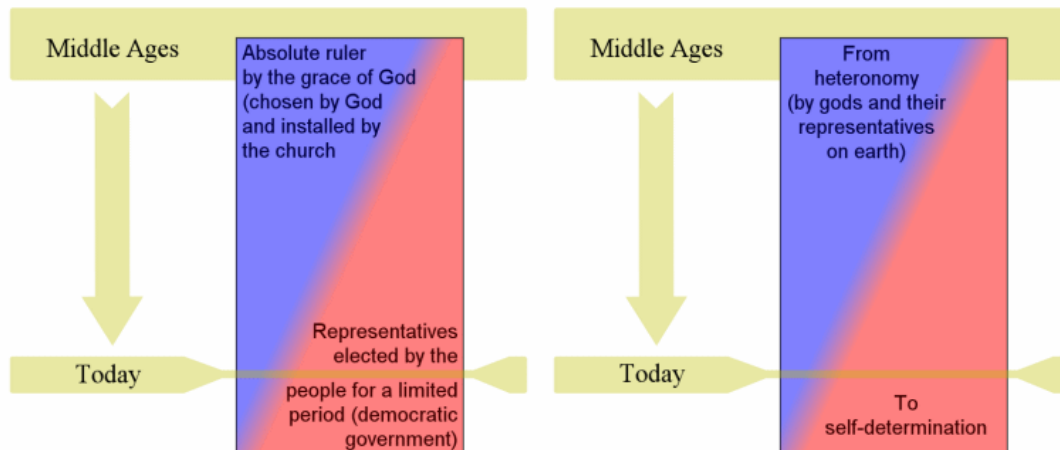
*Afterward:* Civil representatives get elected for a certain period of time and can be re-elected by the people.

### Constitution:

*Before:* Every European national state has a constitution since the formation of the state. The rule of the state (separation of powers) has nearly functioned; the leadership still lies firmly in the hands of the nobility.

*Afterward:* Only a democratic constitution allows a democratic government.

## Development from the Middle Ages until today



### What changes concerning state and religion has democratic thinking brought about?

*Changes due to democratic thinking about the state:*

The nation takes its destiny into its own hands.

*Changes due to democratic thinking about religion:*

Within a democracy, followers of recognized religions are treated equally.

### How is the concept of democracy misused?

*Asserted by public institutions:*

“Democracy controlled by the state is also democracy.”

No, literally only a state controlled by the people is a democracy.

“For safety reasons a democracy fighting an outside enemy must be controlled solely by the ruling elite.”

This is the most common form of undermining or terminating democracy. Democracy can overcome an external enemy but not an enemy who comes from the inside.

*Asserted by public institutions:*

“The election of a pope by cardinals or the election of a caliph (political and religious representative of Mohammed) by the people, who then rules absolutely, is democracy.”

No, this does not meet the criteria of a democratic election already described in the text above.

## 2.2.5 Step 6 – Human rights



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights stands for the largest achievement of human development since, for the first time, equal rights should apply to all human beings in the world!

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

Article 1 of the UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

For all 30 articles and the preamble passed by the UNO on December 10<sup>th</sup> in 1948, visit:

<http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/ger.htm> link? <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

The three pillars of human rights:

- **Freedom:** All human beings have the freedom of thought, conscience, religion, press, and opinion that are all protected by the human rights.
- **Equality:** All human beings are equal before the law and are entitled to protection without distinction. This means that there must not be any discrimination regarding race, skin color, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social background, wealth, birth or position. Everyone can rely on the protection against any form of discrimination, also including full equality of man and woman.
- **Solidarity:** All human beings also have economical and social rights, e.g. the right to social security, fair remuneration, an adequate life standard, physical health and the right to access education, which is an integral element of the human-rights system.

These rights can be specified in five categories: political, civil, economical, social, and cultural human rights.

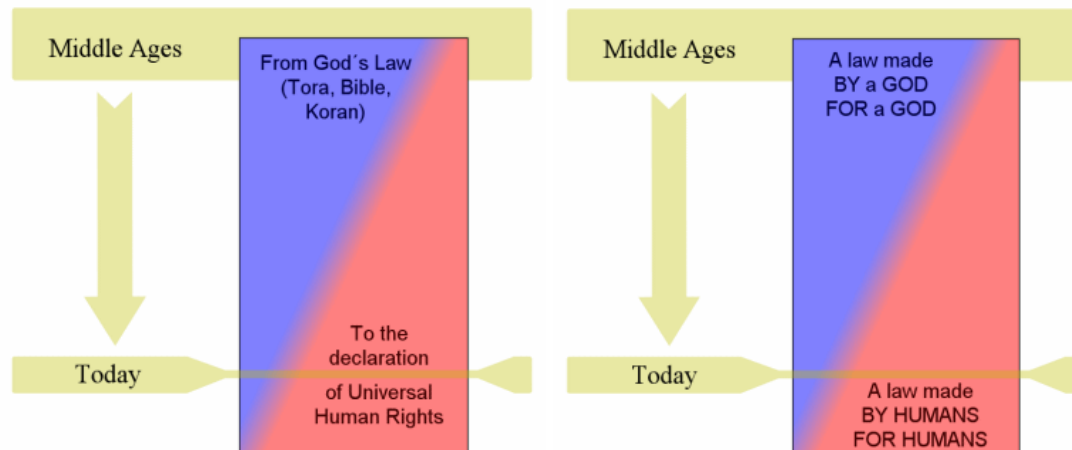
Human rights are only limited by the rights and the freedom of other individuals and by the requirements of morality, public order and general welfare in a democratic society. (Art. 29 UDHR.)

The human rights of others must be respected, not just tolerated. Individual human rights must not be used to violate other human rights (Art. 30 UDHR.)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is the international community’s most fundamental corpus of basic rights and – as stated in the preamble – “a common standard of achievement for all people and all nations.”

With this declaration the circle, which began with humanistic thinking and was the first step on the way to a human-oriented international system, closes. Within this new system, a human being does not allow governmental or religious institutions to limit his or her actions.

## Development from the Middle Ages until today



The democratic view of the world culminated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that should apply to all human beings on earth. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an ideal law made *by* human beings *for* human beings, which is the main difference when compared to God-given laws like the Torah, Bible or Koran where the laws always come from God.

The concept of human rights is based on the fact that all humans have the same rights, solely because they are human beings, and that they are all entitled to these rights just because of their human nature; these rights are universal, imprescriptible and indivisible.

*Here are some examples to illustrate the impact of this new way of thinking:*

### Right to equality (Article 2):

*Before:* Discrimination due to different religions, races, skin colors, genders, positions and political opinions.

*Afterward:* No discrimination due to different religions, races, skin colors, genders, positions and political opinions.

### Right to “free” marriage (Article 16):

*Before:* A man and a woman with different religious beliefs and/or belonging to a different race were not allowed to marry. Divorce was all but impossible.

*Afterward:* Marriageable women and men have the right to get married and start a family regardless their race, nationality or religion. They both have equal rights during the wedding, the marriage and also during a possible divorce. A marriage can only be entered into if both wife and husband agree by mutual consent and without reservations.

### Freedom of religion: (Article 18):

*Before:* Changing one's own religion was nearly impossible and often resulted in the death penalty.

*Afterward:* Freedom of religion means to be able to freely choose and change one's religious beliefs.

### Right to education (Article 26):

*Before:* Education is met with reservation – it diminishes godliness and makes it harder to dominate people.

*Afterward:* Everyone has the right to education. Basic education is obligatory and free of charge. Technical colleges, vocational schools, and universities must be open to everybody according to their skills and abilities. Education must be geared toward the full development of the person and the strengthening of respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

## What changes has the acknowledgement of human rights brought about?

*Changes in thinking about the state:*

Implemented human rights exempt all citizens from the arbitrariness of governmental institutions.

*Changes in thinking about religion:*

Implemented human rights exempt all citizens from the arbitrariness of religious institutions.

### **How are some parts of the human rights disregarded or misused?**

*They are disregarded and misused by public institutions:*

“Under the pretext of maintaining the state’s security, some human rights have to be overruled.”

(E.g. article 5 (article against torture) was overruled in Guantanamo during the “war against terror”)

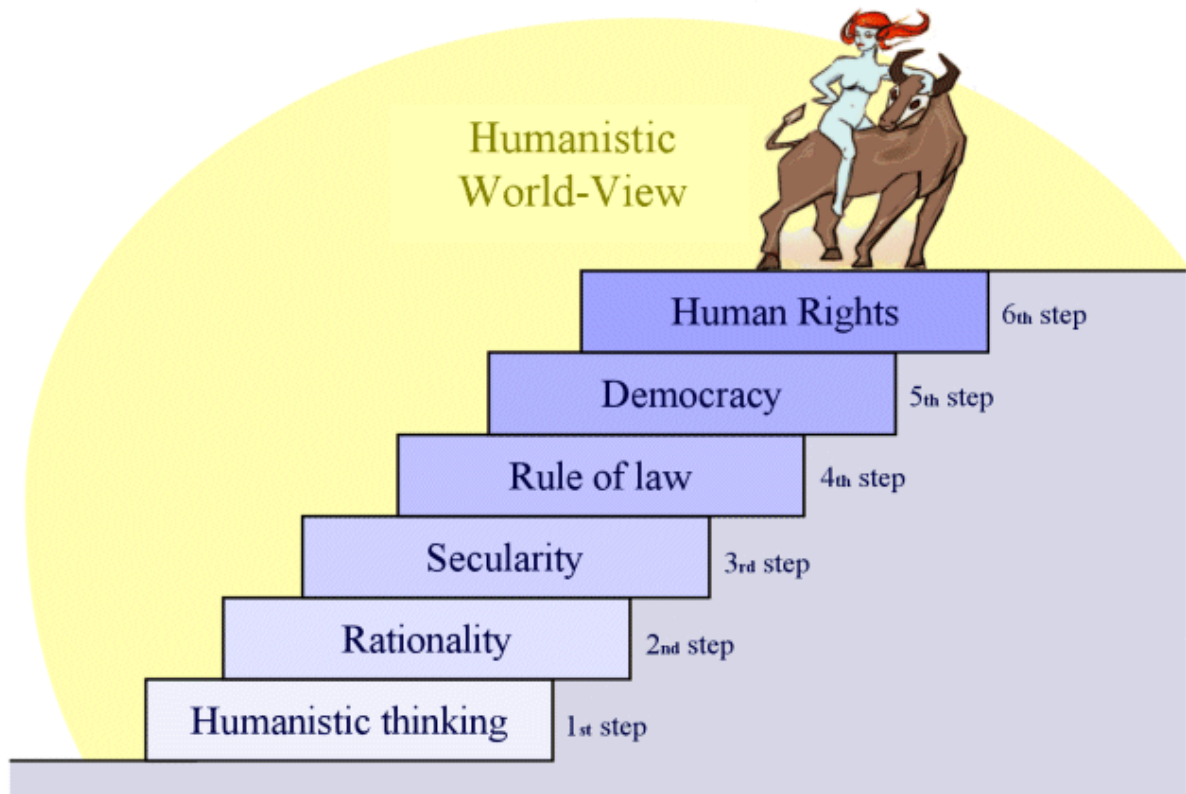
No, because even during times of war the Geneva Convention applies, specifically prohibiting torture.

*They are disregarded and misused by religious institutions:*

“Freedom of religion means that it is not allowed to say anything bad about religion!”

No, constricting any other fundamental freedom under the pretext of freedom of religion must be avoided. One example would be to not criticize forced marriage or corporal punishment of women based on religious rules because of misinterpreting freedom of religion. Every single day the freedom of opinion regarding religious matters is restricted throughout the world – a fact that violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

## 2.3 A gradual buildup



While the description of the individual values was our focus until this point, their gradual buildup will now be illustrated.

Our modern humanistic world-view evolved over six steps, which at the same time represent the main values from which all the other European values can be derived. It is important to understand that the individual steps are based upon each other – no step could possibly have developed without the previous ones.



According to the saga, the King's daughter Europa was abducted and seduced by the Greek God Zeus who had taken on the shape of a bull.

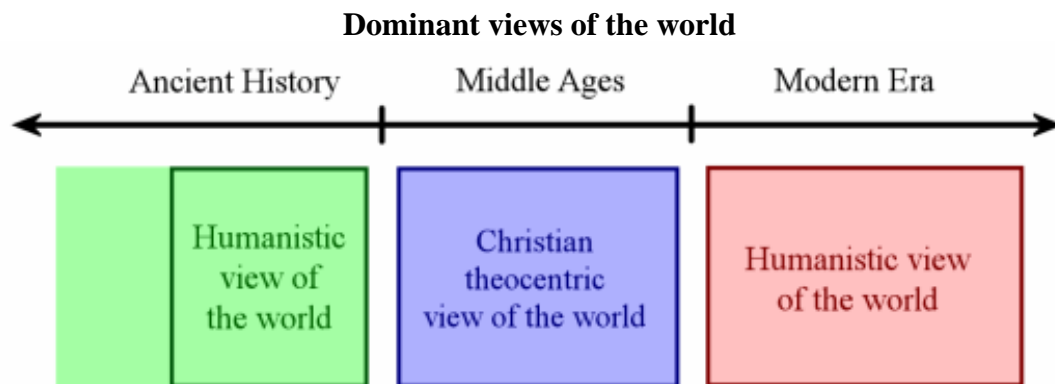
Since that time the roles have changed. Europa has turned into a knowledgeable, independent and free woman who has learned to tame the “godly” bull.

Free, knowledgeable and independent human beings and especially “free, knowledgeable and independent women” are a visible sign of a humanistic culture.

***Explanation of how the individual steps causally build upon one another:***

1<sup>st</sup> step - Humanistic thinking:

Humanistic thinking was the first step from the theocentric view of the world during the Middle Ages toward the humanistic world-view of the modern era.



All European values have their roots within the idea of the humanistic world-view coming from Greek and Roman antiquity. Humanistic thinking was the beginning of the countermovement against the theocentric world-view (all *from* one God, all *for* one God) during the Middle Ages. Part of this theocentric view was the nothingness of every human when compared to God's perfection, since apparently it focused more on human inadequacy. Also, human abilities, such as critical thinking, were considered inadequate and arrogant in contrast to God's omniscience.

**Humanistic Thinking** means to put the main focus on human beings and their actions. This includes a new intellectual attitude, which assumes that every human being (with all his/her abilities) gain an independent quality when compared to God's almightiness.

2<sup>nd</sup> step - Rationality:

For the first time, the ability of using human rationality for making decisions can be used in addition to religious belief.

**Rationality** evolves as the second step, and reason applied by human beings is finally accepted as a mean within every decision-making process. Thus, reason and rationality supersede religious belief. Without humanism, human rationality could not have existed next to the endless and inscrutable wisdom of God that was the paramount principle for over a thousand years during the Middle Ages.

It is important to understand that this concept was only made possible due to the appreciation of human abilities established in humanistic thinking. Until then, all human abilities had been despised, thus making it all but impossible to use human rationality as a mean for any decision-making process. This explains why rationality could only develop on the basis of humanistic thinking.

3<sup>rd</sup> step - Secularity:

In the past nearly all aspects of life had been controlled by religion. But since rational and logic thinking exceedingly disproved dogmatic religious thinking, the impact religion had on worldly matters continuously decreased until the authorities of religion and politics had again been separated. Secularity had been implemented as the third step. From then on, politics had to follow rationality and religion turned into a private affair.

Only because of rational thinking could *dogmatic* religious rules be confronted by *reasonable* rules which arose from logic conclusions. This second possibility did not exist until the appreciation of human rationality. This possibility of using *rational* conclusions for the basis of decisions and laws was expressed by the principle of secularity. Secularity means to separate secularistic developments



(politics) from otherworldly developments (religion) within any thinking. From now on, at least politics must follow rationality and reason. Religious dogmas must not interfere with political decisions serving the commonweal.

Rationality brought about a process of decision making that involves reason for all matters in this world (politics, science.) After a time where religion controlled all aspects of people's lives, here religion became a private matter. For all otherworldly matters, belief (religion) remained the basic principle for any decision making process. Secularity means that this very step was also implemented and adopted within the political system.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> step – Rule of law:

Only implemented secularity lead to the fourth step: **rule of law**. The result was the recognition of basic laws and constitutions made by human beings and not made by God himself or initiated because of the “grace of God.” Without secularity, no significant laws would exist which were and not made by God or initiated because of the “grace of God.”

Only when an individual can separate politics and religion in his/her mind will s/he be able to accept the secular principle of the rule of state. This is the fundament of secular legislation and constitution. Genuine rule of state as mentioned above can only evolve on the basis of secularity. In religious-political systems, the distinguishing features such as separation of powers can never be achieved.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> step – Democracy:

The resulting basic rights of an individual and also the implementation of the separation of powers together form the basis for citizens who dare to demand rights of co-determination from his/her sovereign. The fifth step develops: **democracy**.

Without the rule of state, there would be no basis for democratic principles. Democratic principles can only be allowed, demanded and implemented as long as secular and constitutional principles are accepted in general. On the basis of fundamental secular laws and constitutions, democracy develops.

#### 6<sup>th</sup> step – Human Rights:

The demand to implement this sixth and final step for universal human rights is only accommodated in a well functioning democracy. The Charter of Human Rights defined by the UNO only becomes an eligible good through human understanding for the reasonableness of democracy and the implementation of basic social values for the entire society.

Hardly anyone living under any other form of government than democracy would follow universal human rights. Besides that, only citizens living in a well functioning democracy can even think about demanding an implementation of universal human rights.

The fact that respect for and protection of human rights and well-functioning and efficient constitutional structures are interdependent often remains unnoticed.

The democratic world-view culminated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which would apply to all human beings on earth.

#### **Could any of these steps have possibly developed without the preceding one?**

No, each step evolved on the basis of the previous one! Every previous step was the cause or also the basis for the following one! By attentively reading and critically questioning the previous text, this will become apparent to every critical reader.

#### **How did a humanistic conception of the world become possible at all?**

Each step on the way to today's Europe was accompanied and developed by innovative thinking, which apparently is a human quality. Modern brain research proves the following: *Only if something is imaginable is it also feasible.*

These developments occurred only because they were imaginable for many beings. Europe's history – especially since 1945 – is the evidence that a well functioning society, on the basis of European values, is not only possible, but desirable.

The following dialogue is to illustrate how the new way of thinking changed the point of view of humans regarding their living environment. A holds the old and B holds the new way of thinking, which are (time lapsed) placed adjacently here.

A: Everything is God given, controlled and defined by God!

B: A human being can develop independently from his or her gods! One's thinking and acting defines his/her own world. (humanistic thinking)

A: Man and all animals were created during a unique act of creation by God.

B: We can prove that humans and animals result from evolution over millions of years (rationality)

A: Respect God's Laws since his Godly power is omnipresent.

B: Political and religious powers have to be clearly separated.

A: God created the social classes! There are sovereigns with rights and servants with duties.

B: Fair practice of duties and rights for all humans. (Rule of state)

A: The sovereign and Pope define what is best for the people.

B: The government elected by the people has the power to decide what is best for the voters! (Democracy)

B: What all humans really need is the doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church!

B: What all humans really need is universal rights for freedom and equality!

### ***What if a certain value disappears suddenly?***

*Nowadays all six steps are being taken for granted.*

One is only able to realize the value of freedom, or of a close person, if he is not there anymore.

**Without human rights**, we would solely have the right to vote and also natural rights (natural rights = right to life, personal freedom, physical inviolability etc.) Freedom of thought, conscience, religion, press and opinion as well as the protection against any form of discrimination, the right for education, etc. were achieved by a normal citizen only after the implementation of the universal human rights.

Without democracy, we would all have natural rights but no right of co-determination. The control of our destiny would come from someone else.

Without the rule of state, we would have no natural rights; the sovereign could arbitrarily decide about or life and death, our personal freedom, etc.

**Without secularity**, we would also have to strictly follow religious laws in addition to the governmental laws.

**Without rationality**, we would not have any means to shape our own lives in a self-dependent way.

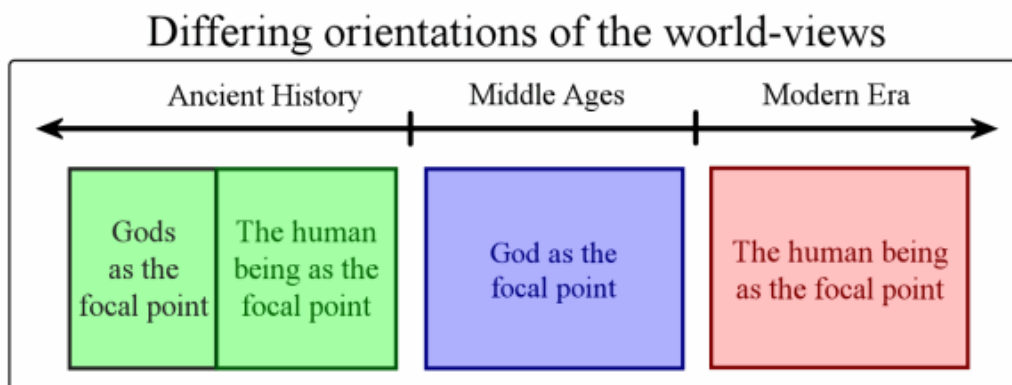
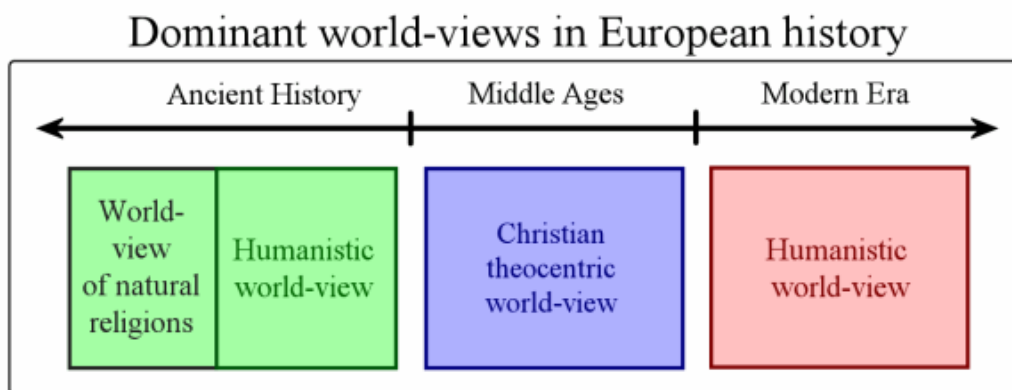
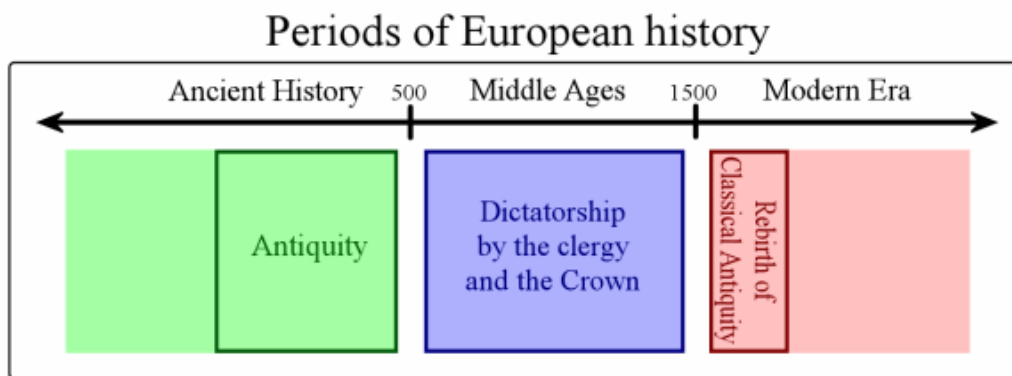
Without humanistic thinking, we would not exist as independent human individuals in the first place. We would still be in the theocentric world-view of the Middle Ages.

# History Repeats Itself

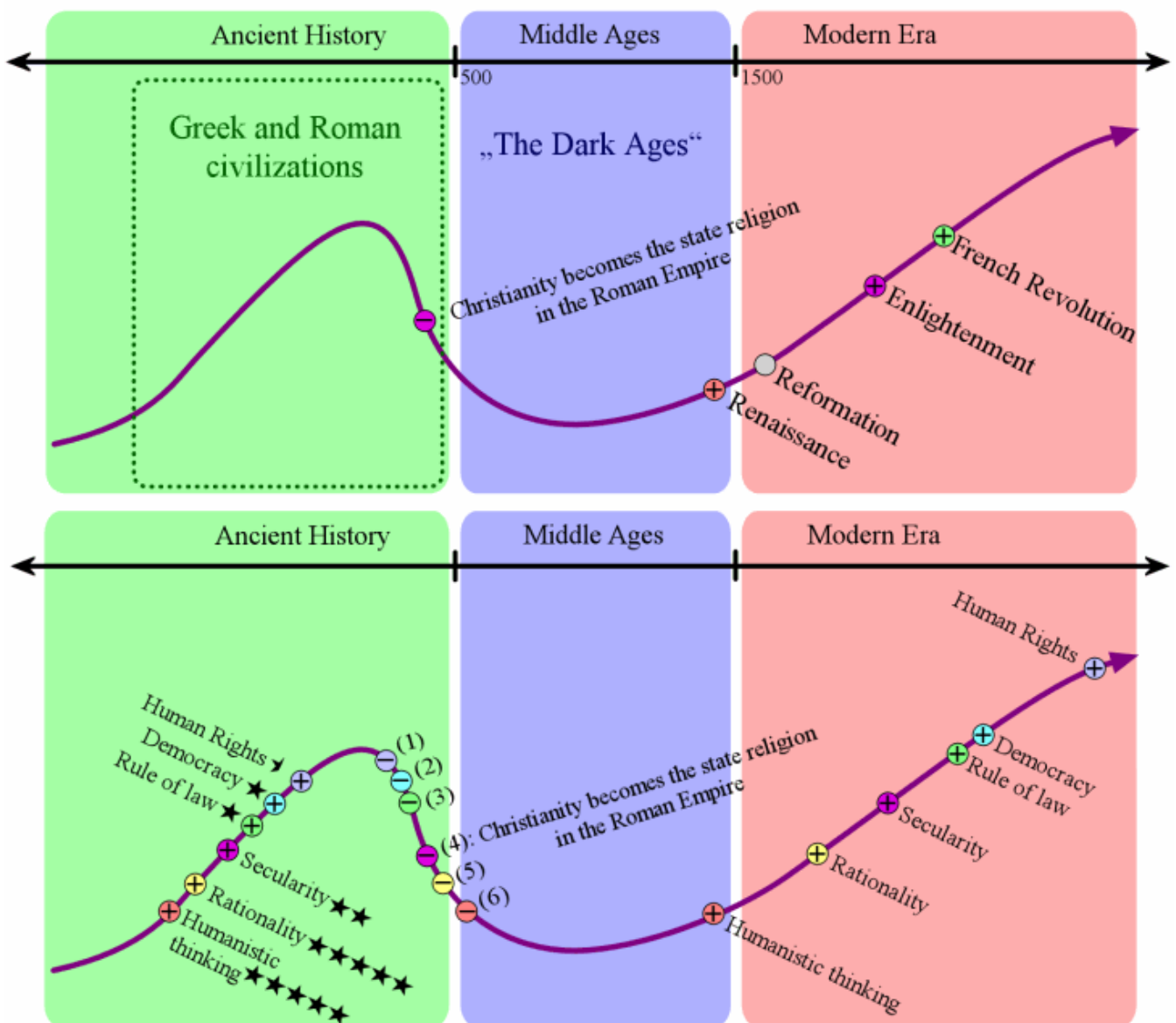
In the preceding chapters, the individual European values were defined and their gradual history development was explained. Now, they will be presented within a somewhat broader historical context. Important social developments and other relevant milestones are stated, so that the European values can be understood and arranged within the complex history of Europe.

The following explanations and diagrams are based on the following time scale:

- Ancient history (3,500 B.C.E. - 500 C.E.)
- Antiquity (800 B.C.E. – 500 C.E.)
- Middle Ages (500 C.E. – 1500 C.E.)
- Modern Era (1500 C.E.– today)



## Humanistic development in Europe



This diagram illustrates the rise and fall of humanistic and/or European values on the basis of the existence or non-existence of the “6 steps to a humanistic society.”

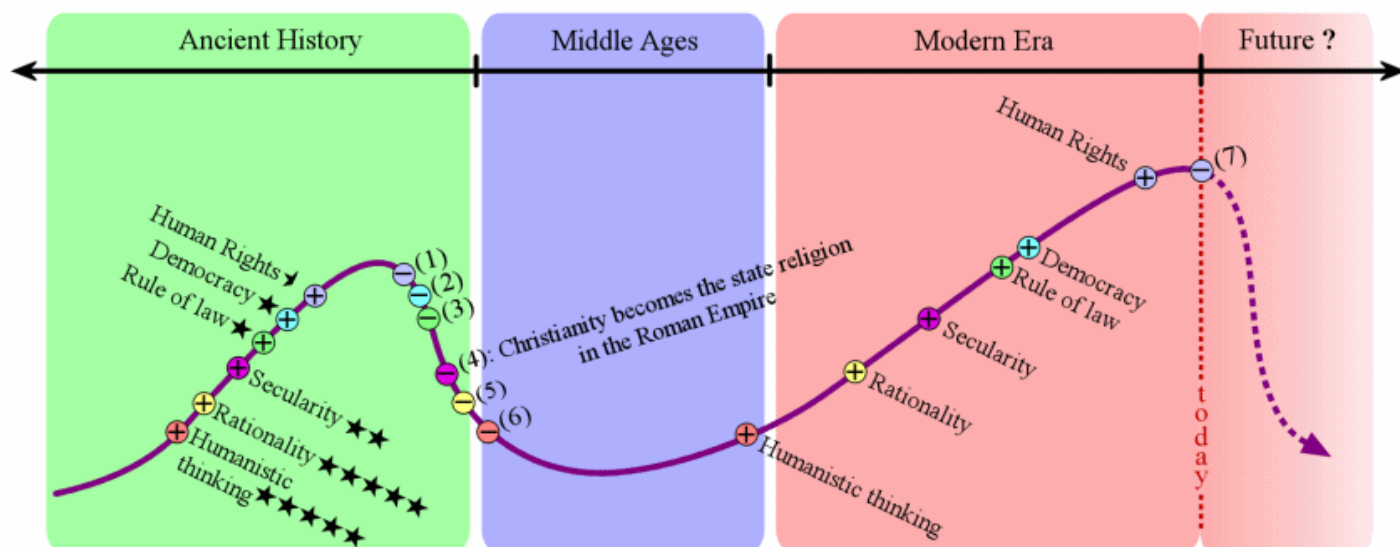
With special consideration of these developments and events:

- Greek Antiquity (800 – 146 B.C.E.)
- Roman Antiquity (509 B.C.E. – 500 C.E.)
- Christianity becomes the state religion in the Roman Empire (380 C.E.)<sup>[14]</sup>
- Renaissance (1450 C.E. – 1600 C.E.)
- Reformation (1517 C.E. – 1600 C.E.)
- Enlightenment (1600 C.E. – 1800 C.E.)
- French Revolution (1789 C.E.)

**Legend for the stars in the “Ancient History” area:**

The number of stars shows in which measure the humanistic principles found entrance into the society of the antiquity. The evaluation goes from six stars for the full implementation of the new way of thinking to one star for a very limited implementation.

## How did the development of a humanistic world-view in Europe take place twice historically?



The fall of the Roman Empire and thus the fall of the ancient civilization led to the following developments:

- (1): The first feeble attempts at human rights disintegrate with the Roman Republic.
- (2): The former Republic turns into the Roman Empire – and becomes a dictatorship.
- (3): Rule of law loses ground as the Republic gets cut down piece by piece. The laws become more arbitrary.
- (4): 380 C.E.: The Roman Empire and Christianity merge - Christianity becomes the Roman Catholic state church. The separation of politics and religion ends.
- (5): Faith is again raised above reason.
- (6): From 500 C.E.: The Christian theocentric world-view replaces the Humanist world-view of Antiquity. God (no longer the human being) becomes once again the focal point of all thought and action!

### (7) Human Rights: **Where do we stand today?**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created to ensure the rights of every human being when dealing with governmental and religious institutions. Still religious institutions curtail other basic human rights like the freedom of opinion, all under the cover of religious freedom. Every single day, the freedom of opinion gets curtailed, especially when it pertains to religious matters in Europe – a fact clearly violating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Already the freedom of opinion has been undermined in a way, making it nearly impossible to say something humorous (harmless Mohammed cartoons) or critical (documentation) about Islam in Europe.

*Why did the humanistic conception of the world of the antiquity fall apart?*

During antiquity both education and science were not yet in a position to disprove the gods, therefore the expression of secularity was weak. The fact that secularity was not developed strongly enough, was the reason Christianity could become the religion of state in the Roman Empire.

Secularity got assigned only two STARS, because it was the weak spot in the gradual path to a humanistic society. While rule of law, democracy and human rights shortly appeared for the first time, they fell aside with the fall of secularism! Shortly afterwards the 2nd step of development (rationality) and the 1st step of development (humanism) were quickly turned into their opposites!

All 6 steps ended up turned upside down and gave way to the Christian-theocentric view of the world!

Not until the rebirth of antiquity, i.e. the recent emergence of humanistic ideas and rationality, people in Europe were given a second chance in order to make it better this time!

## Humanistic development of Antiquity and the Modern Era by comparison

### Historical evidence about the emergence of the 6 stages:

	Antiquity:	Modern Era:
Human Rights:	Roots of the Human Rights in Athenian Democracy and in Roman Law <sup>[1]</sup>	Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 <sup>[2]</sup>
Democracy:	First democracies of the Antiquity: Athenian Democracy 461 – 322 B.C.E. Roman Republic 509 – 27 B.C.E. <sup>[3]</sup>	First democracies of the Modern Era: U.S.A. 1787 Poland, France 1791 <sup>[4]</sup>
Rule of law:	First rule of law led to Athenian Democracy and then was further developed into “Roman Law,” from 450 B.C.E. <sup>[5]</sup>	Starting from 1689 (Bill Of Rights,) rule of law remained the principal demand of the French Revolution and led to the first constitutions: U.S.A. 1787, Poland 1791 <sup>[6]</sup>
Secularity:	The 5 <sup>th</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E. of ancient Greece are considered as the classical period of first secularization (to 380 C.E) <sup>[7]</sup>	In Europe, secularization began with the Enlightenment and became one of the principal demands of the French Revolution. <sup>[8]</sup>
Rationality:	Starting from 600 B.C.E. on: Thales of Miletus was considered as the first philosopher and as the founder of philosophy and science in general. <sup>[9]</sup>	Starting from 1640 on: classical rationalism is usually considered to have begun with René Descartes. <sup>[10]</sup>
Humanistic thinking:	Ancient humanism (Greeks, Romans) starting from 600 B.C.E. – 500 C.E. The transition from theocentrism to anthropocentrism took place for the first time already in the Antiquity and was introduced by the Greek philosopher Thales of Miletus in 600 B.C.E. <sup>[11]</sup>	Renaissance-Humanism starting from 1450 until today. <sup>[12]</sup>

## 2.4 What one should know about ancient democracy and the Middle Ages?

### What one should know about ancient democracy?

The idea of democracy has its origin in ancient Greece. The first realization of a democracy in human history was the ancient Athenian Democracy.

In Greek antiquity, democracy was defined as the direct participation of the people in the politics of their city states (*polis*.) Contrary systems were ruling systems like oligarchy (the ruling of a few), monarchy (ruling of single individual) and aristocracy (ruling of the elite.)

*There is still one important difference to how we see democracy today:*

In ancient times, *people* was understood as a very narrowly defined term, giving the right of political participation only to a certain group of citizens: only free male citizen were allowed to participate within a decision-making process; the majority of the inhabitants – women, semi-slaves and slaves etc. – were excluded from participation within these processes.

This form of democracy, allowing only some adult male citizen to directly participate in politics, was considered the only possible form of democracy for a long time.

Also the Roman republic implemented a political system with rudimentary democratic elements based on the idea of equality of the “free” during elections for republican positions. Even though the oligarchic principle was all-dominant (since the power was held by the aristocratic members of the Roman senate) there was still some sort of co-determination when it came to ruling, like the people’s tribunes defending the simple people within the senate. The implementation of an early form of a constitutional state by applying Roman law was of great historical significance. These laws were administered on the basis of a proceeding in written form and not by the powerful positions of the involved parties.

### What one should know about the Middle Ages?

A society arranged in social classes and having a religious Christian mind-set in literature, arts, and science characterized the Middle Ages. This mind-set led to a Europe where a “One-God-Belief” was established for the first time, implementing also a rather consistent theocentric world-view. Nothing (science,...) and no one (subjects,...) were allowed to deviate from this view.

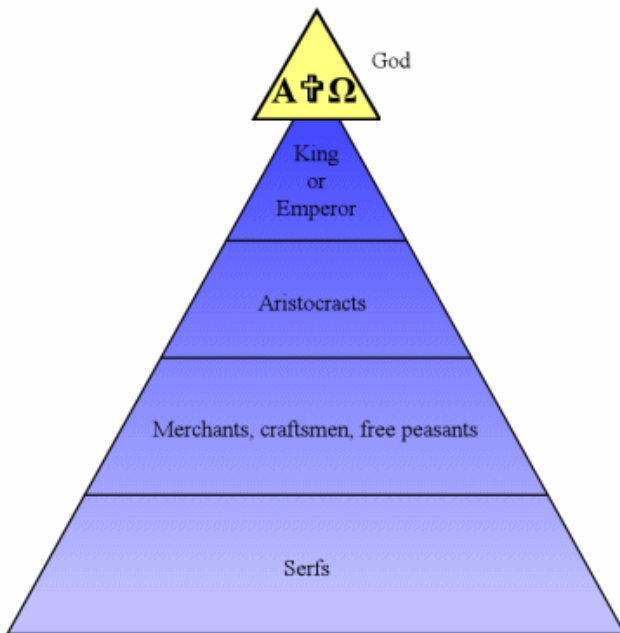
God was at the heart of all thought and action. Since no one had personal contact with this God, it was rather the secular and religious representatives of God on earth, which substituted for the self-responsibility of its citizens, already achieved by Greeks and Romans, with secular and religious submission.

In the Middle Ages, all law and order was derived from God. God was everything and the human being was only his servant. This god-given order was “preserved” in disregard of all current human rights in Europe by an absolute ruler “by the grace of God,” and also by an absolutistic clergy, which embodied God’s representative on earth!

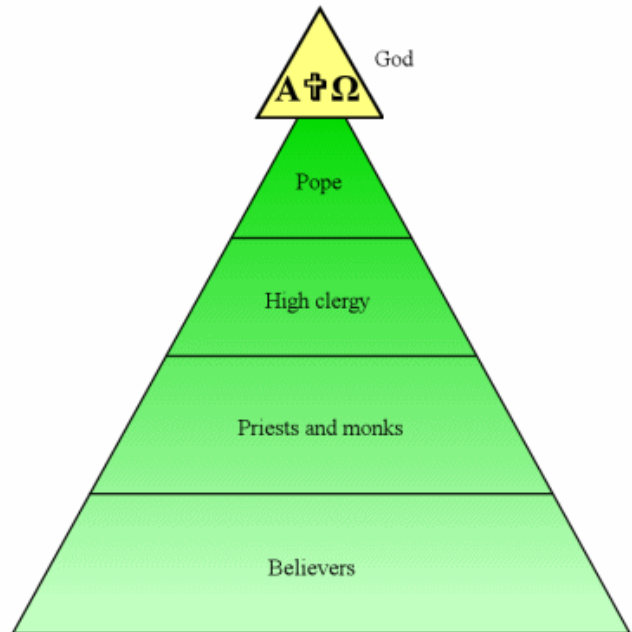


## Worldly & religious pyramids of power

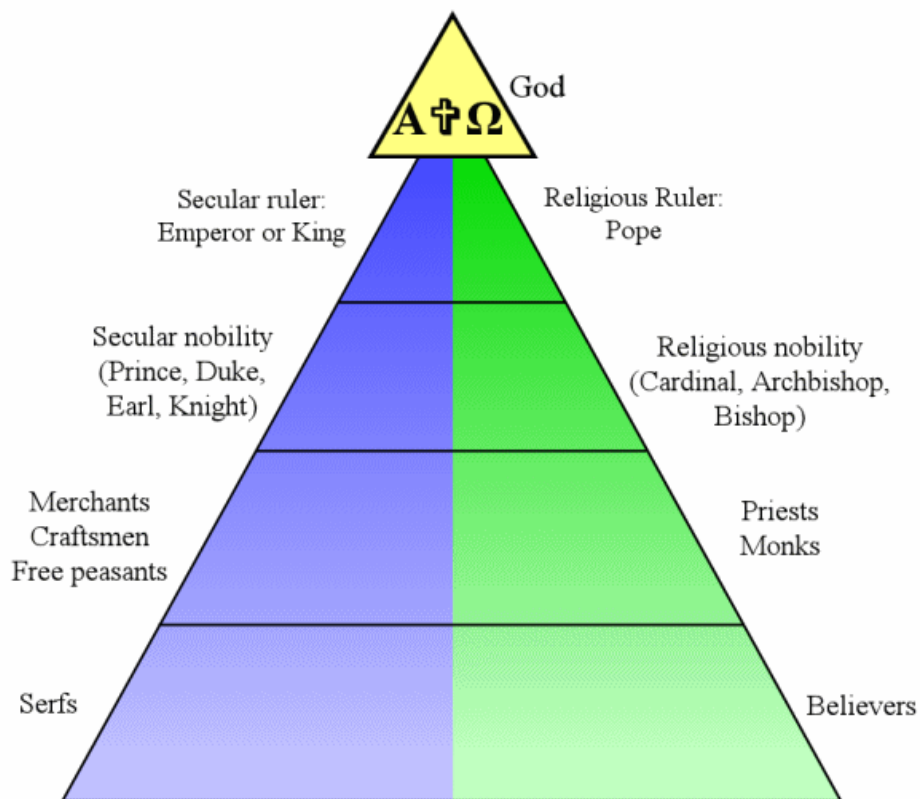
Medieval social structure  
(estates of the realm)



Christian order



Medieval social structure  
(Worldly and Christian order determined by God)



The end of the Middle Ages was ushered by the Renaissance – the rebirth of the antiquity; thus by the reconsideration of the values of the antiquity.

## 2.5 How can a change in world-view occur?

### **A shift from the humanistic world-view of Antiquity to the Christian-theocentric world-view of the Middle Ages**

The era shaped by the Greeks and Romans comes to an end – the Middle Ages close in over Europe.

- Christianity first conquered the Roman Empire and then – step by step – also the rest of Europe. In 380 C.E. it becomes the Roman state religion; in 391 C.E. heathen cults are banned (as a monotheistic religion, no other Gods can be tolerated.) Thus until 600 C.E., Europe was converted to Christianity mainly by Irish missionaries. Around the year 500 C.E., under King Chlodwig I – who had converted to Christianity with his entire people – the rise of the Frankish kingdom begins. This kingdom soon based its domination in western and central Europe on the vestiges of the Western Roman Empire and the empires of the Germanic clans. This development reached its peak with the coronation of King Charlemagne. He was crowned Roman emperor by the pope on Christmas day in 800 C.E.
- The Roman Empire separates into a Western and Eastern Roman Empire (395 C.E.) The Western Roman Empire fell apart in 476 C.E., whereas the Eastern Roman Empire continued to exist until 1453 C.E.
- The Migration period (375 – 568 C.E.) accelerated the fall of the Western Roman Empire and therefore the end of antiquity. After having guaranteed peace, law and order within the borders of the empire, the power of Rome vanishes as a result of the attacks of the Germanic clans and the feared Huns.
- During the 5<sup>th</sup> century C.E., Rome was pillaged several times and the last Roman emperor was deposed in 476 C.E.
- In the early 7<sup>th</sup> century a new power develops in the Orient breaking with the view of antiquity: Islam. Arabic expansion begins in 632 C.E.
- Christian belief puts strict limits to science and controls all aspects of life.
- The change from antiquity to the Middle Ages is marked by a philosophical paradigm shift replacing the antiquity's thinking with Christian thinking. In 529 C.E., the Platonic Academy in Athens is closed down and the first Christian monastery is founded. The "Platonic" time of antiquity was replaced with Christianity.
- Since education only applies to the social elites, the knowledge of antiquity gets lost rapidly. Over the centuries of the Middle Ages, it keeps a place in books but not in the minds of the people.

## **Shift from the christian-theocentric world-view of the Middle Ages to the humanistic world-view of the Modern Era**

A modern era begins – the Modern Era dawns!

- Columbus discovers America (1492 AD.)
- The Ottomans conquer Constantinople (1453 C.E.) The Eastern Roman Empire falls, many Greek scholars flee to Western Europe and helped humanism to its height.
- Humanism counters medieval scholasticism. Scholasticism defines the totality of medieval theology and philosophy, meaning in a narrow sense all attempts to explain the church's dogmas of Catholicism with rational philosophical means. During the Middle Ages, rational thinking was only tolerated by the church as long as it did not interfere with catholic dogmas. Now again there is space for individual and humanistic thinking based on rationality. Whereas Christian thinking during the Middle Ages replaced the thinking of antiquity, it now happened the other way around.
- The new humanistic way of thinking and the "German" Luther Bible spread rather fast because of the invention of the letterpress printing (1450 C.E.)
- Luther's Theses initiated a reform of Catholicism (1517 C.E.)
- The cultural-historical era of the Renaissance (rebirth of the ideals of antiquity) begins.
- The geocentric view (Ptolemy: Earth marks the center of the universe and everything turns around the Earth) is being replaced by the heliocentric view (Nikolaus Copernicus: Earth turns around the sun.) This change in the astronomical view of the world ushers the end of the ideological monopoly that the Church held during the Middle Ages. The monopoly of defining the world gets transferred step by step from the Church (churchly predetermined thinking and dogmatic domination of the Christian clergy) to the natural sciences.
- A shift within the general principle takes place: from the Christian thinking of the Middle Ages to the humanistic world-view.

### **What are the most important differences between the above mentioned views?**


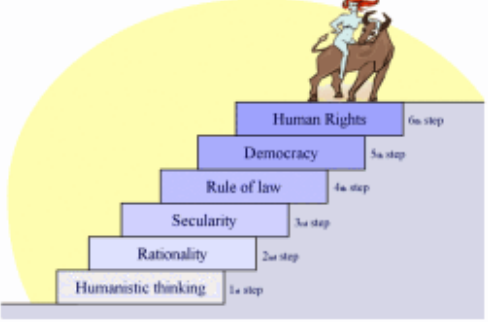
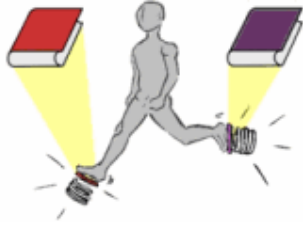






The main difference consists of whether a conception of the world is shaped by a God or by humans. A world-view in which God is the focal point of thought and action is handed down and shaped by this God. This same God also defines his worldly and spiritual representatives on earth. These are the ones to govern and change the world according to God's will.

A view of the world, which moves humans into center stage and was shaped by humans, is the humanistic world-view. It is humane, because changes in life – in the public as well as in the private area – are dealt with by the people, thanks to their reason.

### 3 Developmental steps from the Middle Ages until today

*These 6 steps led to:*

a.) Change from an **inhumane conception of the world** to a **human conception of the world**

<b>Inhumane world-view</b> 		<b>Humane world-view</b> 
<p>God is crucial! The well-being of God is at the center of human action and thought.</p>	<p><b>Humanistic thinking</b></p> 	<p>The human being is crucial! The well-being of humans is at the center of human action and thought.</p>
<p>Faith is the ultimate source of decision.</p>	<p><b>Reason</b></p> 	<p>Reason becomes the ultimate source of decision.</p>
<p>Church and king reign together.</p>	<p><b>Secularity</b></p> 	<p>Separating the powers of everything divine (for the hereafter) from everything human (for the here and now)</p>
<p>Arbitrary laws by the king and inhumane laws by the terrestrial representatives of God</p>	<p><b>Rule of law</b></p> 	<p>Justice through human-made, secular basic law and constitution</p>
<p>Dictatorship by Pope and King</p>	<p><b>Democracy</b></p> 	<p>Representatives of the people periodically elected by the people!</p>
<p>The holy teachings of Catholicism must be valid for all humans.</p>	<p><b>Human rights</b></p> 	<p>One universal law by people for people!</p>

## b.) Change in the relationship with national and religious institutions

On the one hand, this means a shift from a “me” being a servant of the state to the state being my servant in public matters. On the other hand, it also means a shift from a “me” being a servant of the church to religion being *my* supporter in private aspects of life.



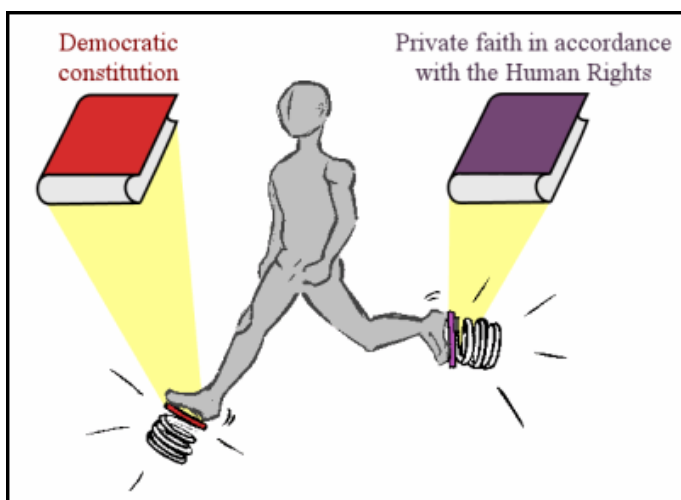
History of mankind is a history of suppression by religious and governmental institutions, which prohibited the individual development of their inferiors.

←*Illustration: State and religion with their limiting dogmas and totalitarian demands are the burden of the unfree subject.*

In previous times one was servant to the state and servant to religion. With the implementation of the European values, the state became the servant, and religion became a helper. Today, the state is a helper in public matters and religion is a helper in private matters.


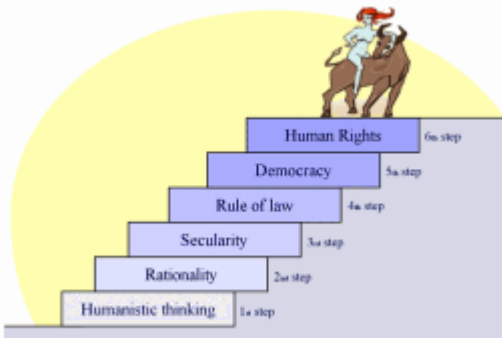







Illustration: → *“Freedom” describes a citizen being freed of governmental and religious institutions.*

An agreement on equal terms was only achieved after the implementation of the six Fundamental European Values.



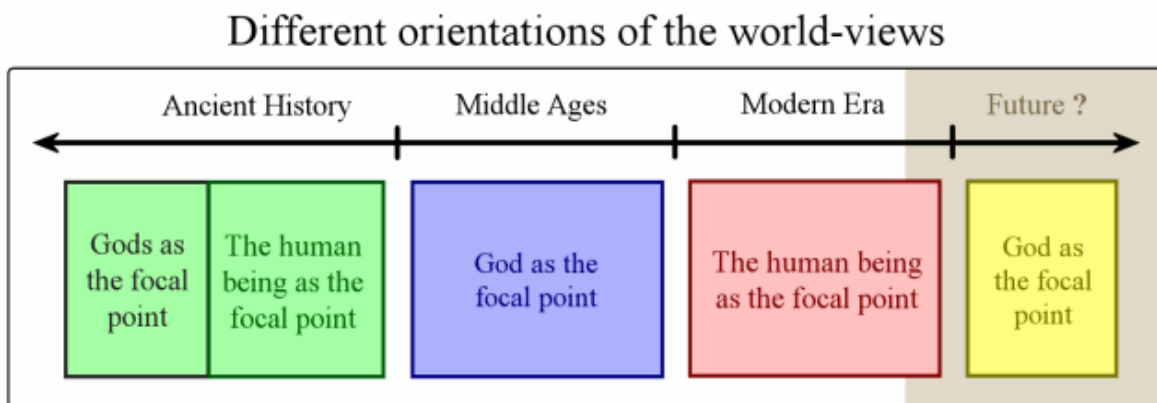
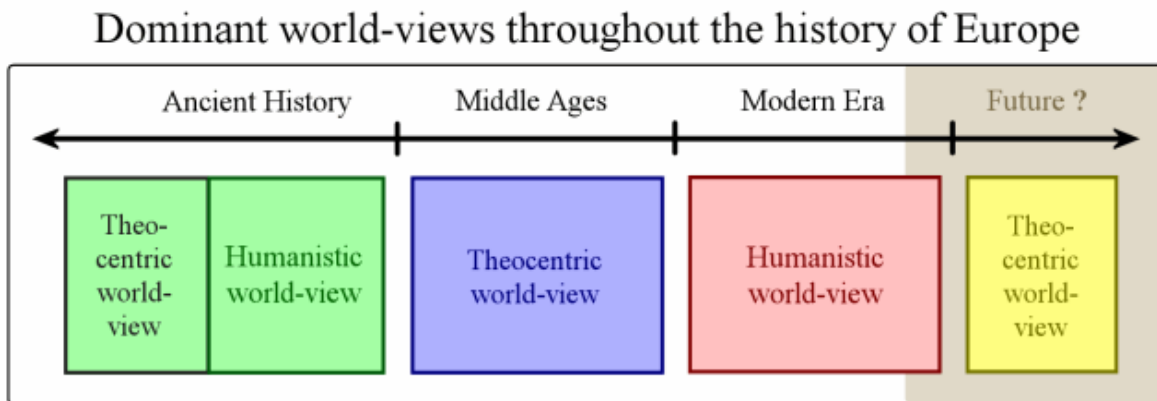
Summarizing the development of the six stages: briefly and concisely brought to the point:

### Change in the relationship with governmental and religious institutions

<p><b>Change in the relationship with governmental institutions</b></p> 		<p><b>Change in the relationship with religious institutions</b></p> 
<p>Emancipation in relation to the state</p>	<p><b>Humanistic thinking</b></p> 	<p>Emancipation in relation to religion</p>
<p>Questioning the ruling system</p>	<p><b>Reason</b></p> 	<p>Questioning religious dogmas</p>
<p>Separation of state and religion</p>	<p><b>Secularity</b></p> 	<p>Religion becomes a private matter</p>
<p>By secular constitution and basic law, the subject becomes a citizen</p>	<p><b>Rule of law</b></p> 	<p>Secular laws prevail over divine laws</p>
<p>Democracy replaces dictatorship</p>	<p><b>Democracy</b></p> 	<p>The respective religions within a state become equal before the law</p>
<p>Human rights become the ideal law for the state</p>	<p><b>Human Rights</b></p> 	<p>Religious activities may not contradict human rights</p>

## 4 Findings

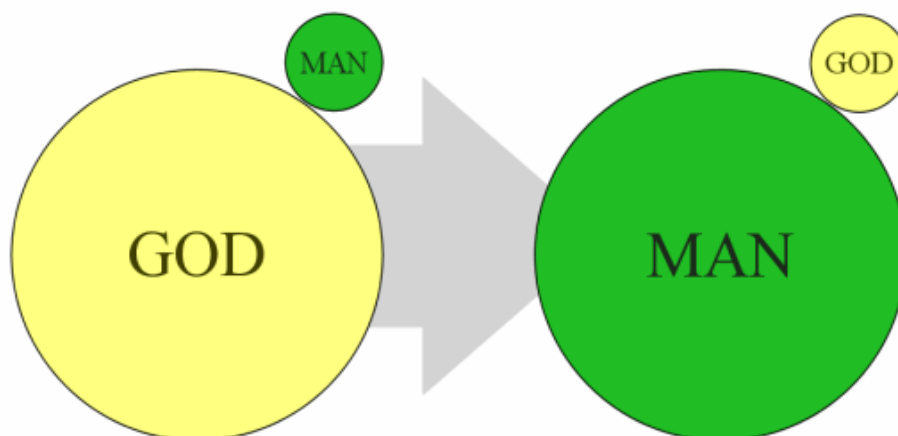
The history of Europe is shaped by constant change between two totally antithetic conceptions of the world: the theocentric conception of the world with a God as the focal point and the humanistic conception of the world with the human being as the focal point.



### Two utterly incompatible views of the world

Theocentric world-view

Humanistic world-view



From the theocentric world-view of the Middle Ages  
to the humanistic world-view of today.

<b>Theocentric world-view</b>			<b>Humanistic world-view</b>	
Exponents: Christian-theocentric conception of the world during the Middle Ages and Islamic-theocentric conception of the world of today (example: Iran)			Exponents: conception of the world of western civilization and of Japan	
A God determined everything! He also determined who rules the community of believers and how he rules!			A community of knowledgeable, autonomous and free people determines itself!	
Repression by governmental institutions	Repression by religious institutions	The six most Fundamental European Values	Freedom from governmental institutions	Freedom from religious institutions
	God as the focal point	<b>Humanistic thinking</b> 		The human being as the focal point
	Faith takes precedence over reason	<b>Rationality</b> 		Reason takes precedence over faith
Governmental and religious institutions work hand in hand		<b>Secularity</b> 	Separation of governmental and religious institutions	
Arbitrary national laws	Inhumane "divine" laws	<b>Rule of law</b> 	Justice by secular constitution and basic law	
Dictatorship	Theocracy	<b>Democracy</b> 	Democracy (western model)	
Human rights ignored by governmental institutions	Human rights ignored by religious institutions	<b>Human Rights</b> 	Governmental institutions ensure the observance of human rights	



## 4.1 What distinguishes a European of today and a supporter of European values?

Today's Europeans and supporters of European values accept and appreciate the following in their thoughts and actions:

- **The universal human rights.**
- **Democratic principles.**
- **Principles of the rule of law.**
- **The separation of politics and religion.**
- **Judgment based on reason.**
- **The human being as a measure of all things.**

Today's Europeans think and act

- **in a humanistic manner,**
- **rationally,**
- **secularly,**
- **by observing the rule of law,**
- **democratically &**
- **respectfully protecting the Human Rights**

## 4.2 Are these European values universal?

They absolutely can be called "European values" because they were realized first and foremost in Europe and America – the new home of emigrated Europeans – and they shape the European cultural society until today.

Ultimately these values do not just belong to Europeans alone, but rather to all human beings who want to live in a humanistic world.

European values are universal, i.e. they can be understood as an invitation to all higher cultures to build up a humanistic society via implementing these six fundamental steps.

***European values are universal humanistic values,  
whose goal is free, knowledgeable and independent human beings.***

## References

In order to be able to check these general facts from history books in a simple and fast way, we refer to the respective passages of the German Wikipedia (As of 01/2009):

- 1: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menschenrechte#Die\\_Wurzeln\\_der\\_Menschenrechte\\_in\\_der\\_Antike](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menschenrechte#Die_Wurzeln_der_Menschenrechte_in_der_Antike)
- 2: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menschenrechte\\_der\\_Vereinten\\_Nationen](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menschenrechte_der_Vereinten_Nationen)
- 3: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attische\\_Demokratie#Funktionsweisen\\_der\\_entwickelten\\_Attischen\\_Demokratie](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attische_Demokratie#Funktionsweisen_der_entwickelten_Attischen_Demokratie)
- 4: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%B6mische\\_Republik](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%B6mische_Republik)
- 5: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demokratie#Mittelalter\\_und\\_Neuzeit](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demokratie#Mittelalter_und_Neuzeit)
- 6: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antike#Urspr.C3.BCnge\\_Roms](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antike#Urspr.C3.BCnge_Roms)
- 7: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill\\_of\\_Rights\\_\(England\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_of_Rights_(England))
- 8: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franz%C3%B6sische\\_Revolution](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franz%C3%B6sische_Revolution)
- 9: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verfassung\\_der\\_Vereinigten\\_Staaten](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verfassung_der_Vereinigten_Staaten)
- 10: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A4kularisierung#Abstrakte\\_S.C3.A4kularisierung\\_in\\_der\\_Geschichte](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A4kularisierung#Abstrakte_S.C3.A4kularisierung_in_der_Geschichte)
- 11: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A4kularisierung#Historische\\_Entwicklung\\_der\\_abendl.C3.A4ndischen\\_S.C3.A4kularisierung](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A4kularisierung#Historische_Entwicklung_der_abendl.C3.A4ndischen_S.C3.A4kularisierung)
- 12: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thales>
- 13: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Descartes>
- 14: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthropozentrismus#Religion>
- 15: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanismus#Renaissance-Humanismus>

## History books in German:

Brockhaus Enzyklopädie, 21. Auflage 2005:

- 2: Band 18, S. 260; "Menschenrechte"
- 4: Band 28, S. 740; "Verfassung"
- 5: Band 23, S. 329; "Römisches Recht"
- 6: Band 22, S. 630; "Rechtsstaat"
- 8: Band 23, S. 700; "Säkularisierung"
- 9: Band 27, S. 290; "Thales von Milet"
- 10: Band 6, S. 475; "Descartes, Rene"
- 12: Band 12, S. 777; "Humanismus"
  
- 14: Band 4, S. 659; "Christentum"

## 1: Menschenrechte Antike

*Die Stoa entwickelte in ihrer Anthropologie und Ethik die Lehre von der Gleichheit der Menschen. Zenon von Kitium (336 – 263) ist der Begründer des Stoizismus.*

Oestreich, Gerhard. Geschichte der Menschenrechte und Grundfreiheiten im Umriss. S. 16 Berlin: Duncker & Humblot 1968  
dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 71. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

Die Stoa sind eine der großen philosophischen Strömungen im antiken Griechenland.

## 2: Menschenrechte Neuzeit

*'1948, 10. Dez. Die Generalversammlung der Vereinten Nationen nimmt die 'Deklaration der Menschenrechte' an, die davon ausgeht, dass alle Menschen frei und gleich an Würde und Rechte geboren sind.'*

Der große Ploetz. S. 1379. Göttingen Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht 2008

## 3: Demokratie Antike

*'Vollendung der Demokratie 462 in Athen.' 'Einführung der Timokratie 322' in Athen. 'Timokratie = Herrschaft der Besitzenden (eine auf Bodenertrag und Produktion eingestellte Klassenordnung).'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 59. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006  
dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 69. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006  
dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 55. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

Oestreich, Gerhard. Geschichte der Menschenrechte und Grundfreiheiten im Umriss. S. 15 – 18. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot 1968

'Der Bürger Athens war stolz, frei zu sein im Bewusstsein seiner Teilnahme an der Regierung und im Gefühl der Respektierung seiner Rechte durch das Gemeinwesen, das die politische und die religiöse, die rechtliche und die göttliche Ordnung zugleich umschloss.'  
(Attische Demokratie: 461 – 322 v. Chr.)

'509 v. Chr. (traditionell) ...das erste Jahr der (römischen) Republik.' 'C. J. Octavianus (seit 27. v. Chr.) Augustus und Alleinherrscher'

Der Große Ploetz. S. 216. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 2008

Vorstandlechner, Hans. Weißt du das? Frag' mich über Geschichtsdaten von 3900 v. Chr. Bis heute. S. 16. Wien/München/Zürich: Verlag Adalbert Pechan

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## 4: Demokratie Neuzeit

*'Der Konvent verabschiedet am 17. Sept. 1787 die Verfassung der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, das Grundgesetz der ersten modernen Demokratie.'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 293. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

*'Sept. 1792 Frankreich wird zur Republik erklärt'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 299. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

## 5: Rechtsstaatlichkeit Antike

*'Dieser Staat [der Römische] ist ein Rechtsstaat in dem das Gesetz (Lex) an die Stelle des Königs (Rex) getreten ist.'*

*'Um 450 siegt die Staatsidee in Rom über Standesdenken.' "C. J. Octavianus (seit 27. v. Chr.) Augustus und Alleinherrscher'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 86. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 77. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

Der Große Ploetz. S. 256. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 2008

Vorstandlechner, Hans. Weißt du das? Frag' mich über Geschichtsdaten von 3900 v. Chr. bis heute.

S. 16. Wien/München/Zürich: Verlag Adalbert Pechan

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*'Rechtsstaatlichkeit in Athen durch Reform des Kleisthenes 509 v. Chr. '*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 54/55. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

„Durch Teilung der Macht in unterschiedliche von allen Bürgern gewählte Verwaltungs- und Regierungsorgane, deren Vertreter ihre Ämter zeitlich stark begrenzt innehaben, Teilung der Gewalten und Ausbreitung der Macht auf das gesamte (männliche) Bürgertum bei gleichzeitiger, gegenseitiger Kontrolle und Machteinschränkung durch die Kurzfristigkeit der Amtsdauer, wird eine Form von Rechtsstaatlichkeit in Athen verwirklicht.(Reform des Kleisthenes 509 – 507. v. Chr.)“

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 54/55. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

## 6: Rechtsstaatlichkeit Neuzeit

*'Der Konvent verabschiedet am 17. Sept. 1787 die Verfassung der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, das Grundgesetz der ersten modernen Demokratie. Wesentliche Merkmale: Gewaltenteilung und ein System gegenseitiger Kontrolle (Checks and Balances)'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 293. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

*'Die französische Verfassung von 1791: Garantie der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte durch Teilung der Gewalten in Exekutive Legislative und Jurisdiktion.'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 296. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

## 7: Säkularität Antike

*'Und so kam es zu dem ganz und gar profanen Gesetzeswerk des Solon (um 580 v. Chr.), der nicht als Prophet oder Götterbote angesehen wurde, sondern einfach als 'Weiser' (sophos).*

Schupp, Franz. Geschichte der Philosophie. Antike. S. 34. Hamburg: Meiner Verlag 2003

*Die Bürger der Polis nahmen, vermittelt durch den von ihnen Beauftragten, ihre innere Ordnung selbst in die Hand, für Zeus blieb das Wetter mit Blitz und Donner.'*

Der Große Ploetz. S. 166. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 2008

## 8: Säkularität Neuzeit

*'In jedem Fall war die Verbindung von Kirche und Staat für sie (die Philosophen der Aufklärung) ein Unheil.'*

Schupp, Franz. Die Geschichte der Philosophie – Neuzeit. S. 299. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag

*'Unter Androhung der Amtsenthebung bei Zuwiderhandlungen schränkte man die Aufgaben der Bischöfe auf den rein geistlichen Bereich ein...'*

Goodwin, Albert. Die Französische Revolution. 1789 – 1795. S 81. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer

Frankreich:

'Juli 1790 Zivilverfassung des Klerus: Verstaatlichung der Kirche; Aufhebung der kontemplativen Klöster und Orden; Wahl der Priester. Die meisten Geistlichen lehnen den verlangten Eid auf die Verfassung ab, ein Konflikt zwischen Staat und Kirche entsteht.'

'Trennung von Staat und Kirche in den USA (1785 Virginia Statute of Religious Liberty)'

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 297. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 293. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

## 9: Rationalität Antike

*'Die griechische Philosophie wollte einen wissenschaftlichen Anfang haben und den symbolisierte Thales von Milet (um 624 – 546).'*

Schupp, Franz. Geschichte der Philosophie. Antike. S. 48. Hamburg: Meiner Verlag 2003

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 51. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

'Logos als Vernunft ist nicht etwas, was dem Menschen natürlicherweise mitgegeben wäre: Ohne Zweifel hatten die Menschen immer schon die Fähigkeit, sich in ihrer Welt zu orientieren, d.h. sich Handlungsmodelle zu entwerfen. Dass die ionischen Naturphilosophen (u.a. Thales) dies aber mit Vernunft, d. h. Unter anderem mit Abstraktionen, mit Versuchen einheitlicher Theoriebildung, mit Argumentationsformen und Logik unternehmen ist ein historisches und kein natürliches Phänomen, es ist ein Ereignis der Geschichte, das bis heute seine ungeheuren und manchmal auch ungeheuerlichen Auswirkungen zeigt.'

## 10: Rationalität Neuzeit

*'Zeitalter der Vernunft: Renè Descartes (1596 – 1650) vertritt den Rationalismus: allein durch Denken und allg.-log. Schlüsse (Prinzipien) wird Wahrheit gefunden (deduktive Methode) ' Die Aufklärung (18. Jahrhundert): die von Westeuropa ausgehende größte geistige Bewegung seit der Reformation basiert auf Humanismus, Philosophie und naturwissenschaftl. Weltbild des 17. Jahrhunderts. Vernunft, Mut zur Kritik, geistige Freiheit und religiöse Toleranz sollen Tradition, relig. Dogmatik, kirchliche und staatliche Autorität (Absolutismus), moralische und ständische Vorurteile überwinden. Natürliche (=vernünftige) Bildung und Erziehung zur Humanität garantieren den Fortschritt, fördern die 'Verbrüderung der Menschheit'*

## 11: Humanistisches Denken Antike

*'594 Solonische Gesetze in Athen deren erster Grundgedanke die Emanzipation des Einzelnen ist'*

*'Protagoras (um 485 – um 415): Der Mensch ist das Maß aller Dinge'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 55. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006  
Der große Ploetz. S. 182. Göttingen Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht 2008

## 12: Humanistisches Denken Neuzeit

*'Die Renaissance in Italien (15./16. Jh.). Hinwendung zur Welt und Humanismus.'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 213. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

*'Aus Byzanz emigrierte Gelehrte gründen um 1440 die Platonische Akademie in Florenz. Gefordert wird freie geistige Entfaltung des Menschen, der sich aus eigener Kraft durch das Studium klassischer antiker Literatur vervollkommen kann.'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 212. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

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## 13: Das Christentum wird Staatsreligion

*'380 Das Edikt von Thessalonike: Der Athanasianismus (Katholizismus) wird Staatsreligion'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 103. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006

*'391 das Christentum wird Staatsreligion, Verbot aller heidnischen Kulte.'*

dtv-Atlas Weltgeschichte. S. 103. München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag 2006